



**Draft Framework for National Support Services
2008/11**

Draft Framework for National Support Services

Section 1 – Overall Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

Future national support services will play a key role in delivering the aims and objectives of Capacitybuilders and the ChangeUp programme. The consultation exercise we conducted around the strategic aims of Capacitybuilders, Destination 2014, provided an opportunity for third sector organisations to give us their views on the possible shape and content of national support services.

It is important to be clear that the majority of responses confirmed the value of national support services for the ChangeUp programme and acknowledged the vital work undertaken by the national hubs over the last few years. The commitment, enthusiasm and effectiveness of all those delivering national services has not been in question.

Virtually all those who responded to the Destination 2014 consultation emphasised the central importance of ensuring much closer links between national, regional, sub-regional and local deliverers of ChangeUp. The creation of such synergy is our responsibility working with all our partners. Therefore, whatever the final configuration of national support services, we will ensure that future business plans for 2008/11 emerge from joint discussions between Capacitybuilders, the preferred bidders for delivering the main national support services and the regional, sub-regional and local bodies working on ChangeUp initiatives.

We now have an exciting opportunity to map out the route for national support services within the ChangeUp programme. Radical proposals are made in this document – focusing on four strategic themes of which one is entirely new. This change alone will serve to indicate that Capacitybuilders is concerned to build the strength of the third sector in its campaigning and leadership role as much as helping those organisations who wish to do so to play a greater role in public service delivery.

Through this new approach to national support services Capacitybuilders shows its commitment to ensure that there is much greater co-ordination across the whole ChangeUp programme and that services offered must be linked to the needs and priorities of those working locally and regionally.

This paper sets out Capacitybuilders' latest thinking on the future for National Support Services. It is principally being circulated to the Infrastructure National Partnership, our formal advisory committee, and other specific organisations with a particular interest in helping to shape the future services. The more formal consultation on the way forward for national support services was conducted during the Destination 2014 exercise.

Please let us have your views by **Monday 2 July**. Once we have absorbed responses and amended our plans, we will be issuing an invitation to tender for strategic lead bodies to develop and manage the proposed main national support services by the middle of July. We will also be seeking initial “expressions of interest” from organisations which might wish to offer leadership in particular programme areas rather than bidding for the main national services as such.

2. SUMMARY

Capacitybuilders has drawn on the Hubs Review 2006, consultation on Destination 2014 and existing Hubs business plans in preparing its proposed framework for National Support Services (NSS) for the period 2008/11.

Capacitybuilders has set itself a number of goals:

- to acknowledge a wider range of pressing needs than the current themes
- to build in connections between consortia (and other infrastructure organisations) and the National Support Services
- to emphasise the demand-side or user-focus
- to ensure that the focus of national support services is on the support organisations serving the third sector, thereby enhancing their ability to offer continually improving services to frontline groups
- to encourage and share expertise that is developed around the ChangeUp consortia/support networks in regions and localities
- to move towards creating one web portal that provides access to all forms of support

We believe there should be two categories of national support services:

- **Capacity-building strategic leads** –covering broad support themes (Finance, Performance, Workforce and Voice), and coordinating the programmes under the strategic leadership of Capacitybuilders
- **Capacity-building programme leads** – delivering particular programmes within strategic themes.

We are envisaging a three stage commissioning process:

Stage 1: A tender exercise designed to identify organisations committed to the ChangeUp programme and capable of managing one or more of the identified strategic themes. The aim is to select the best organisations to deliver what is needed by the sector in relation to national support services (mid July to mid September 2007)

Stage 2: A largely parallel exercise where bodies which would like to be involved in delivering specific programmes within the strategic themes “lodge” their interest with us (mid July to mid September 2007)

Stage 3: Detailed negotiations with preferred bidders in each strategic theme to determine the specific business plans for 2008/11 – in consultation with regional, sub-regional and local ChangeUp consortia and those organisations which have expressed an interest in delivering particular programmes (October/December 2007).

We need to ensure that the programmes of support provided through the new national support services reflect the key objectives of Capacitybuilders first published at our launch and now in Destination 2014. These objectives are to:

- improve the quality and efficiency of support organisations serving frontline organisations
- encourage extra investment in support bodies or functions through demonstrating their benefit to frontline groups
- ensure investments reach diverse organisations and socially excluded groups
- develop knowledge of other funds available and to work with a range of funders to spread best practice

3. BACKGROUND

Following the Hubs Review 2006, Capacitybuilders decided to approach the recommissioning of National Support Services in a different way.

The national consultation on Destination 2014, Capacitybuilders' plan for the development of third sector support from now until 2014, generated a range of responses to the questions:

1. What should national support deliver to benefit frontline organisations?
2. What should National Support Services deliver for consortia and other capacity-building partners?
3. What about the existing hub themes? And what about other suggested national support services? Which need further investment and which should stop being a priority or be delivered in a different way?

4. WHAT CAPACITYBUILDERS IS SEEKING TO ACHIEVE IN ITS RE-COMMISSIONING OF THE NATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Drawing on all the analysis and discussions about the future of national support services, CapacityBuilders has set itself a number of goals:

1. take account of the decisions made by the Capacitybuilders Board in November 2006 on the future of national support services

2. respond to the views heard through the consultation on Destination 2014:
 - Third Sector organisations have a wider range of pressing needs in addition to the existing six themes
 - Capacitybuilders urgently needs to connect up consortia (and other infrastructure organisations) with the National Support Services
 - the new arrangements must emphasise the demand-side i.e. be developed in response to and in close partnership with frontline organisations and support agencies that are close to them. There was some support for the application of a subsidiarity principle - that support should be arranged and delivered as close to frontline third sector groups as practicable.
 - there should be no national support services delivering direct to frontline third sector organisations except via open-access web-sites – to avoid duplication, and the undermining of more local support agencies
 - national support services should encourage and share expertise that is developed around the support networks in regions and localities
 - we must join up the support themes more effectively, and create one web portal that provides access to all support materials, sign-posting, support networks, consumer reviews of services, product and project reviews etc.
3. build on the extensive experience and commitment of the hubs and their current programmes
4. ensure equalities and diversity issues are an integral element of the national support services programme
5. re-balance Capacitybuilders' contribution to national support services' core costs with funding explicitly for programme projects and activity, which have a more direct effect on support agencies capacity and service quality
6. control the commissioning more to ensure that activity has delivery partners' buy-in from the start, and meets Capacitybuilders' requirements.
7. streamline national support services partnership working with a greater focus on clear roles and accountability
8. benefit more from the contribution of national infrastructure partners' existing activity.

Rationale for National Support Services

Capacitybuilders believes that support services should be provided at a national level if:

1. it makes sense for the services to be provided in a way that generates free movement of information and practice, avoids duplication and brings economies of scale
2. the activity is transformational in nature and requires a theme-specific lead, though still working in partnership with consortia and other infrastructure organisations
3. it adopts a form of theme leadership that is enabling and participative rather than top-down; that values the diverse nature of the sector and fosters creativity.

5. FRAMEWORK OF SERVICES AND PROCESS

5.1 Capacitybuilders proposes that there will be a three stage commissioning process:

Stage 1: credentials - selecting the best organisations to deliver the broad strategic themes (July to September 2007)

Stage 2: expressions of interest from organisations willing to deliver specific programmes with a strategic theme (July/September 2007)

Stage 2: detailed programme negotiations – agreed preferred bidders build an initial activity and project programme in close consultation with Capacitybuilders, local, sub-regional and regional consortia consortia, organisations which have expressed an interest in delivering specific programmes within strategic themes. This work will culminate in the production and sign off of three year business plans for 2008/11. (October/December 2007)

5.2 There will be two categories of National Support Services:

- 1) Capacity-building strategic leads** – 3 year commissioned grants, covering broad support themes – Finance, Performance, Workforce and Voice.
- 2) Capacity-building programmes** – 3 year commissioned grants, delivering specialised programmes within each strategic theme.

5.3 There will be four broad support themes. Within each theme there are a number of key programmes targeted at known support needs. It should be emphasised that these are simply illustrations of possible programme areas. There may be other suggestions and we would be keen on your views on this in particular. Capacitybuilders has attempted to group them sensibly though there could be other configurations.

<p>1) Finance</p> <p>Programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising • Community Enterprise/transfer of community assets • Marketing • Public service delivery • Finance management • Business planning 	<p>2) Performance</p> <p>Programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance and Quality Improvement • Vision, mission, strategic planning • ICT • Mergers, alliances, collaborations • Monitoring and evaluation • Communications
<p>3) Workforce</p> <p>Programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Employment policies and practice • Workforce Development/Training and development • Volunteer management • Leadership • Governance 	<p>4) Voice</p> <p>Programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigning • User involvement • Sector participation in national, local and regional public policy and strategy • Advocacy • Community action

Capacitybuilders reserves the right to commission other support services outside this framework where needs and opportunities arise.

Capacitybuilders will invite organisations to bid for strategic lead status and/or express an “interest” in leading on particular programmes within a strategic area of work.

Bids should be based initially on the expertise and capacity of each organisation or partnership, and on proposals to deliver core functions for a given grant. Capacitybuilders will first select the four strategic leads and then, together with such lead bodies, select the programme leads in their theme areas.

An independent panel will be established to receive bids for the strategic lead bodies, assess them on the basis of their capacity to manage one or more strategic themes and to make recommendations to Capacitybuilders. Final decisions concerning “ preferred bidders” for each strategic theme will be made by the Board of Capacitybuilders or a designated sub-committee of the Board.

6. ROLES OF LEAD AGENCIES

All national support services will have three main objectives in the context of contributing to Capacitybuilders’ long –term key objectives identified earlier:

Goal 1: Create a step change in the quality and effectiveness of support offered to third sector organisations

Goal 2: Significantly improve infrastructure agencies' access to the skills, knowledge and resources they require to support third sector groups

Goal 3: Enable infrastructure organisations to assist third sector organisations develop the skills/ knowledge they need to access and benefit from support.

6.1 Capacity-building strategic leads – 3 year commissioned grants, covering broad support themes. Capacity-building strategic leads will be charged with improving the quality and reach of infrastructure support by:

- a. providing national leadership while working in close communication and partnership with Capacitybuilders, consortia and infrastructure organisations at many levels and in many subsectors. This includes raising the sector's awareness of the central importance of the theme.
- b. ensuring national support services core functions are delivered in the programme lead area
- c. ensuring detailed programme activity demonstrably responds to frontline and infrastructure organisations' demand, with full buy-in from consortia and other relevant infrastructure organisations
- d. acting as a national voice about related topics directed to national government, regulators and policy-makers, in partnership with Capacitybuilders and others
- e. coordinating programme work within the strategic theme, and contract-managing and supervising other programmes
- f. combining with other capacity-building strategic leads on issues of joint interest, and with Capacitybuilders' communications centre
- g. ensuring that support provided in strategic theme is inclusive, meets the needs of community organisations and other designated target groups and parts of the sector; complies with the law and best practice, and is of a high standard.
- h. where possible leveraging other funding into the programmes covered by the strategic theme.

Strategic theme leads will also work together and with Capacitybuilders to:

- select the programme leads
- influence funders and sponsors of the third sector to improve their understanding of third sector capacity-building support, and their contribution to third sector organisation's effectiveness and support needs, e.g. by seeking to improve the 'performance' relationship between funders and funded, such as in relation to

local authorities and their twin roles as grant-makers and commissioners of public sector services.

- capture learning about support outcomes in order to develop a national evidence bank of the benefits of infrastructure, through case studies, reports and statistics.

6.2 Capacity-building programme leads – 3 year commissioned grants to deliver specific programmes within strategic themes.

They will be managed by strategic lead bodies referred to earlier. Capacity-building programme contractors will be charged with improving the quality and reach of infrastructure support by:

- a. Creating expert networks in close communication and partnership with consortia and infrastructure organisations at many levels and in many subsectors
- b. ensuring national support services core functions are delivered in the programme area
- c. ensuring detailed programme activity demonstrably responds to frontline and infrastructure organisations demand, with full buy-in from consortia and other relevant infrastructure organisations
- d. supporting the strategic lead to be a national voice about related topics, heard by national government, regulators and policy-makers
- e. combining with other capacity-building leads on issues of joint interest.
- f. ensuring that support provided in the appropriate strategic theme area is inclusive, meets the needs of third sector organisations and other designated target groups and parts of the sector; complies with the law and best practice, and is of a high standard.
- g. contributing to wider capacity-building strategy and delivery within the strategic theme area.

Some programmes may, beyond the core functions, be quite different e.g. running a franchise or extending existing programmes of support. Capacitybuilders reserves the right to require lead agencies that they evaluate radical options along with other activity proposals.

6.3 Proposed core functions of national support services

National Support Services in future will have more of an enabling role, and the core functions of strategic theme leads will be:

- a. deliver a central, national online and telephone resource covering, as a minimum, introductory information on the topic, comprehensive signposting to further information, comprehensive signposting to sources of support, and independent guidance to choosing between the range of tools or approaches

- b. build resource banks - pull together (lists of) publications, programmes, reports, projects, tools (review and/recommend them) so that frontline organisations and those close to them can access easily
- c. generate networks/directories of expertise, including speakers and trainers to input to regions, sub-regions and localities e.g. supporting conferences, delivering training, creating and networking theme leads/ champions.
- d. identify, support and use regional theme leads – individuals and/or organisations.
- e. generate learning about best practice on the theme and what works best in support – and promote and share it across the sector.

6.4 Proposals for programme activity and projects

National Support Services will bring forward proposals with delivery partners (consortia and other infrastructure organisations) for activity and projects.

The programme leads, coordinated by the strategic leads, will work with consortia, members of the Infrastructure National Partnership (INP) and other key infrastructure organisations to develop and fund projects and activities that respond to priority needs, have a clear fit with frontline demand, and are demonstrably effective in building frontline capacity.

Activities may include:

- developing, testing and spreading effective new approaches to support service delivery such as co-production and brokerage – and including drawing in relevant models and experiences in other sectors
- supporting the development of relevant knowledge and skills amongst advisers and trainers who support the front-line. The knowledge and skills could be either generic -such as training – or theme specific such as sustainable funding
- promoting and supporting the development of a range of support for very small, small, and medium sized third sector organisations
- disseminating good practice in meeting needs of different size and type of organisations, or into different sub-sectors or to reduce exclusion
- ensuring that infrastructure is hooked up with wider third sector capacity-building to meet the challenges and make the most of opportunities provided by the 2012 Olympics
- other activity for which consortia and infrastructure organisations can demonstrate a need that fits with programme leads' remits.

They will also ensure that support is offered in inclusive ways and using inclusive materials, and meets the needs of the full diversity of front-line organisations. These detailed proposals for the coming year will be presented to Capacitybuilders for funding – and/or will be funded by other means, including support from consortia's budgets and other infrastructure partners.

7 OTHER FEATURES OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

7.1 Scrutiny functions

We would like to explore how best to advise and monitor strategic leads and programme leads, so that programmes deliver on a range of principles in all their work. Scrutiny might be valuable on:

- a. law - ensuring all programmes' information, advice and training complies with law and related best practice; that it is accurate and up-to-date
- b. smaller/community organisations – ensuring that all programmes meet the particular needs of community organisations (and all small organisations)
- c. equalities and diversity and - ensuring all programmes' information, advice and training reflects best practice, reduces inequalities and is fully inclusive
- d. social enterprise – ensuring that the programmes encompass the particular needs of social enterprise - both specially constituted (CICs) and voluntary and community organisations that trade
- e. medium-sized organisations – ensuring that the programmes meet the particular needs of medium-sized organisations

Definitions of organisations' size:

- very small organisations <£10,000 p.a.
- small organisations >£10,000 <£100,000 p.a.
- medium-sized organisations >100,000 to £1 million

7.2 Communication Centre

All the evidence shows the vital need to ensure better communication and synergy both between national support services themselves and across the whole ChangeUp programme. One question is whether Capacitybuilders should establish a communications centre from within its own staffing or if we should provide a commissioned grant to another organisation to do this work. **Your views on whether we should build our own capacity further at Capacitybuilders to fulfil this function or commission the work would be welcome.**

Whatever method is chosen the following communications work needs to be done:

- a. bringing together all the materials produced by the National Support Services
- b. providing a single gateway to information, advice and sign-posting for both infrastructure organisations and frontline third sector organisations
- c. marketing the whole ChangeUp effort to the sector and key stakeholders.

8 STAGES IN THE RECOMMISSIONING PROCESS

Date	Stage
June 2007	send this draft framework to INP members (Capacitybuilder's formal advisory committee) and other targeted organisations to seek their views
July	consider responses to draft document and set up independent panel as part of the application process for selecting strategic theme leads.
July	issue formal tender document for strategic lead bodies in relation to final set of main themes. Invite informal "expressions of interest" from organisations which might wish to consider delivering specific programmes identified within the main themes
Mid/end September	independent panel short-lists strongest candidates in each theme and makes recommendations to Capacitybuilders. Capacitybuilders Board or sub-committee consider such recommendations and selects "preferred bidders" in each case. Capacitybuilders will also have logged expressions of interest in programme delivery in each theme.
October - December	development of 3 year business plans for each thematic area by Capacitybuilders and preferred bidders working together, in consultation with local, sub-regional and regional ChangeUp consortia. Capacitybuilders to sign off on 3 year business plans and agree budgets at its Board meeting on 19 December 2007
October	establish a joint cross cutting and communications group to work on evaluation methods and ChangeUp programme communication needs – to be integrated where appropriate in both national support service plans and ChangeUp consortia plans

SECTION 2: THEME-BY-THEME – SUGGESTED SERVICES TO BE COMMISSIONED BY CAPACITYBUILDERS

Introduction

All National Support Services will have three main objectives (as in section 6 above) and will deliver core functions (as in 6.3 above)

The support media that infrastructure organisations may need assistance with are:

- Advice – in person, on paper and on-line
- Information, signposting
- Training
- Coaching/mentoring
- Consultancy/one-to-one support
- Networking and peer-support
- Purchasing and Brokerage

The following lists are indicative only. Capacitybuilders wants to hear from potential programme leads and from consortia and others in the sector what the exact components and priorities should be.

THEME 1: FINANCE

Finance is viewed by Capacitybuilders as one of the four strategic theme areas. Finance encompasses a number of potential support programmes:

- fund-raising
- social enterprise, community enterprise
- marketing
- public service delivery
- finance management
- business planning
- community assets transfer

In the feedback to Destination 2014, it was clear that the sector feels third sector organisations need support on the broad funding/finance area, and in particular want help preparing for and delivering public service contracts, on marketing, and on enterprise/sustainable funding.

1.1 Fund-raising

- Successful grant applications
- donor/legacy management
- funding strategy
- knowledge of funders and funding programmes

1.2 Enterprise

- trading and other earned income
- taxation
- community interest companies and other vehicles
- Legal structuring (primary purpose trading subsidiaries)
- Funding strategy

1.3 Marketing

- What is marketing in the Third Sector?
- Sponsorship and Relationships
- Techniques of modelling and planning
- Pricing (including costs allocation and recovery)

1.4 Public service delivery

- Understanding the market
- Tendering, including procurement and negotiation
- Preparing for tendering
- Full cost recovery
- Asset transfer and management
- Contracts
- collaborative approaches to trading / contracting/

1.5 Finance management

- finance out-sourcing
- Effective resource management:
- Financial modelling
- Forecasting and budgeting
- Resource allocation
- Investment decisions
- managing grants and loans / equity / fees
- finance risk management

- Finance and the law - and regulation - compliance

1.6 Business planning

- Scenario planning
- Business planning models and techniques
- Market analysis
- Links to vision, mission values

The finance strategic lead will also work with other strategic leads, consortia and Capacitybuilders to build the engagement of funders (trusts, foundations and public bodies) in the support themes, so that they understand and fund support activity.

THEME 2: PERFORMANCE

Performance is a generic need for all third sector organisations, and is viewed by Capacitybuilders as one of the four strategic theme areas. It covers all the disciplines that impact directly on the extent to which organisations achieve their mission.

Performance encompasses a number of support programmes:

- Quality and Performance Improvement
- Vision, mission, strategy
- ICT
- Mergers, alliances, collaboration
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Communications

2.1 Quality and Performance Improvement

- quality assurance - choosing appropriate schemes, drawing greater benefit from them
- other quality improvement processes/approaches
- strengthening the sector's self-evaluation, self-improvement capacity
- organisation development
- managing change
- operational planning/systems .
- management/performance information frameworks such as balanced scorecard
- performance measurement

2.2 Vision, Mission Strategy

- strategic planning - skills development and support for Boards and executives
- environment analysis
- consultation and communication around strategy
- new approaches to away-days and creative thinking in groups

- learning from other sectors
- networks of facilitators, trainers, consultants

2.3 ICT

Capacitybuilders believes that the outstanding needs in relation to ICT are:

- for all organisations, ensuring that the ICT needs are fully integrated into the strategic planning process as a whole
- For small, new organisations - especially those operating where skill levels and material resources are likely to exclude people involved in voluntary and community action (including social enterprise) from getting on line and accessing information, support and networks, and from running normal small office functions, and Data Protection compliance.

Therefore subsidised (grant-aided) support should be restricted to organisations which are very small and small only.

- **very small organisations <£10,000 p.a.**
- **small organisations >£10,000 <£100,000 p.a.**
- Medium-sized organisations that are >100,000 to £1 million are more able themselves to resource the maintenance and gradual improvement of their systems, but can face ICT challenges, such as step-change investment in hardware, software and skills to provide new and innovative services as well as enabling them to reach audiences they previously have not been able to reach. Work priorities could include:
 - developing and promoting ICT volunteering and circuit rider initiatives as appropriate models of support for third sector organisations. Develop the capacity of circuit riders and provide accredited circuit rider training.
 - a national ICT support franchise – low cost remote and on-site support for stand-alone computers and small networks.
 - enabling (and delivering?) training and resources for specialist ICT and generic infrastructure agencies
 - helping infrastructure agencies develop sustainable ICT support services including pump priming fund
 - Increasing the range of relevant and affordable private sector products and services
- Capacitybuilders is also interested in increasing awareness of ICT's critical role in providing and receiving services for particular groups including people with disabilities and elderly people

- co-producing a series of resources to help frontline and infrastructure groups ensure their ICT is accessible
- supporting projects to develop best practice in work with excluded people

2.4 Mergers, Alliances, Collaboration

- Service delivery collaboration – joint funding bids, joint tendering for public services, integrating services - including cross-sector
- Campaigning together
- Large-small collaboration
- Sharing back office functions
- Mergers – deciding if there’s a fit? The process – through it and beyond
- Absorbing other organisations
- Costs and expertise

2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

- Outcomes and impact
- Setting targets, (aims, objectives, key performance indicators)
- Monitoring and information gathering methods – focus groups, surveys etc.
- Analysis - and presentation of findings
- User involvement in monitoring and evaluation

2.6 Communication

- Internal communications
- Facilitation and mediation
- Participation
- Culture
- Learning organisations
- Knowledge management

THEME 3: WORKFORCE

Development of the skills of both paid third sector staff and volunteers is a generic need for all third sector organisations and is viewed by Capacitybuilders as one of the four strategic theme areas. This theme contains programmes that focus on key audiences for all National Support Services - managers, leaders, and trustees. Capacitybuilders would like to explore how to use this ‘overlap’ to best advantage.

It covers all the disciplines:

- management
- employment policies and practice

- workforce development
- volunteer management
- leadership
- governance

3.1 Management

- lever resources for skills development for managers
- ensure mainstream management training is sector friendly
- widen access to management training/development at all levels, in all roles
- promote the sector as a place to work as a manager and develop a career
- project management
- resources management
- problem solving

3.2 Employment Policies and Practice

- resource/broker good employment practice and current employment law advice that is accessible to front line organisations and infrastructure of all sizes,
- on-line resources and products to support good employment practice
- products and services that support third sector organisations at different stages – employing for the first time, HR skills for general managers
- pro-bono resources and volunteers with e.g. ACAS, REACH
- benchmarking HR management as a key tool to improve employment practice
- enable small organisations to share HR support
- the recruitment of a diverse workforce
- recruitment and retention
- support Personnel and Diversity Forums to identify and share good practice

3.3 Workforce development

- Training and development
- using NOS as cost effective tools for recruiting, managing and developing paid staff, trustees and volunteers
- Reinforcing the sector's profile as an employer with Learning and Skills Council, Sector Skills Councils, Investors in People and learning providers
- Continuing to support SKiLD as the framework for developing the skills and knowledge of advisers in local infrastructure
- Innovative approaches for affordable sharing of skills and best practice
- Lever resources to increase skills of paid staff, volunteers and trustees
- Promoting the use of on-line learning resources and learning networks
- Workforce planning

3.4 Volunteer management

- ensuring that volunteering infrastructure and (other) generic infrastructure are properly meshed at regional, sub-regional and local levels, through appropriate partnerships with consortia and other infrastructure agencies/networks.
- volunteer recruitment campaigns - especially for trustees, and people with particular skills
- support for the establishment of thematic links between volunteering infrastructure and other key networks & agencies. For example, linking volunteering infrastructure with Sport, Health and Social Care, Arts/Culture/Heritage and Refugee, Asylum Seekers and Migrant communities' infrastructure.
- bringing forward proposals jointly with consortia for activity and projects which will bring real benefit to frontline organisations (e.g. training for advisers, infrastructure re volunteer training and development; networks and campaigns, projects)

3.5 Leadership

- developing leadership skills across a wide range of trustees and managers both through the work of the Third Sector Leadership Centre and with other bodies
- establishing leadership development programmes and networks across the sector especially for small and medium sized organisations
- enabling mentoring and coaching programmes for leaders across small, medium and large organisations
- identifying and supporting the leadership needs of infrastructure organisations
- raise investment in leadership development in large organisations
- leading within coalitions and partnerships
- succession planning and talent management
- organisation development and re-structuring

3.6 Governance

- increasing the supply of trustees and board members, with the range of profiles, skills and experiences needed by the third sector through work with the general public and with targeted audiences such as employers
- enhancing the knowledge and skills of board members, senior managers and others involved in governance
- developing a governance learning scheme including accredited learning programmes where appropriate
- promoting, adapting and developing the Trustee Standards and governance code
- enhancing the governance capacity of organisations to deliver their mission, engaging and involving their key stakeholders by ensuring:
 - board policies, systems and processes to ensure good governance
 - the range of organisational structures and their governance characteristics
 - pump-priming networking/learning groups for specific audiences e.g. BME boards
 - developing and promoting new resources on governance where gaps/needs exist.

- ensuring that people providing governance advice, support and training have the resources, knowledge and skills to support VCOs in governance issues, including a competency framework for advisers to structure and inform their governance learning
- research on trusteeship and third sector governance
- working with funders to ensure they take into account the quality of governance of organisations when making funding decisions; provide support for organisations to develop their own governance and fund governance capacity building work.

4. THEME 4 - VOICE

Many people have commented that “ voice, campaigning and leadership” is a real support need for third sector organisations. We accept this view and believe that a strategic theme encompassing advocacy, campaigning and leadership would be of benefit.

Potential Programmes:

1. Campaigning
2. User engagement
3. Engagement with public policy and planning
4. Advocacy
5. Community action

4.1 Campaigning

- Planning campaigns
- Working to influence decision makers locally, regionally and nationally
- Raising public awareness of the multiple roles of the third sector
- Evaluating campaigns
- Campaigning and the law
- Membership and other networks
- Local and national campaigns
- Campaigns and fund-raising

4.2 User engagement

- Participation
- Consultation
- Membership
- User-run and user-led TSOs
- Governance and users
- Co-production

4.3 Engagement with public policy and planning

- Representation arrangements
- Fora and networks
- Building the agenda
- Linking campaigns to engagement
- Independence, influence and service delivery

4.4 Advocacy

- Models of advocacy: self-, citizen-, crisis-, peer-, professional-, and collective-advocacy
- Standards and codes of practice
- Recruitment, training and support of advocates
- Information and consultation
- Related models: befriending, interpreting and professional support.

4.5 Community Action

- Community consultation
- Community groups
- Community transport
- Environmental projects
- LETS/time-banking
- Community volunteering
- Community campaigns
- Parish halls and community centres

APPENDIX 1 – national support services theme input from the consultation

Theme	High priority	Not sure	Low priority
Commissioning & Tender support	152	9	7
Finance	142	22	21
Involvement in LSPs LAAs	131	11	15
Partnerships, collaboration, mergers	122	15	13
Governance	120	26	20
Collaboration with statutory sector	113	14	15
Performance	111	22	21
Workforce Development	111	24	19
HR & Employment support	110	19	19
Volunteering	94	11	30
Campaigning and Advocacy	92	13	25
ICT	83	33	46
Marketing	74	31	21
Social enterprise support	72	18	26
Stronger links	46	25	19
Premises Leasing & management	42	17	46

Existing themes in bold

Thoughts on the above grid and other intelligence:

The above rankings are of course a guide only. This was not a scientific exercise it depended on who attended the various consultation sessions– it depended on who attended the regional consultation sessions and who took time to post their ‘votes’! But it does provide a snapshot to think about.

- One comment made about collaboration and merger as a support need was that it may not be a frequent issue for lots and lots of organisations, but when needed it is very important – either way it attracted a relatively high level of interest. For each significant merger or structured collaboration the resource requirements are high, and therefore it may be best for Capacitybuilders to extend funds that reduce the costs to participants.

- On human resources, emphasis was given equally to employment support and to the more strategic workforce development approach. If the sector gets a Sector Skills Council, the strategic functions will be adequately funded. Capacitybuilders should concentrate on specialist advice on employment and employee relations.
- Despite many challenging comments about Capacitybuilders' apparently supporting public service delivery, the above chart shows that the service most requested was support in responding to commissioning by public sector bodies and in bidding for public service contracts. This was what was meant in D2014 – an advisory and consultancy service to assist third sector organisations even if no grant or loan is required. Support on full-cost recovery would be an essential element of such a service + marketing, maintaining independence, contract negotiation.
- ICT as a support service seems to have significantly lower levels of need/support. The reasons for this are unclear – perhaps skill levels are now more adequate to carry out the normal office functions, or there are a range of valued local and regional services, or perhaps organisations are less concerned about going to a shop or local business for help. Perhaps necessary to focus an ICT National Support Service onto certain issues or parts of the sector.
- The two needs that relate to the sector's participation in the regional/local public domain of policy and strategy (and related funding probably) were both seen as high priorities. It is less clear what sort of 'service' might enable third sector organisations to engage more effectively, but it is certainly a capacity-building issue.
- Volunteering - any infrastructure development objectives in relation to volunteering, necessarily cut across the core function of Volunteering England. Capacitybuilders could only consider certain aspects –such as linking volunteering support activity into other infrastructure networks.
- Campaigning - the initiative created by the Sheila McKechnie Foundation *Connecting Campaigners* offers an excellent first step in strengthening the support for third sector organisations on this crucial aspect of independence and voice. Capacitybuilders has already announced its support on the basis that work will be undertaken in liaison with the campaigns team at NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations)

Please send any views on this paper and how we might proceed to establish national support services to Peter Williams, Acting Strategy and Policy Co-ordinator, Capacitybuilders by close of play, Monday 2 July 2007.

Capacitybuilders – 4 June 2007