AT THE SAME TABLE:
Developing the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia

A Nova Scotia Nonprofit Sector Research Project

FINAL REPORT
January 2012

Made possible through the support of the
Nova Scotia Department of Labour and
Advanced Education
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix Welcome</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCO Welcome</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Method</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting the Context</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Movements</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia Developments</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nova Scotia Nonprofit Sector Research Project</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings: Sector Representation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Question</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Discussion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Findings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Structure</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings: Shared Services</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Question</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Discussion</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Findings</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Strategies</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings: Core Capacity Development</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Question</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Discussion</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Findings</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Strategies</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Informant Interviews and Voices of Interest</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Peoples in Nova Scotia</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acadians and Francophones in Nova Scotia</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Nova Scotians</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ Nova Scotians</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Steps</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Bibliography and Resources</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phoenix and the Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO) conducted a research study from January to July 2011 involving a pan-Canadian examination of developments in the nonprofit sector and a focused exploration with nonprofits in Nova Scotia.

The research team included:

- Veronica McNeil, Executive Director, FOCO
- Timothy Crooks, Executive Director, Phoenix
- Miia Suokonautio, Director of Programming, Phoenix
- D’Arcy Morris-Poultney, Researcher/Writer, Phoenix
- Reshmu George, Administrative Support, Phoenix

The research team conducted 23 key-informant interviews with nonprofits in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador with a focus on how the sector organizes itself, sharing services and how training is best delivered to staff and volunteers.

In Nova Scotia, the majority of field research was conducted via nine focus groups in communities across the province (Amherst, Bridgewater, Yarmouth, HRM, Truro, New Glasgow, Sydney, Kentville and one via webconference), with 150 participants from more than 110 agencies. Key-informant interviews were conducted in communities of interest including with Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, Acadian, and LGBTQ individuals. Thirty Acadian/ Francophone participants were consulted in seven different locations (Argyle, Cheticamp, Claire, Dartmouth, Pomquet, Richmond, Sydney) via webconference. Research was also conducted with more than 30 sector authorities in expert-reference interviews. In June 2011, 63 participants from more than 35 nonprofit agencies gathered to hear the interim findings from the research process.

Researchers were told that a formal structure to represent the common interests of the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia is needed. Provincial focus group participants identified key challenges including unstable and inadequate funding, high rates of volunteer and staff turnover, navigating an ever-changing policy environment, developing staff resources in effective and meaningful ways, increasing needs in our communities of interest, and good governance.

Participants recommended building on strengths to fill gaps. For example, it is important to recognize and respect existing efforts to coordinate and represent the nonprofit sector. In many ways, although often informal, this sector is already connected and able to mobilize around issues quickly. Most nonprofits are already attached to an organization representing their missions. There is no clear voice for the whole sector provincially, however, and it was felt that the sector has not yet leveraged its collective voice.

Participants said that any sector-representation body should build on existing umbrella groups, while remaining inclusive – all must be welcome at the table – and avoid over-representing any single region in the province. A body of this sort should be tasked with addressing funding challenges, government policy, public awareness, human resources challenges, and capacity development.

This body should:

- Be accountable to the sector with effective multi-directional communication and be responsive to feedback;
- Be autonomous, not housed within government;
- Be inclusive of minority voices and voices on the margins, including women, Francophone, African Nova Scotian, Aboriginal and LGBTQ communities;
- Be action oriented;
- Be consultative with stakeholders; and,
- Be sustainable, able to survive changes in government.
Informants reported that nonprofits can benefit from improved sharing of services such as human-resources management.

Concerns about sharing services included confidentiality of clients and agency records, confusion of agency brand from the public and funder perspectives, loss of control and ownership of a service, and upfront resources required to engage in shared services. Agencies described successful service sharing as including long-term outlooks on partnerships between agencies, clear expectations of each agency (including potential for cost-savings), legally-binding agreements with “out clauses,” clearly identified upfront resources required of each partner and a willingness to relinquish some elements of control for collaborative decision making.

Particular attention was paid to shared training, and the need for a provincial database of partners, resources and training opportunities. Training is an area where rural, small and marginalized organizations face the largest challenge. It was also agreed that genuine capacity development needs to be more than just one-time training events. Ongoing peer learning and mentoring are tactics for true capacity building.

Overall, participants felt that training opportunities were an important strategy to address the sector’s long-term health, as well as for the recruitment and retention of staff.
The work of nonprofits is too important to neglect. This report is a first step toward better understanding the nature of our work, who does it, its major challenges and how cooperating as a sector can make us stronger and more vibrant. Our hope is that this report is a step toward serving our communities better.

In 2006, the Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO) held its first annual general meeting and incorporated as a nonprofit. It was the culmination of six years of discussion, building organizational networks and testing the waters. Similar umbrella organizations exist across Canada, including other parts of Nova Scotia. The benefits of networking with other nonprofits are clear: we can stretch limited resources, connect each other to opportunities and resources, and advocate for our common interests.

Other provinces have conducted extensive research on the nonprofit sector to understand its strengths and vulnerabilities, with quantified data on education levels, salaries, benefits, job satisfaction and motivation. It was this research, and a strong belief in the need for a strong sector, that inspired Phoenix to become involved.

Mission-driven organizations can struggle under the demands of recruitment, screening and training new people. When their missions are compromised, so too are our communities since their strength relies so heavily on nonprofit organizations working for good education, considerate healthcare, environmental protection, social justice, community and recreation centres, places of worship and gathering.

Knowing that Phoenix staff are committed professionals and feeling that employees deserve long-term stability, security, and a fair wage, the agency wanted to better understand the high turnover rates most nonprofits struggle to manage. In the fall of 2007, when it was made apparent that labour market statistics for the nonprofit workforce in Nova Scotia were not available, Phoenix embarked on a journey to help develop the province’s nonprofit sector.

Within weeks, Phoenix approached FOCO and a baseline labour market study was released three years later, in 2010. Now, after extensive research across Canada with focus groups throughout Nova Scotia, this report explores routes toward a stronger, more vibrant nonprofit sector.
Dear friends and colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that Phoenix Youth Programs (Phoenix), in partnership with the Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO), releases this report on developing the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia.

Over the last several months, we have heard from seasoned experts across Canada, colleagues from across our province and key informants in a number of communities of interest. We’ve met in libraries, community halls and schools. We’ve communicated in English and French. And in each of these spaces and places, we’ve heard loud and clear that there is work to be done and that we can do it together.

Since 2007, Phoenix and FOCO have been working with our local and national counterparts and government partners to help us understand our sector and explore how we can attract, retain and develop the best talent. That input allowed for the completion of a first of its kind labour market study on the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia, as well as the identification of key strategies for our sector’s development: representation, shared services and core capacity development.

This report has four main components: (1) Laying the groundwork and the context of this research; (2) organizing the sector to represent and address our interests; (3) managing resources through sharing services; and (4) developing core competencies.

In each section, we outline the issues, what we asked, what we heard, some of the data we collected and strategies shared in our focus groups and interviews.

We know that Nova Scotians connect with nonprofits every day in cities and towns across the province. Our sector is a major employer, and contributes to both healthy communities and the economic base of our province.

We also know that this report comes at a time when there is much on the horizon. Our greatest aspiration is that this report, combined with the wisdom, engagement and commitment of our colleagues, will help ensure our sector remains vibrant, nimble and strong.

Phoenix is especially grateful for the contributions of FOCO over the last many years and for providing insight, support and guidance for this project. We are thankful for the hard work of the FOCO Board and staff as well as the many FOCO members who have been part of the process along the way.

Join us as we move forward together!

Timothy Crooks, Executive Director
Phoenix Youth Programs
Dear friends and colleagues,

The Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO) is honoured and excited to release this report—the culmination of a year of intensive consultation with experts on the work and challenges of nonprofit organizations across Nova Scotia. It is our fervent hope that the information presented will spark new ways of cooperating to overcome the resource challenges we face, so that we can continue to improve the essential services we provide.

This report, combined with the Nova Scotia Nonprofit Sector Labour Force Study (2010) released in partnership between Phoenix and FOCO, provides data and information to support agencies in planning programs and services and working collectively on shared interests and concerns.

The nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia continues to focus on collective issues that impact our ability to pursue our mandates. The major challenges include funding processes, human-resource strategies, volunteerism, public awareness of the sector and working with government.

FOCO’s core mandate is to strengthen and unite nonprofit agencies throughout Nova Scotia. FOCO remains committed to working with partners across the province to develop a sustainable and transparent model of sector representation where we coordinate our efforts to more effectively represent our challenges and address broad and complex issues. Work has already begun on the promotion of sharing services within our sector and the development of an online catalogue of training opportunities. FOCO is committed to working with the sector and government partners to advance the issues presented in this report.

We wish to thank Phoenix for their diligent work on these vital research projects; the many volunteers and agencies that supported this initiative; and the many individuals who completed surveys and attended focus groups. The collective endeavours of all involved have provided the nonprofit sector with important information for our future development.

Wendy Bye-Stevens, Chair of the Board
Federation of Community Organizations
Researchers from Phoenix and FOCO conducted a study between January and June 2011 involving a pan-Canadian examination of development in the nonprofit sector and a focused exploration with nonprofits in Nova Scotia.

Across Canada, the research team conducted 23 key-informant interviews in six provinces outside of Nova Scotia (British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador). The purpose of this pan-Canadian approach was to set the national context regarding provincial variations on how the nonprofit sector is organized and to examine the nature of sector-government relations in other jurisdictions. Interviews focused on how the sector works to represent its interests, sharing services, and how training is coordinated and delivered to staff and volunteers.

In Nova Scotia, the majority of field research was conducted via nine focus groups, in communities across the province, with 150 participants from more than 110 agencies. Focus groups were held in Yarmouth, Bridgewater, Kentville, Truro, Sydney, HRM, Amherst, New Glasgow as well as one via webconference with Acadian/Francophone participants in seven different communities across the province. Some of the participating agencies included family resource centres, United Ways, transition houses, regional and local environmental agencies, and cultural and arts groups.

Key-informant interviews were conducted in communities of interest including the Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, Acadian, and LGBTQ communities.

Each focus group asked participants to address three key questions: (1) What could sector representation look like for Nova Scotia's nonprofit sector; (2) what is our provincial experience and capacity for sharing services in our sector; and (3) how are nonprofit organizations addressing their core competency training needs.

Research was also conducted with more than 30 sector authorities in expert-reference interviews.

In June 2011, 63 participants from more than 35 nonprofit agencies gathered to hear the findings from the research process. This provincial forum was the last data collection exercise, with the research team gathering and incorporating feedback into the final report.

The above research was augmented by a comprehensive environmental scan and literature review. Key sources are noted in the bibliography.

---

1 A list of key informants interviewed across Canada is provided at the end of this document.
This nonprofit sector development project has come at a time when our sector faces persistent challenges, and yet there is much exciting activity happening in Nova Scotia and across Canada. A number of important initiatives, political shifts and demographic movements have converged to bring Nova Scotians to where we are today.

Top among the key issues facing the nonprofit sector regionally and nationally are the demographic changes in our labour force. The labour market in Nova Scotia has been described as “smaller, greyer and more urban,” reflecting the decreased size of the labour pool, our aging population, and the continued movement of workers from rural to urban areas. Already the overall labour force participation rate in Canada has decreased from 50.15 per cent in 2006 to 49.61 per cent in 2010.\(^2\)

In an environment with fewer workers, nonprofits are forced to compete with their business and government counterparts for skilled staff. Their capacity to offer competitive salaries and benefit packages, however, is limited. For example, in their national labour-force study, the HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector found that three-quarters of Canadian nonprofits have fewer than 10 employees, and just over 30 per cent of these small nonprofits offer pension plans or pension contributions.\(^3\) Employees of nonprofits in all size categories rated compensation related items as those areas with which they were least satisfied.\(^4\)

Nonprofits suffer high rates of staff turnover, which affects their ability to deliver on missions and draws down on limited resources. Some estimates cite that the loss of one person is equivalent to his or her annual salary.\(^5\)

---

Over the last three decades, national and provincial nonprofit organizations across Canada have been working to help us understand ourselves as a sector and labour force. Stemming from work done under the Voluntary Sector Initiative\(^6\) beginning in the late 1990s/early 2000s, the **HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector** was initiated in 2006 to conduct collaborative human-resources (HR) research.\(^7\) The HR Council conducted a national labour force study (2007-2009) that provided an evidence-based understanding of the sector’s HR needs. This data set the stage for a labour-force strategy aimed at ensuring access to skilled labour.\(^8\)

In 2009, **Imagine Canada**, a national charitable organization that focuses on Canada’s charities and nonprofits, launched its **National Engagement Strategy**,\(^9\) including identifying a Framework for Action in 2010.\(^10\) The national strategy included community conversations across Canada; provincial forums (including one in Nova Scotia in fall 2010); and in the fall of 2011, a national summit. The strategy’s aim is to identify some of the change drivers in the nonprofit sector and how nonprofits can best address these while working together.

In parallel to these national initiatives, there appears to be a **pan-Canadian movement to improve dialogue between the nonprofit and other sectors**. Some of the initiatives we explored in this research project included the British Columbia Government Non Profit Initiative, the Alberta Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector Initiative, the Ontario Partnership Project and the Ontario Nonprofit Network, the Quebec Comité sectoriel de main-d’oeuvre/économie sociale et action communautaire, and the Community Non-Profit Organizations Secretariat in New Brunswick. In exploring these other initiatives, and talking with committees and secretariats, there are many lessons for us to learn in Nova Scotia.

---

\(^6\) [http://www.vsi-isbc.org/eng/about/history.cfm](http://www.vsi-isbc.org/eng/about/history.cfm)
\(^7\) [http://hrcouncil.ca/about/documents/HRCouncil-newsletter_revE.pdf](http://hrcouncil.ca/about/documents/HRCouncil-newsletter_revE.pdf)
\(^8\) [http://hrcouncil.ca/about/documents/HRCouncil-newsletter_revE.pdf](http://hrcouncil.ca/about/documents/HRCouncil-newsletter_revE.pdf)
\(^9\) [http://hrcouncil.ca/labour/strategy.cfm](http://hrcouncil.ca/labour/strategy.cfm)
\(^10\) [http://www.imaginecanada.ca/node/239](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/node/239)
At the local level, these have been exciting years for Nova Scotia’s nonprofits. In March 2008, the Nova Scotia Volunteer Community Advisory Council (VCAC) was formed to improve communication, collaboration and partnership between the nonprofit sector and government. The VCAC was a key player in the development of the Collaboration Agreement, whereby the Government of Nova Scotia and the nonprofit sector committed to create open, transparent, consistent and collaborative ways to work together on issues, policies and programs.\(^{11}\)

Similarly, in 2007, the Network of Networks was formed by the then Department of Health Promotion and Protection to act as “an informal effort to bring people together to share information, identify best practices, and work to develop the capacity of the voluntary sector in Nova Scotia.” The Network has sought to convene a number of voluntary sector groups to try to strengthen “our collective sense of capacity building.”\(^{12}\)

A year after the election of a new NDP government, the Voluntary Sector was recognized in 2010 as a significant component of the labour force by its inclusion in the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (then the Department of Labour and Workforce Development). A week later, the Department announced the Community Development Trust - Voluntary Sector Professional Improvement Fund, whereby $800,000 was made available to provide for sector development initiatives, including capacity development and skills enhancement.\(^{13}\)

In November 2010, the Province of Nova Scotia announced its JobsHere strategy, the government’s plan to grow the economy.\(^ {14}\) The strategy is made up of three interrelated priorities: (1) learning the right skills for good jobs, (2) growing the economy through innovation and (3) helping businesses become more globally competitive. The JobsHere strategy has included policy changes and investments in training, workforce development and industrial expansion. As Nova Scotia’s nonprofit sector is increasingly recognized as a key component to a healthy economy, we hope that there will be increased training and development opportunities for our sector.
THE NOVA SCOTIA NONPROFIT SECTOR RESEARCH PROJECT

In 2008, Phoenix Youth Programs (Phoenix) and the Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO) worked with a research Advisory Committee to undertake a labour-force study of the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia.

The Nova Scotia nonprofit labour market research results were released in October 2010 as a Discussion Paper and examined by 120 of our colleagues at a provincial conference in Dartmouth. The results of those discussions posed the important question: “What next?”

Having reviewed the feedback from participants, we embarked on Phase II of the research project. In particular, we focused on three priority areas: (1) sector representation, (2) shared services/resource management, and (3) core capacity development/professional development.

At this time we are happy to share the results of Phase II and what we heard from our national and provincial colleagues from January to July 2011. Findings on these three key areas are shared in the remaining sections of this report.
FINDINGS: SECTOR REPRESENTATION

Many of us in the nonprofit sector are engaged with colleagues in business and government to help address the needs of our staff, communities and service users. Some nonprofits are part of their local chambers of commerce and others belong to committees working with government.

We heard from our colleagues across the province that there is an overwhelming need for a more formal structure to represent the common interests of the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia. It was felt we could better unite our voices to address issues that require mutuality, understanding with government, and commitment by business.

For example, it was noted in our focus groups that if the government were to undertake changes in funding formulas for nonprofits, there is currently no existing body within the sector that could be mobilized to help inform funding restructuring. As a result, the government addresses its nonprofit stakeholders in an ad hoc manner and many nonprofits do not have an avenue to inform policy and funding changes.

THE QUESTION

We asked focus group participants: “Is there a homegrown model of nonprofit sector representation that’s right for Nova Scotia? If so, what is it, what does it look like, and how is it structured?”
THE DISCUSSION

We heard loud and clear that we have **enough common issues** that it would be beneficial to work together. Participants noted that, as a sector, we’re big enough, we’re mature enough and we impact Nova Scotia enough to capably organize ourselves.

Furthermore, both our national and provincial colleagues noted that nonprofits are a **significant part of the economy and labour force**, employing as many people as the manufacturing sector. Sector representation, as such, is a worthwhile undertaking.

There was a strong consensus that we could do more together to address the challenges we face as individual agencies. In order for certain things to change, it is **unlikely that continuing with the status quo will be effective**. Some possible consequences of inaction include ever-increasing challenges in employing the right staff and volunteers, and insufficient consultation in policy changes that affect the sector.

Provincial focus group participants discussed how the **challenges facing nonprofits are complicated**, which is why they have yet to be resolved. Key challenges include:

- Unstable or inadequate funding;
- High rates of volunteer and staff turnover;
- Difficulties navigating an ever-changing policy environment;
- Finding and keeping the right staff;
- Developing staff resources in effective and meaningful ways;
- Increased need in our communities of interest; and,
- Agency governance.

These issues were felt to be **too broad and complicated to be addressed as individual agencies**. We heard that they require a collaborative approach to make any significant impact. Participants were optimistic that we would indeed be **stronger working together**.

THE FINDINGS

Travelling across Nova Scotia, we heard some of the best thinking on how to build a homegrown model of sector representation for this province, such as:

1. In building a sector representation model, we need to **recognize and respect the level of sector organization that currently exists**. In many ways, although often informal, we are already connected and are often able to mobilize around issues quickly.

2. **Most people are already connected to some sort of larger umbrella** that represents their mission, a priority or a common purpose. Examples included family resource centres, anti-poverty campaigns and arts coalitions.

3. **No participant identified being represented at a sector level provincially.** Participants felt that this was an important gap.

4. There is **value in organizations linking** and talking to each other.

5. There is **value in having a coordinated voice**. We have not yet leveraged our collective voice to its full extent.
We shared sector representation models to participants, based on what we saw in other provinces. For example, in some provinces, a nonprofit secretariat has been formed within government, in others a representative roundtable has been convened to address issues of common concern. Some provinces have gone so far as to establish independent organizations with a mandate to represent sector issues to government and to other nonprofits. Each of the models varied in terms of structure, funding, communication, and mandate.

Participants were then asked to weigh in on which models they liked, which ones they didn’t and what was missing overall. We then engaged in a discussion about what elements should be present in a Nova Scotia nonprofit sector model.

We heard:

1. **Regionality matters.** In particular, any representative body that is too heavily focused on HRM would not have buy-in from rural areas and wouldn’t have the experience needed to represent rural concerns.

2. **Inclusivity matters.** There should be mechanisms for organizations of all sizes to participate in any representative body. Some respondents were clear that not everyone had to be at the table but that smaller organizations should have a way to provide input and to know that their experience mattered.

3. **Key agenda items for a sector-representation body** should be:
   a. Sufficient and stable funding;
   b. Government regulations, policies and procedures;
   c. Public awareness, opinion and support;
   d. Recruitment and retention of board, staff and volunteers; and,
   e. Capacity development and succession planning for paid and unpaid human resources.

4. **Existing umbrella organizations should be involved in the creation of any sector-representation body and the door should be open to participation from others as well.** Using existing assets could enhance the potential for sustainability and coordination of the overall sector.

5. **Accountability and communication will be the cornerstones to success for a sector-representation body.** Any representative organization or group will need to be open to receiving feedback, giving updates and having decision-making be transparent. A lot of work is required to keep all stakeholders, particularly those within the sector, up-to-date, informed and involved.

6. **A nonprofit-sector body should be autonomous** and not housed within government. This was felt as particularly important in that the role of a nonprofit-sector body would be to develop the sector internally and work with other sectors in an autonomous manner on issues of common concern. It should also **not interfere with existing subsector relationships** and their interface with government.

7. The scope of activity for a nonprofit-sector body should consider the breadth of issues put forward by the sector, not only those that involve the government. It was felt that there are many things that could be done to develop the nonprofit sector that do not require close ties with government. These might include professional development and shared services. Some issues, however, would invariably involve multiple government departments and should be addressed at that level.
8. **Minority voices/voices on the margins must not be lost.** We heard loud and clear that the different perspectives brought forward by nonprofits in different regions as well as those working with voices of interest and subsectors must find a place in the discussion. One example was that we were cautioned not to lose sight of issues affecting women as well as Acadian/ Francophone communities in a too broad or too urban conversation.

9. Participants let us know it’s time to move beyond problem definition and talk and to **start getting things done.** Any model pursued should be **nimble and efficient,** with a **clear agenda and tangible outcomes and timelines.** Otherwise, participants worried that the process would stall and stakeholders would lose interest.

10. Similar to making sure no voice is lost and establishing efficient decision-making processes, participants outlined their expectation that a sector representation model should **balance autonomy with stakeholder consultation.** Spending too much time seeking input from stakeholders runs the risk of being unresponsive to urgent matters or getting lost in process.

11. **A successful sector-representation model must be sustainable.** Developing a model that is able to survive changes in government and that has a strong base of sustainability will allow for long-range planning and development.

11. A successful sector-representation model will **work within the nonprofit sector and with government and business.** An overreliance on the development of a government-based agenda, it was felt, would hamper opportunities for good work within the sector and with business partners. At the same time, it was understood that any model would **require government buy-in for a relationship with government to work.**

12. There is a **coordination gap that needs to be filled.** There are many successful structures, including working committees and advocacy coalitions, but there is a coordination gap in convening these structures and allowing access for organizations not yet connected.

13. **Working group models** where groups of people come together around issues of interest and then disband once outcomes are achieved could be incorporated into the overall sector-representation model. This would allow for adaptability and flexibility in responding to issues as they arise.

14. **Leaders wanted!** Individuals, organizations, government officials and bureaucrats are all needed to champion a sector-representation model moving forward. There are many thoughtful, insightful and experienced leaders in our sector. Engaging them in the task of sector representation is a necessary first step in developing buy-in and consensus with the larger sector.
**THE STRUCTURE**

In our provincial focus groups, we presented a number of different models of sector representation from across Canada. Based on the feedback we received and the elements that any model should incorporate (as noted above), we heard that **sector representation in Nova Scotia should replicate the successes of the Nova Scotia Volunteer Community Advisory Council but be housed outside of government.** The sector model should advance sector interests first and then invite government and businesses to participate.

We called the ideal hybrid the **Potluck Model**, as it invites everyone to bring something to the table. This model was developed as a result of what we heard in our focus groups and confirmed in our follow-up provincial meeting. Proven elements from other provinces were incorporated along with the characteristics unique to Nova Scotia required for success.

The key feature of this model is that a sector-representation body could exist for the benefit of the nonprofit sector, while still working autonomously with government and business as needed.

The approval for the potluck model was high. It calls upon existing leaders to develop a framework with a reflective voice that includes a diversity of organizations and umbrella groups from various regions, subsectors and voices of interest in the design. Community stakeholders need to be assured of a seat at the table of any sector-representation body, or a mechanism to provide input and to know how decisions are being made.

The ability to engage the public and private sectors was again highlighted as a key component but the overall “table” where nonprofits convene is not contingent upon the participation of other sectors.

Focus group participants did not reach consensus on the make-up of the nonprofit sector table (the oval labeled “Nonprofits”). It was not yet decided whether this space would be a distinct organization, an advisory group with its own terms of reference, or some other entity.

**Benefits of the Potluck model:**
- creative and efficient;
- effective for determining priorities;
- allows sector to work on different levels.

**Limitations of the Potluck model:**
- sustainability must be assured;
- complexity of model should not complicate representation;
- government participation not guaranteed.
FINDINGS: SHARED SERVICES

Service sharing has been around as long as nonprofits have existed. Agencies have shared office spaces such as reception and meeting rooms, and organizations have shared staff or common financial services. Much research and literature exists on the benefits and pitfalls of sharing services. Some nonprofits in British Columbia and Alberta, for example, have already effectively documented their potential for the development of the sector.\(^\text{15}\) In addition, the HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector has a guide to sharing staff services available to the public.\(^\text{16}\)

At its core, sharing services offers a variety of potential benefits for nonprofits. In particular, sharing services can reduce costs (e.g. bulk purchases, shared locations) as well as increase capacity through consolidating existing costs and efforts for the acquisition of more specialized services and resources (e.g. human resources staff, group pension benefits, coordinated advocacy).

It was felt, in particular, that sharing services offers the possibility of developing the sector by helping increase the capacity of organizations. For example, where agencies may already be spending time and money on human resources but are unable to employ a full-time human resources staff person, clustering agencies around this issue may allow for consistent access to an HR specialist to a group of organizations. Similarly, where most nonprofits have fewer than 10 staff and most are unable to offer pension benefits, consolidation could allow for the purchase of group-based pensions and benefits, helping address possible staff attraction and retention issues.

Overall, sharing services, it was felt, should support organizations to meet their missions. Focus group participants identified a strong recognition of the value in nonprofit agencies increasing their willingness and ability to share services.

---

\(^{15}\) *Shared Services: An Opportunity for Increased Productivity, United Community Services Co-op, BC and Sharing Services, Sharing Space: Summary Report, Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations 2010.*

\(^{16}\) [http://hrcouncil.ca/resource-centre/shared.cfm](http://hrcouncil.ca/resource-centre/shared.cfm)
**THE QUESTION**

We asked focus group participants: “What services do you already share and which would you like to share more? What would need to be in place to increase service sharing between agencies and what role, if any, could an intervener play?”

**THE DISCUSSION**

We heard from focus group participants that agencies in Nova Scotia already have experience sharing services but there is still tremendous capacity to do more. Sharing services can happen locally, regionally, provincially or nationally. It can also happen within specific sub-sectors of nonprofits (e.g. environmental groups or community centres).

La Fédération Acadienne de la Nouvelle Écosse (La FANE) unites its 26 member agencies through cultural connections, shared office spaces, shared financial services and regional meetings. The Cultural Federations of Nova Scotia is the umbrella organization that oversees the infrastructure for eight individual nonprofit federations including Dance Nova Scotia, Theatre Nova Scotia, and the Writers’ Federation of Nova Scotia. These federations are jointly housed under one roof on the Halifax waterfront with shared reception and meeting space. We also heard about the strong connections and joint advocacy done by Nova Scotia’s Family Resource Centers (FRC) who are so well connected that an issue facing them anywhere in Canada could be addressed in a mere matter of hours by sister FRCs.

In Nova Scotia, focus group participants perceived the **benefits of sharing services** to include:

- Improved services to clients;
- Increased agency capacity, leading to better outcomes; and,
- Better use of agency financial resources.

**Concerns identified around sharing services** included:

- Upfront resources required to engage in shared services;
- Uncertainty regarding how to proceed with sharing more complex services (e.g. staffing);
- Confidentiality of clients and agency records;
- Confusion of agency brand from the public and funder perspectives; and,
- Loss of control and ownership of a service.
THE FINDINGS

Similar to what we heard in Nova Scotia, at a national level there are equally diverse types of service sharing, from collective office spaces at the C3 Centre in Ottawa to the United Community Services Co-op in British Columbia, a “unique business services co-operative owned by over 100 non-profit and community organizations [that] works to strengthen the non-profit sector by seeking co-operative and collaborative solutions to issues that face non-profit and community organizations.”\textsuperscript{17}

Clear how-to guides, as well as cost-benefit analyses of service sharing are available in Canada.\textsuperscript{18}

Focus group participants overwhelmingly identified the strong potential benefits of sharing services yet felt that the upfront time and resources needed to embark on service sharing was a significant barrier. For example, matching agency needs, understanding legal parameters, and engaging in the development of trusting, long-term relationships between organizations were felt to hinder the capacity of organizations to come together. As such, nonprofits cited that a potential role existed for either resources or an outside intermediary (e.g. a consultant or government department) to help facilitate the initiation of service sharing.

Based on national examples, relevant literature and our focus groups across Nova Scotia, we heard a number of key elements needed for successful, shared-service agreements, including:

1. **Relationships matter and they take time.** Agencies interested in sharing services need to take the time to engage in a relationship-building process and keep a long-term outlook throughout the process. The likelihood of success is greatly increased when the underlying relationships are strong.

2. **No strings attached.** During the exploration stage, all parties should feel free to withdraw from the relationship and the possibility of sharing services.

3. **Clear expectations and objectives need to be identified from the outset.** Each participating agency should outline its expectations, including for cost savings, of the relationship or partnership. Returning to these expectations regularly helps agencies determine the feasibility and success of the partnership.

4. When required, **legally-binding agreements, including “out clauses” for agencies wishing to leave the agreement** should be developed to ensure the long-term health and well-being of all those involved and that agency missions are not compromised.

5. **Resources required of each partner should be identified upfront** so that agencies can proceed with a clear understanding of the cost to their organization of the partnership.

6. Partners should bring a **willingness to relinquish some elements of control** so that collaborative decisions around a shared service are possible.

7. **Learn from others.** In the design stage, consulting with other agencies with experience in sharing service arrangements, to gain insights and mentorship, is important and valuable.

\textsuperscript{17} http://ucscoop.com/

\textsuperscript{18} Sharing Services: An Opportunity for Increased Productivity by the United Services Co-operative and the Shared Service Ensemble Model, the HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector.
An important case example of a missed opportunity for shared service remains sharing office, program and meeting spaces. In our focus groups across Nova Scotia, we repeatedly heard that many of the agencies not currently sharing space are always interested in doing so to reduce operational costs and improve synergy between staff and volunteers of different organizations. However, the resources, time and research capacity required for agencies to enter into a shared-space agreement is a significant barrier. Staff and volunteers busy with existing workloads have little time to investigate and implement a shared service arrangement and, as a result, such agreements rarely move beyond initial exploratory conversations.

Legal assistance was commonly identified as another requirement that many agencies lacked.

Simply put, resources are needed to enter into shared service agreements.

We also heard loud and clear that a potential shared service is for small and medium-sized nonprofits to hire and retain professional staff such as accountants, HR managers and PR and marketing specialists. Salaries for professional positions and the lack of qualified applicants are reasons to explore the capacity for agencies to share some staff positions. For example, the Nova Scotia Nonprofit Labour Market Study (2010) found that only 13 per cent of nonprofit agencies can afford to have a staff person dedicated to human resources management. A potential shared service could be with an HR consultant, shared between multiple agencies so that each could access HR consulting services as needed.

In response to the identified interest in sharing services as well as the barriers cited by focus group participants, agency representatives noted that real steps could be taken to facilitate an increase in sharing services between organizations.

We heard:

1. There is a role for an intermediary, whether government, a capacity-building organization or an umbrella group to act as a broker, convener or facilitator. This intermediary could support the assessment of service needs and potentials, as well as help map a way forward.

2. An overall sector navigator or project manager could help nonprofit agencies make connections and do the necessary research to share services. Such a navigator should be seen as impartial and be able to support agencies in making connections to one another.

3. A provincial database that functions as a central clearinghouse of information could help agencies find the partners and resources they need to share services.

4. Whether through the intermediary, navigator or database, particular types of information are especially important, including those related to legal and labour issues. This information is helpful for those agencies that are already prepared to share services but are unsure how to address certain questions in order to proceed.
Most nonprofit agencies, regardless of their diverse missions, require similar core competencies that keep them running and support them in the pursuit of their specific goals.

The large bulk of agencies are governed by Boards of Directors, develop financial and record keeping systems, design and implement various evaluations, and undertake communication strategies with varied stakeholders. If an organization has paid staff, it requires human resources competencies and if the agency is volunteer-run, volunteer management skills are needed. Other core competencies required by most nonprofits include knowledge and skills in leadership and management, legal, technical, IT, and social media matters. For small or medium-sized organizations, developing expertise in all of these areas can be daunting.

Although the 2010 Nova Scotia Nonprofit Labour Market Study found that almost 75 per cent of those employed in the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia had at least one university degree, many agencies still reported a high need for skill development in various core competency areas.

Skill development needs are affected by the diversity of core competency needs, the pervasiveness of small organizations where few staff are employed to perform multiple functions, and the difficulties in accessing appropriate development opportunities.

In traveling across Canada, we learned that opportunities for training and advancement have the potential positive spin-off of encouraging staff retention because employees feel valued and competent in their positions. Core capacity development also supports the nonprofit sector as a whole since agencies are strengthened to meet their missions.

Recognizing that the HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector and many other capacity building organizations have already done a great deal of work in identifying core competency and training needs, our research focused instead on the how of core capacity development. In particular, we wanted to know how nonprofits in Nova Scotia are currently meeting their capacity development needs and how they would like to see them met in the future.

**THE QUESTION**

We asked focus group participants: “How are you currently meeting your core capacity development needs? What would you like to see developed to help you meet your training and capacity development needs?”

**FINDINGS:**

CORE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
THE DISCUSSION

Capacity building organizations at the regional and national levels across Canada have already developed standards, assessments and toolkits around core competency development. For example, Imagine Canada has created standards in five core competency areas: governance, financial accountability, fundraising, staff management and volunteer involvement.19 The HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector has published a core competency checklist that identifies seven key competency areas for nonprofits: governance; financial management and sustainability; information technology management; human resource management; programs and services; community relations and engagement; and fund development.20

Investments in capacity development are investments in the sector: better services, better employment, better use of public dollars, better retention.

We also heard:

- All nonprofit agencies, regardless of size or structure, need training in core competencies;
- Training is often fragmented, disorganized, inadequate, inappropriate and inaccessible due to cost, location, and timing;
- Genuine core capacity development needs to be more than just one-time training events that are often costly but yield little results. Instead, knowledge development happens best when supported by multiple levels of learning engagement, called capacity deployment, including: ongoing content development, peer-exchanges and mentorship opportunities; and,
- Rural, small and marginalized organizations face the largest challenges in meeting their core capacity development needs because of cost, agency size, and inappropriate content.

THE FINDINGS

Focus group participants in Nova Scotia were passionate about their training and development needs. Agencies spoke eloquently about the many opportunities and challenges they face in accessing the right kinds of training and, as a result, meeting their agency missions. Financial limitations were also cited as a factor for not accessing available training, particularly for small and/or rural nonprofit agencies.

We also heard that there is presently enough common need, as well as knowledge and experience in the nonprofit sector that a coordinated approach to core capacity development is possible.

Participants cited an existing variety of training and development bodies. For example, agencies that are well networked with other agencies expressed easier access to training information and some networks already work well together to address each other’s training needs.

Many viewed capacity development as a motivation to belong to a larger network or umbrella organization where professional development was a regular component of annual general meetings, a benefit of membership or where access to peer knowledge and expertise was possible.

Finding the right training, at the right time, and at the right cost is challenging because there is no coordinated database of training and educational events. Some participants perceived that training may be unnecessarily duplicated while other training gaps are not being filled.

Participants shared a desire to have training opportunities shared in person through regular meetings but noted that online and other communications tools are also an option.

---

19 Imagine Canada Standards for Canada’s Charities & Nonprofits, 2011
20 Does Your Organization Have It Covered? An Assessment for small nonprofits, HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector, 2011
Overall, focus group participants felt a desire to participate in core capacity development and that to do so was a worthwhile investment of agency resources and time. Participants also shared some key elements to a thoughtful, coordinated core capacity development strategy for the provincial nonprofit sector. These included:

1. **A role for governments.** It was noted that where nonprofits often deliver on government mandates or work toward the public good, many participants felt that there is room for increased government involvement in core capacity development, whether through **funding, professional development lines as a portion of granting contributions, a government-funded training body** (e.g. Learn-Sphere in New Brunswick) or by **reserving spots for nonprofits in training opportunities** otherwise reserved for government employees only.

2. **A calendar of annual or ongoing available training.**

3. **A central portal and database** where training information is housed. This could include upcoming training opportunities, a list of local or regional experts in various disciplines, peer-reviewed facilitators, funding sources, etc.

4. **Greater access to “just-in-time” resources that provide specific training only when required.** It may not be necessary to be trained in the complexities of labour law but it may be beneficial to have access to legal expertise, whether through a comprehensive web-based resource or a roster of willing experts.

5. **Increased peer-supported learning and mentorship programs.** Many participants noted there is existing expertise in their own communities yet inadequate connections between staff and volunteers to learn from one another. Some possible developments could include executive director circles, Board circles, staff exchanges, and lunch and learns.

6. **Greater emphasis on capacity deployment** that moves beyond knowledge delivery to support implementation through practice, peer support and mentorship.

7. **Local and minority voices matter.** As per the proceeding section of this report, many participants cautioned against trainings that presume homogeneity or mainstream cultural norms that are often insufficiently responsive to the needs of the diversity of communities in Nova Scotia. **A greater diversity in trainers and facilitators was also encouraged.**
Focus group participants stated clearly: “Inclusivity matters.” In the spirit of what we heard and to provide a better balanced report, we wanted to include here some of the individual voices that speak to the diversity of our province. Our hope is that by their inclusion, we are able to provide a fuller picture of our sector.

Although every effort was made to ensure that our research was accessible and that opportunities were provided for input in multiple formats (focus groups, one-on-one interviews, a provincial forum), we recognized that certain voices were not being sufficiently heard. As a result, we conducted key informant interviews or focus groups with members of the Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, Acadian/Francophone, and LGBTQ communities in the province.

Our intent was not to ask, “What do all people of a particular group think?” since to do so would presume a false homogeneity that simply doesn’t exist. Instead, we asked, “Do you personally, as a member of your community, feel there is merit in a nonprofit sector development initiative?” and, “Moving forward, are there strategies you would recommend to ensure that the efforts of such an initiative are relevant to you and members of your community?”

We are thankful for the time and insight offered by our colleagues, who shared the following information with us.
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN NOVA SCOTIA

To have a greater voice, Aboriginal agencies and peoples belong to a number of different organizations. Aboriginal peoples living on reserves belong to the Assembly of First Nations and in Nova Scotia, and off-reserve Aboriginal Peoples are part of the National Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. Given that issues affecting Aboriginal peoples are complex and require the support of a combined regional and national voice, these groups, as well as the Native Council of Nova Scotia, work to help inform policy and practice for Aboriginal peoples in Nova Scotia. In addition, Nova Scotia has 13 Band Councils.

Sector Representation
There are concerns that the models of sector representation presented are biased against Aboriginal issues as these issues would get lost in a homogeneous model. Native groups could possibly work alongside mainstream nonprofits on areas of interest, but there may not be enough value in joining a sector wide representative network. The Aboriginal voice is strongest on its own, linking with other Aboriginal organizations provincially, regionally and nationally.

Shared Services
The Native Social Counselling Agency and many Native organizations partner with each other at a program level, but there are few resources for sharing services. Confidentiality and financial issues would need to be addressed in order for sharing services to work.

Capacity Development
As funders rarely see direct outcomes from supporting staff training, there is little money going towards capacity development for staff. Board members are not getting necessary training and make decisions without the right supports, eventually costing agencies time and money. One central agency is needed to share information about available training and to offer free capacity development.

Provided by Audrey Lucas, Community Support Worker, Native Social Counselling Agency
ACADIANS AND FRANCOPHONES IN NOVA SCOTIA

A French language focus group was conducted by videoconference on June 1, 2011, in partnership with La Fédération Acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (La FANE). Thirty participants in seven communities took part in an amended discussion on issues of sector representation, shared services and core-capacity development.

During the consultation and subsequent evaluation forms, participants identified that their primary motivation for working in the nonprofit sector is the work feels rewarding. Some of the challenges identified include inadequate funding, volunteer and staff recruitment and human-resource challenges, lack of training opportunities, lack of leadership and the preservation of the Acadian language and culture.

Acadian communities in Nova Scotia are currently represented by La FANE and by the Office of Acadian Affairs in the provincial government. It is important to note that La FANE is a good example of a sub-sector representational model for Acadians. This sub-sector of Acadian communities sees benefit to joining with a larger provincial sector-representation model for all nonprofits, including non-Acadian/Francophone organizations.

With respect to sector-representation models, the two-table model (where nonprofits share some common issues with government) received the most interest across Acadian communities. Participants said that the essential elements in a sector-representation body include the involvement of all members across the province and stable funding. A provincial strategy should not lose sight of the reality of Francophones.

Participants identified several immediate needs for training and professional development, including:

- Funding and grant applications;
- Training for Boards of Directors;
- Supervising and supporting volunteers;
- New staff training;
- Support for human resources;
- French language workshops;
- Community development; and,
- Marketing and communication.

To achieve these training goals, three required components would be funding, better communications, and sharing resources between agencies.

Compiled by Isabelle LeVert-Chiasson from videoconference notes of the French-language consultations organized with the support of la FANE
African Nova Scotians

Although African Nova Scotians participated in the study through focus groups and provincial meetings, we felt that it was important to highlight and reflect some of the particular issues facing African Nova Scotians in the province. As such, focus group participants and an online interview were conducted with Erin Desmond of the Association of Black Social Workers.

Moving forward, it is important to continue recognizing the wisdom, experience and contributions of African Nova Scotians. Efforts should be made to ensure that everyone is kept informed and has a chance to influence the process of nonprofit cooperation. Efforts to develop the nonprofit sector should be mindful that African Nova Scotian communities are still being marginalized. Researchers were given an important message: “We are here and we need to be heard.”

The people and organizations consulted were supportive of better cooperation to overcome separateness and avoid working in vacuums, which Desmond says is “making things more complicated, resulting in a lack of knowledge about programs, training and funding opportunities.”

ABSW is interested in being involved in a larger discussion of sector representation, including monthly meetings, focus groups and an annual general meeting. Desmond stressed the need for a current and comprehensive resource manual that can be used by all the nonprofits involved. Commitment from government is needed to help with funding, training and educational opportunities.

The African Nova Scotians consulted by researchers stressed the necessity of remaining connected to African Nova Scotian organizations, including churches. “African Nova Scotians need to be present to represent their different issues, needs, and outlooks.”

It was also noted that there are other marginalized groups that should be taken into consideration. “We look forward to a collaborative forum where diverse voices can be heard and appreciated. There is much work to be done to strengthen our organizations.”

Our thanks to Erin Desmond, Secretary of the Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW) for her informed perspective.
Sheena Jamieson, Support Services Coordinator for The Youth Project (TYP), talked of the ways the LGBTQ communities in Nova Scotia work together. For example, TYP maintains a network with the Nova Scotia Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA), connecting it to GSAs in schools across Nova Scotia. GSAs are also networked to each other.

**TYP benefits from having advocates in sectors where there may not have been previous relationships or positive references regarding its services.** TYP also benefits from having **allies that advocate for inclusion of LGBTQ issues; sharing skills and knowledge with organizations in existing LGBTQ associations;** and drawing from the experience and expertise in other agencies. Jamieson said TYP staff and volunteers feel connected to what's happening in their communities, and supported in their work.

A concern that has emerged from TYP’s work is that **as networks grow to include more people, some issues could get lost or are not be fully understood.** If a nonprofit network were to advocate to the benefit of the nonprofit sector, TYP would **hope for a working knowledge of LGBTQ issues** related to labour, health and the workplace.

**TYP staff and volunteers encounter a lot of assumptions** about their sexual orientation and gender identity, and find it difficult to attend training sessions knowing they will have to provide as much training as the trainers themselves. Employers and managers often worry that they will send staff and volunteers to a training session where their **gender identity will not be recognized or respected,** or heterosexism will impede learning or participation.

*Our thanks to Sheena Jamieson, Support Services Coordinator, The Youth Project*
In the fall of 2011, the Government of Nova Scotia, as part of its Sector Council Program, announced funding that would support up to seven new provincial sector councils. The purpose of the program is to support an industry-led approach to human resource development tailored to meet the labour market needs of particular sectors. The three priority areas for funding are: HR planning, attraction and retention, and training.

Of note is the government’s willingness to contemplate a proposal from the nonprofit sector to create a sector council or a ‘sector-like’ council, assuming that sector stakeholders are supportive of such an initiative, its goals and objectives are clear and the program requirements are met.

As noted in this report, nonprofit sector organizations in Nova Scotia consulted from January to July 2011 indicated their general support for workforce and skills development, sharing services, and sector representation. While there is now a new and real opportunity for the nonprofit sector to access resources that would assist in workforce development and address other matters of concern, it is timely to convene key sector stakeholders in envisioning and developing a possible sector-like council.

Given the research conducted to date and the opportunity to present a proposal to the provincial government for a sector like council, Phoenix intends to act as a convener and facilitator to bring together key stakeholders and continue the conversation. This will begin in early 2012.

In particular, a specialized consultant will be employed to ensure the following:

- Assist in reporting back on the findings from the consultations;
- Prepare a concept paper for a sector-like council that would primarily address workforce issues as well as other specific issues of concern to the sector, as well as looking at a new model of engagement between the sector and government;
- Meet with sector stakeholders (both those who were engaged in the spring 2011 round of consultations and those who were not) to share the findings from the consultations, present the concept of a sector-like council and to get feedback on a new model of engagement between the sector and the government;
- Convene a meeting to get feedback from key sector stakeholders about a sector-like structure and a new model of engagement between the government and the sector;
- Assuming there is buy-in for a sector-like council, further refine the governance model, goals and objectives, organizational structure and budget;
- Finalize the engagement model for presentation to the Minister responsible for the nonprofit sector;
- Prepare the draft application for resources to create a sector-like council; and,
- Support implementation of the sector council if the application is approved.

During the process of this initiative, it is expected that Phoenix, in collaboration with the consultant and community colleagues, will work with government counterparts to discuss next steps in implementing a sector-like council for the nonprofit sector in Nova Scotia.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY
and RESOURCES

Print sources
- Blueprint for Action, Collette Bradshaw, NB
- A Slice of the Pie: An overview of nonprofit sector-government relations in Canada, Peter Elson, AB
- Timelines and Structural analysis provincial government-voluntary sector relations, Peter Elson, AB
- State of Health of the Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector, Phoenix FOCO, NS
- Working for the Good of Ontario’s Communities, Ontario Nonprofit Network, ON
- Nonprofit Labour Market Development in Ontario, Ontario Nonprofit Network, ON
- United Way’s Community Quest, United Way Halifax, NS
- A Framework for Action for the Nonprofit Sector, Imagine Canada, Canada
- Understanding the Capacity of Social Services Organizations, Imagine Canada, Canada
- Shared Services: An Opportunity for Increased Productivity, United Community Services Co-op, BC

Electronic sources
http://www.statcan.gc.ca
http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr
http://www.hrvs-rhsbc.ca
http://www.nfpresearch.ns.ca

Key informant interviews
British Columbia: Timothy Beachy, Catherine Crucil, Barbara Grantham, Margaret Dickson and Rachel Flood
Alberta: Keith Seel and Peter Elson, James Flaherty, and Alana Wall, Mandie Abrams and Russ Dahms,
Alberta Workforce Council
Ontario: Rob Howarth, John Stapleton, Amanuel Melles, Lynn Eakin, Lynne Toupin, Brenda Gallagher, Paula Speevak-Sladowski,
Brenda Cameron Couch, Caroline Andrew, Tanara Pickard, Ontario Nonprofit Network ONN, HR Council
Quebec: Celine Charpentier
New Brunswick: Annette Vautour-MacKay, Patricia MacNevin
Newfoundland: Bruce Pearse
Nova Scotia: Erin Desmond, Sheena Jamieson, Audrey Lucas, Isabelle LeVert-Chiasson, Carole MacDougall