White Paper on a Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector

Foreword by an Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern TD.

Voluntary activity forms the very core of all vibrant and inclusive societies. It involves an incredible diversity of types of activity, ranging from the very informal to the highly structured. It can mean anything from occasionally helping out in a local sports club to participation in major national organisations. Particularly in a time of great change in our country, we must work hard to protect and enhance the spirit of voluntary participation and we must see this as a key social goal.

The great strength of voluntary activity is that it emerges organically from communities. It would be wrong for Government to seek to control and be involved in every aspect of voluntary activity, but there is no doubt that it can provide an enabling framework to help this activity. Where this involves direct supports, a delicate balance must be struck between having a relatively light official involvement and maintaining proper accountability.

This White Paper signals a very clear intention of the Government to invest in enabling the voluntary Sector to serve individuals, communities and the country as a whole. It recognises the rights and responsibilities of everybody involved. It provides for a number of concrete initiatives to move the agenda forward.

I look forward to the implementation of its recommendations and the contribution which it will make in the coming years.

Foreword by Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs, Dermot Ahern TD.

The publication of this White Paper marks a fundamental change in official attitudes to support for Community and Voluntary groups.

This Government is strongly committed to building an inclusive society in which Community and Voluntary groups can play a vital role. The White Paper contains a wide range of practical measures to ensure better support for Community and Voluntary groups.

The main features include:

- Formal recognition of the role of the Community and Voluntary sector in contributing to the creation of a vibrant, participative democracy and civil society.

- Introduction of mechanisms in all relevant public service areas for consultation with Community and Voluntary sector groups and to allow the communities they represent have an input to policy-making.

- Multi-annual funding to become the norm for agreed priority services and community development activities. This will mean a major move away from the present unsatisfactory and *ad hoc* funding schemes experienced by many Community and Voluntary groups.

- Designation of Voluntary Activity Units in relevant Government Departments to support the relationship with the Community and Voluntary sector.

- Holding of regular policy fora by relevant Departments and agencies to allow for wider consultation and participation by the Community and Voluntary sector in the policy-making process.

- 'Best practice' guidelines in relation to consultation by statutory agencies with the Community and Voluntary sector and in relation to funding mechanisms and systems, to which all Government Departments and statutory agencies will be expected to adhere.

- A strong Government commitment to follow up and implement **all** the

decisions in the White Paper. An Implementation and Advisory Group, drawn from relevant Departments, statutory agencies and the Community and Voluntary sector itself, is being established to oversee the implementation of the White Paper decisions and to pursue other issues that arise.

- Transfer of responsibility for charity regulatory matters and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests to the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. I am committed to ensuring that comprehensive legislation on regulation of charities and their fundraising is produced as a priority. The sector will be consulted in the development of the legislation through the Implementation and Advisory Group.

- An ongoing review of funding programmes and schemes, to be carried out by the Implementation and Advisory Group working under the aegis of the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, to bring about a more coherent and user-friendly system of funding and support. **The long-term aim is to change from the existing highly-fragmented funding and support system to one based on the concept of single line funding and single line reporting mechanisms**.

- An immediate cash injection of £7 million for

  - National networks and other federations and for Community and Voluntary infrastructure and supports;

  - Support for the Community and Voluntary Fora established in each city and county in the context of the setting up of County and City Development Boards;

  - A Research Programme which will include quantifying the full extent of Community and Voluntary activity in Ireland, its contribution to social development, to the economy and to employment.

The White Paper delivers a range of practical measures to improve statutory support for the Community and Voluntary sector and to strengthen the relationship between the two Sectors. In my personal view, the most significant impact the White Paper will have over the long term will be that it is based on a strong philosophy of support for the Community and Voluntary sector as an essential requirement to the health of our society and our democracy.

This Government is making it clear by publication of the White Paper that we have

moved far beyond the attitude that statutory agencies fund voluntary organisations merely for utilitarian reasons, i.e. to provide services that the State cannot or will not deliver directly itself because of resource constraints. We see the Community and Voluntary sector as essential partners in economic and social development. Democracy is not just about getting a day out to vote at elections every few years. It is also about participating in society and making one's own personal contribution to social life, to the development of local communities, or to the welfare of society as a whole or particular disadvantaged groups within it.

I would like to place on record my appreciation of the contribution made to the development of the White Paper by the members of the White Paper Steering Group. I would also like to thank everybody up and down the country who participated in the consultation process and made their views known. It is my hope that those of you who were part of this process will find that what you had to say was listened to and that the issues that are important to your organisation or group are addressed in the White Paper.

GLOSSARY

ADM	Area Development Management Ltd.
CDB	County/City Development Board
CDP	Community Development Programme
CE	Community Employment
Comhairle	Combines the NSSB with certain functions of the National Rehabilitation Board and responsible for the provision of independent information, advice, support and advocacy services for all
CPA	Combat Poverty Agency
EU	European Union
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Saothair - National Training and Employment Authority
FOI	Freedom of Information Act
IDPC	Interdepartmental Policy Committee
INOU	Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
ISP	Integrated Services Process
IT	Information Technology
LEADER	Liaisons entre actions de developpement de l'economie rurale
LDP	Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development
MABS	Money Advice and Budgeting Service
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NCI	National College of Ireland
NDP	National Development Plan

NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSSB	National Social Service Board (now Comhairle)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
SPC	Strategic Policy Committee
VEC	Vocational Educational Committee

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Executive Summary

Chapter 1 - Overview

Voluntary activity is an essential sign of a society where people are concerned for each other. The Government recognises the worth of every type of volunteerism and voluntary activity and does not believe that it should seek to regulate or be involved with every type of activity. The specific purpose of this White Paper is to deal with the formal interaction between the State and Community and Voluntary sector. **(1.1)**

Voluntary activity spans the whole range of social activity and is a vital element of democracy. A strong democracy enhances and protects the capacity of citizens to participate. In a strong democracy people regard the State, not as the answer to every problem, but as just one player among others. All the others - the private Sector, trade unions, religious organisations, non-governmental organisations, sporting organisations, local community and residents' associations – play a pivotal role in democratic life and in continued economic and social progress. **(1.2)**

Voluntary activity has tremendous potential to foster reconciliation and mutual understanding between the two communities in Northern Ireland and between North and South. The Government will continue to support and encourage such work. Cross-border linkages have the potential to deepen our understanding of each other. **(1.3)**

In the Government's vision of society, the ability of the Community and Voluntary sector to provide channels for the active involvement and participation of citizens is fundamental. **(1.4)**
An active Community and Voluntary sector contributes to a democratic, pluralist

society, provides opportunities for the development of decentralised and participative structures and fosters a climate in which the quality of life can be enhanced for all.

This is a key point. The Government regards statutory support of the Community and Voluntary sector as having an importance to the well-being of our society that goes beyond 'purchase' of services by this or that statutory agency. The Government's vision of society is one which encourages people and communities to look after their own needs - very often in partnership with statutory agencies - but without depending on the State to meet all needs. **(1.5)**

The importance and role of voluntary activity to the well-being of society and democracy underpins the Government's approach in this White Paper. **(1.6 - 1.7)**

2001 is UN International Year of Volunteers. The Government is particularly keen to encourage new volunteers to come forward and to foster a culture of support for volunteering in schools and third level institutions. As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, a National Committee on Volunteering will be established. **(1.8)**

Chapter 2 – Context and Background to White Paper

Introduction **(2.1 – 2.4)**

A Green Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity was published in May 1997 with a view to initiating a consultation process with the Community and Voluntary sector. A Steering Group was then brought together to advise and assist the Department on the consultation process. The membership of the Group is given in Appendix 1. An extensive consultation process took place. This led up to a National Consultative Seminar in March 2000.

Main Issues that have emerged in the consultation process. **(2.5)**

The following are the main issues that have emerged in the consultation process:

- Defining the Statutory, Community and Voluntary sectors and their roles
- Nature of the relationship between the sectors
- Principles and structures underpinning that relationship, including issues of consultation and representation
- Need for shared and defined vision on the parameters of the relationship between the two Sectors
- Role of volunteering
- Funding and support for the Community and Voluntary sector
- Implementation and monitoring of White Paper decisions

The White Paper seeks to formulate a coherent strategy and to identify the policy responses at national, regional and local level, which will most effectively address the issues raised during the consultation process. **(2.6)**

The aim of the White Paper is to **(2.7)**

- **Describe the current context in which the Community and Voluntary sector operates, and the range and diversity of the sector;**
- **Set out a cohesive framework of support for the Community and Voluntary sector across Government Departments and Agencies;**
- **Promote sound principles and best practice models for the effective functioning of the State/Community/ Voluntary Sector relationship; and**
- **Make recommendations across a number of areas relevant both to the support of voluntary activity generally and to the framework (e.g. funding, enabling, administrative) necessary to support and deepen the relationship.**

Social and economic context in which the Paper is being published **(2.8)**

At national and at international level, there is a major shift taking place in the way in which decisions are made and influenced (the term 'governance' is often used in this context). Far-reaching economic, technological and other changes are creating unprecedented opportunities for many people, but increased insecurity and inequality for others. In many countries pockets of affluence co-exist with areas of high unemployment, inadequate skills provision, low incomes, environmental deterioration etc.

Civil society is coming to play a more active role in shaping change and addressing needs. This is seen as follows: **(2.9)**

- A more active role for civil society in adopting innovative approaches and technologies to mobilise action at both the policy and practical level;
- More co-ordinated and efficient approaches within and between Government institutions (e.g. the drive for more integrated approaches);
- Increased dialogue and consultation between Governments and non-governmental organisations; and
- Greater transparency and accountability on the part of all the actors in terms of their activities, their priorities and outcomes.

Questions being asked about this process of change include the following: **(2.10)**

- Will civil society be enhanced or undermined by the growth in new forms of governance?
- Can the capacity of civil society be developed to play an effective role?
- How will these organisations evolve to ensure that they remain representative?
- Can the institutions of Government rise to the challenge of managing complex cross-Sectoral relationships?

A parallel development is a trend where Governments look to the Voluntary Sector and to **(2.11)**

volunteers to play a larger role in the direct delivery of welfare services. The United Nations World Summit on Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) **Final Declaration and Programme of Action**, made reference to the importance of "*promoting socially useful volunteer work and allocating appropriate resources to support such work*".

A recent European survey showed that more than one quarter of people in Europe over 15 years of age engage in voluntary activity, over half of them on a regular basis. The study notes that there is a strong 'social welfare component' in volunteering in Ireland. There is also a high input of volunteer time in fundraising for organisations. **(2.12)**

In a number of European countries, the voluntary organisations have led the way in establishing programmes, identifying needs and setting much of the welfare agenda. A number of countries have legislation to govern regulation and organisation of the sector. This is largely not the case in Ireland, except in the case of recognition of charities for tax concession purposes. **(2.13 – 2.14)**

Some countries trace the origins of state recognition of volunteering back to the adoption of a constitution recognising the right of association. The Irish Constitution recognises the right to associate. **Overall, however, there is an underdeveloped legal and policy framework in Ireland for the support of voluntary work and the contexts in which it takes place. The Government is committed to dealing with this situation and this White Paper is the start of such a process.** **(2.15)**

Despite a dramatic improvement in Irish economic performance, real economic and social issues remain to be resolved. State agencies are increasingly aware of the need to consult with local groups in developing appropriate responses and to involve them in delivery of such responses. The Integrated Services Process is a practical initiative to develop best practice in an integrated response to multi-dimensional problems of need. Other integration initiatives include the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs' Family Services Project and the Springboard initiative operated under the aegis of the Department **(2.16 – 2.17)**

of Health and Children.

(2.18)

Re-thinking Our Vision

The rapidly changing economic and social situation in Ireland requires serious consideration on how to influence society to make it socially and economically inclusive, to make it a place where equality of treatment, opportunity and access, and respect for the autonomy of the individual are the norm. There is a need to create a more participatory democracy where active citizenship is fostered.

(2.19)

Key Principles Underlying the Vision

The process of providing a voice for all our people poses challenges both to the State and to the Community and Voluntary sector. Although the solution envisaged is not a centralised solution, it is based on the central allocation of resources within a facilitative and enabling framework which promotes the growth of 'civil society'. It requires commitment from Government to be an active partner in the process. But it also requires recognition that Government is only one of the players - all must play an active part. The following organising principles underpin the type of framework we envisage:

Active Citizenship

- Active citizenship refers to the active role of people, communities and voluntary organisations in decision-making which directly affects them. This extends the concept of formal citizenship and democratic society from one of basic civil, political and social and economic rights to one of direct democratic participation and responsibility.

  As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, the Government will institute a new Electoral Participation Initiative.

Resource Allocation and Promotion of Equality of Opportunity

- Some groups tend to be excluded from opportunities and resources available to the rest of society. Underlying structural causes for such exclusion (e.g. long-term unemployment, educational disadvantage) must be addressed.

Helping people to participate in issues which affect them

- There is a need to develop positive action programmes to target groups which are most marginalised and to support them to become involved in issues and concerns affecting themselves and their communities.

Respect for individual freedom in the pursuit of social goals

- It is important to foster a culture and society which respects the autonomy of the individual. This means creating a climate which supports individuals and groups to make things happen rather than have things happen to them.

Promoting and Strengthening Social Dialogue

- Individuals and communities must be facilitated to speak about the problems affecting them and be part of the practical response.

- The promotion and strengthening of social dialogue across society involves the State developing partnerships with a wide range of bodies and organisations, including not only Community and Voluntary interests, but also employer representatives, trade unions and farming organisations.

EU Developments **(2.20 – 2.25)**

The importance of combating social exclusion is recognised at EU level, as is the role of the Community and Voluntary sector. A White Paper on the sector is to be published by the EU Commission. The European Social Fund regulations provide that Member States are required to make "a reasonable amount" of their overall Social Fund allocations to community groups and NGOs. The Communication **Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations in Europe** refers to the increasingly important role that voluntary organisations play and recommended that voluntary organisations should be given the opportunity to be involved in planning services and policy-making with public authorities at all levels. It also states that:

> "*Relationships between voluntary organisations and public authorities should be clearer and new partnerships developed.*"

The impact of the considerable emphasis placed on the involvement of NGOs in the design, delivery and monitoring of EU funded programmes in Ireland is significant. The importance of this in contributing to the enhancement of social partnership cannot be underestimated. The vital contribution of civil society to solving social and economic **(2.26 - 2.27)**

progress is also recognised in the designation of 2001 as International Year of Volunteers by the United Nations.

History and role of the Community and Voluntary sector in Ireland

Community and Voluntary sector - Historical perspective **(2.28)**

While recognising the diversity of groups and interests involved, the term 'Sector' is used as a convenient description and form of reference in this White Paper.

The Community and Voluntary sector has a long and valued tradition of meeting social needs in Ireland. The important role of the sector is reflected in the substantial amount of funding - almost **IR£ 1 billion** in 1999 (**EURO 1.267** billion) - which it received from the Irish State and EU sources. **(2.29)**

The sector is sometimes seen as comprising two discrete subsections - a community Sector and a voluntary Sector. In practice, the two are opposite ends of a continuum and many organisations combine features of both. **(2.30 – 2.31)**

In Ireland the sector not only complements and supplements State provision, but is the dominant provider in particular areas. The Church-based education system - at primary and secondary level - and voluntary hospitals predate the foundation of the State. Many services have been initiated and run by religious organisations. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is one of the largest voluntary organisations, with 1,000 local branches comprising approximately 10,000 members, active not only in welfare services, but also enabling people to become self-sufficient and raising the structural inequalities in society. **(2.32)**

In the 1950s the State began to play a wider role in funding voluntary social welfare provision and voluntary activity. The Health Act 1953 introduced *Section 65* grants. **(2.33)**

Community development also has historical roots, as typified by the co-operative **(2.34**

movement. Muintir na Tíre, founded in the 1930s, also stresses the importance of self-reliance and local initiative. The 1970s saw the development of community empowerment and involvement with self-help initiatives aimed at disadvantaged groups. EU funded anti-poverty programmes were instrumental in this regard. Community development is underpinned by a vision of self-help and community self-reliance. An impressive infrastructure of community and local development has been built up in Ireland. For example, the Community Development Programme now has a strong network of some 90 projects all over the country. Many community groups are issue-based, rather than area-based. Anti-poverty networks and other national level Community and Voluntary sector organisations have had a significant input into national social partnership agreements. At EU level, their equivalent NGO networks have been active in influencing the development of social policy. **-2.37)**

Changing Role of Religious Organisations **(2.38)**

The role of religious organisations in relation to the Community and Voluntary sector is changing. This has created gaps that are increasingly being filled by the statutory sector and other voluntary organisations. Religious personnel have increased their role in, for example, encouraging and advocating State expansion in provision and support for voluntary organisations.

Recent developments in the Community and Voluntary sector **(2.39)**

The sector has changed considerably since the early 1990s. The Community and Voluntary sector is active in

- delivery of essential services
- advocacy and provision of information
- contributing to policy-making
- national and local partnership arenas

- undertaking research
- creation of opportunities for members and participants to access education, training, income and employment opportunities.

Recent decades have also seen growth in voluntary social service and independent information-giving organisations. **A key challenge for the future for these groups is to harness their collective energy in order to maximise their impact, both at policy development level (e.g. in relation to welfare/health issues), and at the level of their individual client base.** **(2.40 – 2.41)**

Definition **(2.42)**

Faughnan (1990) offers the following broad classification of Community and Voluntary organisations:

- Mutual support and self-help organisations;
- Local development associations;
- Resource and service providing associations;
- Representative and co-ordinating organisations; and
- Campaigning and advocacy organisations.

The EU Commission suggests that 'Voluntary' organisations have a number of characteristics, including that they are: **(2.43)**

- Distinguished from informal or *ad hoc*, purely social, or familial groupings by having some degree, however vestigial, of formal or institutional existence
- Non-profit distributing
- Independent, in particular of Government and other public authorities

- Must be managed in what is sometimes called a 'disinterested' manner - in the Irish context this particularly relates to containing some element of voluntary, unpaid participation.

- Must be active to some degree in the public arena and their activity must be aimed, at least in part, at contributing to the public good.

The Commission also makes a useful distinction between different types of organisations based on their primary activity: **(2.44)**

- Service delivery or provision to provide to their members or clients, services such as social services, health care, training, information, advice or support

- Advocacy: i.e. organisations whose purpose is to campaign, lobby and otherwise argue on behalf of some cause or group with the aim of changing public perception or policy

- Self-help or mutual aid: organisations typically formed by groups of individuals with some common interest or need in order to provide mutual help, information and support and co-operation

- Resource and co-ordination: so-called 'intermediary bodies' which co-ordinate the activities of, or provide information and support to, either individual organisations working in a particular field or to the sector in general. Such organisations fulfil the important function of providing an interface between the sector and public authorities.

These classifications are useful in that they illustrate the diversity of organisational types making up the sector. However, any classification system only partially recognises the wide variations of size, structure, or culture embraced in each category. **(2.45)**

While the discussion in Ireland commonly refers to the Community and Voluntary sector, some sources prefer to look at the sector as a component part of a wider 'non-profit Sector'. The non-profit Sector can be defined as the sector that is non-market and non-state. It also spans a range of specialised organisations and institutions, such as voluntary public hospitals, major mental handicap organisations, major sporting organisations, credit unions, trade unions, political parties, employer organisations, educational institutions and **(2.46)**

church-based institutions. **The principles and decisions contained in the White Paper will apply to the support of voluntary activity and to developing the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary sector and the State generally. The specific recommendations will apply to specific parts of the Community and Voluntary sector, as relevant.** A pragmatic approach to the issue of the definition of the sector is necessary, given the range of Departments and agencies that engage in relationships with a wide variety of Community and Voluntary organisations at different levels.

Employment in Community and Voluntary sector

(2.47 – 2.49)

The constitution and scale of the non-profit Sector in Ireland is discussed in **Uncovering the Non-profit Sector in Ireland: Its Economic Value and Significance**, Donoghue et al NCI 1999. The study shows that, in 1995, paid employment in the Community and Voluntary sector amounted to 3 per cent of the non-agricultural workforce, i.e. 32,136 paid employees. Volunteering within the sector came to 31,919 full-time equivalents. Social services accounted for location of 42.3% of volunteers. Some 52% of the sector's funding comes from public (State and EU) sources. The report concluded that the Irish non-profit Sector is economically significant and compares favourably to non-profit Sectors of other countries.

(2.50)

For the purposes of the White Paper, the Faughnan description (para. 2.42) is the working approach employed. However, there are huge differences in scale in the sector, from small community projects on the one hand to large organisations representing particular groups. Nonetheless, there are many shared values and identified needs, and the White Paper will set in train an agenda for change which will hopefully enable these values to be strengthened and meet a range of the needs.

(2.51 – 2.52)

The Government will commission, during 2001, a programme of research which will include quantifying the full extent of Community and Voluntary activity in Ireland, its contribution to social development, to the economy and to employment. The Government is making an allocation of £400,000 available for this purpose. The research

programme will also support work that examines the Irish Community and Voluntary sector in an international context and identifies best practice abroad in relation to governance and legal issues such as incorporation, registration and charitable status. The findings of the research programme will inform the debate on the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

There is a need for a mechanism to oversee the detailed implementation of the decisions announced in the White Paper and to advise the Government on an ongoing basis in relation to other issues that come up for resolution. **An Implementation and Advisory Group will be established (see Chapter 6).** **(2.53 – 2.55)**

Additional funding for Community and Voluntary sector supports **(2.56 - 2.57)**

The Government is committed to continued support for the sector. **The Government is allocating £7 million to enhance the capacity of the sector to organise itself at national level, to foster the development of additional support and training within the sector and to further support volunteering**. Detailed information on these additional funds is set out in Chapters 4 and 5 and summary details are contained in Table 2.

Chapter 3 – Structures Underpinning the Relationship

The role of government **(3.2 – 3.5)**

The basic law of the State is the Constitution, **Bunreacht na hÉireann**. In accordance with the Constitution, all powers of government derive from the people. It is the Government's responsibility to determine priorities in the allocation of resources. Ministers and civil servants are accountable to the Oireachtas and to the citizen. Public Servants in local authorities and other local or regional agencies are directly responsible to their elected representatives or boards. Ministers are accountable in a very direct and personal way for their decisions and the work of their Departments. Ministers have channels of

communication and information direct from the citizen and thus are in an especially good position to reflect and distil a wide range of opinion and demands coming from grass roots level.

It is the Government that is ultimately solely responsible for making key decisions on social and economic policy issues – no matter how extensive a process of prior consultation that may have taken place. However, the context in which these constitutionally-based powers and responsibilities are exercised is increasingly one of social partnership. This White Paper develops and makes more explicit the participation of the Community and Voluntary sector in partnership and consultation mechanisms, within the overall constitutional and legal framework that governs public administration. **(3.6 – 3.7)**

The changing face of the Statutory sector **(3.8 – 3.12)**

The Public Service is undergoing major changes. The Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) requires each Government Department to examine and review its performance under three main headings:

- The contribution it could make to national development
- The quality of services provided to the public
- The provision of value for money to the taxpayer

This involves the production by each Department of a **Strategy Statement**, setting out its **Mission Statement, Values and High Level Goals**. The Strategy Statements can be seen as a link between Government policy and its implementation. The **Public Service Management Act** deals with the provision of quality services, the establishment of the performance management system, the implementation of revised financial management systems and the business planning process. Other legislative changes with a profound impact on our system of public administration include the Committees of the House of the Oireachtas Act 1997 and the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995.

The role of the Community and Voluntary sector **(3.13 – 3.14)**

The Government recognises that the Community and Voluntary sector plays a crucial role in a mature democratic society, quite separate to and independent of the institutions of Government. The Community and Voluntary sector has a special role and potential to:

- Help create a vibrant civil and active society in which individuals are encouraged and enabled to participate fully. This is an essential component of a mature democracy;
- Respond to pressing social needs quickly, directly and effectively;
- Pioneer new approaches to service provision and local and community development;
- Improve the effectiveness of services through feed-back and monitoring of services by consumers and users;
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to participate and develop skills;
- Create employment opportunities through the provision of services and through the activities of community development projects, thus contributing to community infrastructure;
- Foster self-help and enable people to become active participants in shaping their future;
- Identify needs and appropriate responses tailored to the specific needs of local communities and neighbourhoods and specific communities of interests;
- Offer new solutions where conventional approaches have failed;
- Enable people who are excluded to become involved in the regeneration process in their own communities and at a wider societal level.

The relationship between the State and the sector **(3.15)**

The Government is not, of necessity, a player in voluntary activity and many voluntary organisations do not have a formal relationship with the statutory sector. The main areas where there is a working relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector include:

- Communicating consumers' views and requirements
- Developing new services to meet emerging needs
- Advocacy, lobbying and campaigning
- Inputs to policy development and the planning of economic and social policy or programmes
- Contracting delivery of services
- Establishing good practice
- Monitoring and evaluation of the work of specific programmes
- Negotiating and developing the sector's relationship with the State.

Participation can be defined as an exchange between citizens and government, between those who make policy and people affected by policy choices. Participation should lead to more successful outcomes. Its precise form is shaped by the problem at hand. It is important to balance the democratic base of elected governments, since no group other than elected representatives has a mandate to speak for the whole of society, with the benefits of participation in the achievement of a wider consensus. **(3.16 – 3.18)**

The goal of the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector is to achieve the common aims of both Sectors, while respecting the separate roles and responsibilities of each and acknowledging the difference between consultation, negotiation and decision-making. Both flexibility and realism are required. **(3.19 – 3.20)**

Mechanisms that facilitate consultation between the sector and State bodies **(3.21 –**

The developing and widening role of the Community and Voluntary sector has led to the

establishment of a wide range of mechanisms for consultation and involvement in the policy-making process: **3.22)**

1) National representative structures;

2) The Community and Voluntary Pillar, the mechanism created to participate in the negotiations leading to **Partnership 2000** and its successor, the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**;

3) Consultation mechanisms set up by individual Departments and agencies which involve the sector;

4) Local Development Agencies (e.g. Area-based Partnerships);

5) New arrangements emerging from the ongoing process of local government reform, including County Development Boards and local community fora;

6) Regional bodies;

7) National consultative bodies (NESF and NESC) on which the sector is represented alongside the other social partner and statutory interests;

8) The National Anti-Poverty Strategy.

National representative structures **(3.23 – 3.24)**

Sectoral organisations are now well developed in Ireland and there are many co-ordinating bodies, sometimes referred to as federations, umbrella bodies or networks. There has been a debate about the possible need for a national organisation to represent the Community and Voluntary sector as a whole. It may well be that given the diversity of the Community and Voluntary sector it is appropriate for it to be organised along Sectoral lines. On the other hand, there may be a case for an umbrella body which can pull the various strands together. This is an issue for consideration and resolution by the sector itself, rather than by Government.

The **Community and Voluntary Pillar** represents a wide range of Community and Voluntary organisations which was brought together in the context of the need for a structure and voice for the sector in the **Partnership 2000** and the **Programme for** **(3.25 – 3.27)**

Prosperity and Fairness discussions. The Pillar is a model of how the voice of disadvantaged Sectors can be represented at national agreement level. There has been some debate within the sector about the possible widening of the range of Community and Voluntary sector participants in the national partnership arena, including the question of bringing together other platforms with a specific focus (e.g. housing, disability, environmental issues) for this purpose. Another recent development is the emergence of **The Wheel**. This is a movement for groups and individuals who wish to explore ways and means in which the Community and Voluntary sector might come together.

The question of representative structures is one for the sector itself. The Government recognises and welcomes the diversity of the sector and recognises the right of the sector to develop structures to reflect the diversity of the sector. This has clear strengths, but also poses some difficulties. Where generally-accepted representative groups exist, nominations to Working Groups, etc. will be called for, as relevant, from these groups. However, Government reserve the right to appoint individuals who have particular expertise, knowledge of an area, etc., particularly where it is clear that there is no representative structure, or where it is clear that there is no public agreement on a way forward on an issue. **(3.28)**

Consultation mechanisms set up by individual Departments and agencies which involve the sector **(3.29 – 3.32)**

A range of advisory and monitoring committees that give the sector a voice in relation to policy development or management of particular programmes exist at both national and regional/local level. However, not all voluntary organisations wish to work closely with the State in consultative fora. Some regard it as a mark of their independence to have little or no contact with State agencies. Mutuality of interest is a cornerstone in this whole area, with consultation and participation where necessary and desirable, rather than for its own sake. The Government will continue to encourage the independence of the sector – including by promotion of additional, non-governmental sources of funding, e.g. from the business Sector.

The Establishment of Voluntary Activity Units in Certain Government Departments **(3.33)**

It is important that Government Departments which have significant contact with the Community and Voluntary sector adopt an enabling approach and that they adopt community development principles of participation and inclusion in their work**. In this context, a Voluntary Activity Support Unit or Units will be designated in relevant Government Departments.** Such Units already exist in the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (Community and Voluntary Services section and the Family Affairs Unit). Units discharging similar functions also exist in other Departments. For example, a Unit has also been established in the Housing Division of the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

Local Development Agencies **(3.34 – 3.36)**

These opened up new opportunities and challenges for the Community and Voluntary sector. A key to their success is that they have been highly innovative in their working methods and in preparing flexible, targeted and integrated responses to local needs. However, there is a strong need for greater integration of structures and services and the Government has now commenced a move towards an integrated local Government and local development system.

Local Government reform/County Development Boards **(3.37 – 3.39)**

A broadly-representative Development Board (CDB) is being established in each city and county local authority. The CDB will develop a Strategy for Social, Economic and Cultural Development in full partnership with all local interests. A Director of Community and Enterprise and support staff have been appointed.

Community and Voluntary Fora have been set up to select the sector's representatives on the Board and supporting groups. These Fora also have the potential to link with State bodies outside the local government area. Financial resources are made available so that the full potential of the Fora can be developed. **A sum of £1 million per annum is being made available for this purpose.** Agencies will, where appropriate, be encouraged to consult with the local fora where seeking feedback or input in relation to their policies or initiatives. **(3.40 – 3.43)**

Regionally-Based Bodies **(3.44 – 3.47)**

These include the Western Development Commission and the new Regional Assemblies for the Border, Midlands and Western Region and the Eastern and Southern Region set up in the context of the National Development Plan (NDP). Regional bodies such as these have considerable potential to foster greater collaboration and consultation between statutory agencies and Community and Voluntary groups. The Western Development Commission is responsible for promoting the economic and social development of the Western Region (the Counties of Connacht, plus Clare and Donegal). The Western Development Commission has an important co-ordinating role in relation to public and private bodies operating in the Region.

National consultative bodies (NESF and NESC) in which the sector participates as a social partner **(3.48 – 3.52)**

The National Economic and Social Council provides a forum for discussion of the efficient development of the national economy, the achievement of social justice and also has a role

in advising the Government. The National Economic and Social Forum contributes to the formation of a wider national consensus on social and economic policy initiatives, particularly in relation to unemployment. Membership of both includes representatives of the Community and Voluntary sector. The Government has indicated our intention to put these two organisations on a statutory basis within a new Office for National Economic and Social Development.

National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) **(3.53 – 3.57)**

Consultation with an involvement of the Community and Voluntary sector was a central feature of the development of the NAPS. The NAPS targets are being reviewed at present and a number of developments in its implementation are being planned. The Government is committed to continuing this process of participation and consultation in the development, ongoing implementation and review of NAPS.

Further mechanisms for broadening the consultation **(3.58 – 3.60)**

The Government is keen to widen the opportunities for individuals working in Community and Voluntary groups to participate in the process of influencing policy. In addition to the mechanisms outlined above, relevant Departments and agencies will undertake to hold regular policy fora in future to allow for wider consultation and participation in the policy-making process. It is proposed that such policy fora will be held on particular theme issues (e.g. childcare, the arts). The Government expects that relevant Departments and agencies will take the lead in organising such fora. An example is the series of Family Fora
for Community and Voluntary groups currently being undertaken by the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs.

Government Departments and State Agencies will ensure that there are administrative arrangements in place to underpin the effective functioning of the working relationship. Each Department and Agency will outline its role and future plans that relate to the sector and publish information on a regular basis. **(3.61)**

(3.62)

Best Practice in consultation

Government Departments and agencies will adhere to the best practice guidelines in relation to consultation by statutory agencies with the sector set out in **Appendix 3**.

Principles that should inform the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary sector and the State **(3.63)**

The following are a set of principles or commitments that emerged from the wide-spread consultation process leading up to publication of this White Paper. The Government suggests that these should be seen as basic principles informing the relationship between the State and the sector.

Joint Principles applying to both the Statutory sector and the Community and Voluntary sector.

1 Both Sectors value openness, accountability and transparency in the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

2 Services and programmes will be informed by the principles of respect for the individual's dignity, privacy and confidentiality. They will also be informed by the rights of users to quality services that are accessible to them, e.g. people with disabilities. Services and programmes should have regard for commitments under the Constitution, EU and International Treaties and Conventions.

3 There is a shared commitment by both the State and the sector to ensure the involvement of consumers and people who avail of services in the planning, delivery, management and evaluation of policy and programmes. This applies at all levels: national, regional and local.

4 There is a commitment by the State and the sector to focus on the needs of the most disadvantaged.

5 The sector and the State are committed to paying particular attention to the needs of groups experiencing discrimination, especially those named in Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty.

6 There is a commitment to achieving equality of opportunity, access, treatment by

both the State and the sector and to the development of mechanisms to do this. This includes the commitment to affirmative action for particular target groups.

7 There is a joint commitment relating to fostering co-operation and the co-ordination within and across each Sector as well as between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

8 There is a commitment on the part of both the State and the sector to provide access to, and to share, information relevant to the pursuit of shared objectives.

9 The State and the sector commit themselves to carrying out regular monitoring and evaluation of their individual actions and of the co-operation between them.

10 The State and the sector each recognise their mutual right to constructively critique each other's actions and policies.

11 There is a commitment on the part of both the State and the sector to create and support the appropriate mechanisms, institution and conduits to enable the State to relate to the sector and its component parts.

12 There is a commitment to developing mutual understanding of the culture and operating principles of each Sector and to take practical steps to achieve this. Both Sectors commit themselves to using working methods that are flexible and efficient in the context of the growing demands and range of tasks posed by modern society.

Principles Informing the State

1 The State recognises and validates the sector as a core component of a vibrant civil society and the effort to build a broader, more participative and more accountable democracy in Ireland.

2 The State commits itself to respect the autonomy and diversity of the Community and Voluntary sector and acknowledges its role as a legitimate social partner. This relates to a variety of partnership arenas. In particular, the State recognises that Community and Voluntary groups, who providing services or undertake community or local development work with statutory funding, have a right to be consulted about policy in relation to the design and delivery of services/programmes.

3 The State recognises and welcomes the diversity of the sector.

4 The State acknowledges the right of the sector to organise and represent itself.

5 The State acknowledges the role of the sector in inputting to policy-making and the pursuit of common objectives. This includes proposed legislation,

development of relevant policies (i.e. policy areas of immediate interest and having an impact on the work of both), monitoring of existing policies and consultations with end-users of public services. The State will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to give effect to this.

Principles informing the Community and Voluntary sector

1 The sector recognises and values its diversity as well as recognising and valuing its commonly held features. Appropriate structures to reflect this should be developed.

2 The sector will continually develop itself as a Sector, enhancing communication and building co-operation between its component parts.

3 The sector will maintain its ethos as a Sector distinct from the State, albeit acknowledging a role in supplying services on contract from the State.

4 The sector is accountable for any resources received from the Exchequer, EU or private sources.

5 The sector will engage in work and actions designed to impact at policy level.

6 The sector recognises that public authorities as statutory bodies have legal responsibilities in delivering services.

Chapter 4 – Enabling the sector

The Community and Voluntary sector is a very diverse Sector, made up of very many separate groups and organisations of widely differing size, constitution, resources and focus, working at local, regional or national level. This diversity demands a flexible and nuanced response**.** Aside from funding, which is discussed in Chapter 5, the task of **enabling the sector** encompasses the following distinct elements: **(4.1 – 4.3)**

Technical Supports

- Provision of direct supports to the sector by Departments, specialised national agencies and local statutory agencies

- Provision of dedicated support structures for local groups and projects participating in certain funding programmes (e.g. the Community Development Programme

regional and specialist support agencies) and the encouragement of the emergence of other voluntary Sector-based training and support services for the wider Sector

Volunteering

- Support and fostering of volunteering

Legal and regulatory issues

- A supportive legal and regulatory framework

The enormous growth in the Community and Voluntary sector in recent years has created increased needs for training and other technical supports to enable groups to do their work more effectively. The precise technical support needs of individual voluntary organisations and community groups will vary depending on the focus of the specific group and/or its stage of development. The range of supports needed within the sector can be categorised as follows: **(4.4 – 4.5)**

- Management and organisational development and personal/professional development of staff
- Support for the relationships with statutory agencies
- Support for networking
- Support for the role of contributing to policy formation, including research
- Evaluation and review
- Support for volunteers and volunteering
- Training and support in community development skills and in the involvement and participation of the most marginalised
- Support for information dissemination, to the public, opinion and policy-makers and to membership, as may be relevant
- Production of resource materials and provision of technical advice

Primary responsibility for identification of training and support needs rests with individual groups and organisations in the sector themselves. Just as not all voluntary activity will, or **(4.6 – 4.7)**

should, be funded by the State, it follows that the training and support needs of all Community and Voluntary sector organisations should not be met either by direct statutory provision or by grant aid. However, the approach to funding set out in **Chapter 5** will ensure that resources are available across a wide range of Community and Voluntary organisations for training and support needs, including the vital area of training and supporting volunteers.

Training of statutory personnel **(4.8)**

Both statutory agencies and Community and Voluntary groups should ensure that relevant staff have an understanding of the ways in which the sector works and the ethos and statutory framework that shape their roles.

Direct support **(4.9)**

Many Health Boards, Local Authorities, VECs and other agencies employ development staff to support voluntary organisations working in their respective fields. This direct support in kind and staff resources is enormously important.

In addition to the supports provided by local and regional agencies, two statutory agencies, Comhairle (formerly the NSSB) and the Combat Poverty Agency, as well as ADM, an EU-funding intermediary body, provide support, including training, advice, resource materials and assistance in development of policy responses, to the sector. The three organisations will be asked to come together to develop specific proposals for the further development of such supports in ways which will ensure clarity and definition in respect of the roles of each agency and which will maximise synergy between them. The Government is committed to strengthening the specialist technical supports that the State provides for the Community and Voluntary sector, including further supporting the services which have been developed by the above agencies. **(4.10 – 4.11)**

Structures set up to support projects participating in specific programmes (such as the Community Development Programme and the Women's Education Initiative) have proved **(4.12 –**

4.16)

to be a very successful model of providing training, organisational development and employment practice support to the local projects participating in that Programme. The model's features are:

- A local and accessible service in response to the expressed needs of the projects themselves and the Programmes' strategic objectives;
- A commitment to high standards and to key community development principles and practices and to on-going evaluation and monitoring in that regard; and
- Support as an integral part of the funding programme, but delivered at one remove from the funder itself; thus support agencies work in partnership with the funding Department and the local projects, while maintaining their independence.

Developing other support availability within the sector, including enhancing the capacity of other Federations and Networks **(4.17 – 4.19)**

There are many national networks and umbrella bodies and local networks that provide support to their member groups - many of which are in receipt of statutory funding. A number of other, specialised training and support organisations have also emerged in recent years from within the sector. While a prime function of many umbrella bodies is representation, they also undertake significant work in providing support systems and services for member organisations, or for organisations doing like work. The main kinds of support service offered include:

- Provision of information and guidance for member groups
- Provision of education and training programmes for volunteers and staff
- Assistance with organisational and management development, standards development
- Specialist assistance in areas such as recruitment and legal incorporation.

An additional fund of £2 million will be provided to develop other support and **(4.20)**

training availability within the Community and Voluntary sector. This new allocation will foster the availability of additional training and other support services to Community and Voluntary sector groups from within the sector itself.

Links with Third Level and other educational Institutions **(4.21)**

Many third level institutions have developed education and training courses or research initiatives directed at meeting the specific needs of the Community and Voluntary sector. The Implementation and Advisory Group will monitor developments in this area and act as a catalyst in ensuring that good ideas 'find a home'.

Accreditation of learning in the Community and Voluntary sector **(4.22 – 4.23)**

Issues relevant to developing **accreditation** appropriate to the needs of the Community and Voluntary sector include:

- The Ethos of the Community and Voluntary sector
- The demand and type of accreditation
- Accreditation models and options
- Reference to National Standards/mainstream structure/s
- Resources/support required.

A review of the content and delivery of training to those in the Community and Voluntary sector should be undertaken. The value of this training should be verified and appropriately rewarded. A priority for the National Qualifications Authority will be to put in place appropriate accreditation arrangements for the Community and Voluntary sector. The Implementation and Advisory Group will monitor progress in this area. **(4.24 – 4.25)**

Accessing the capacity within the sector and within other Sectors **(4.26 –**

A number of ways in which the members of groups and organisations can access the

capacity within the sector and within other Sectors were suggested in the consultation process, including a 'skills exchange' bureau, an 'Investors in People' programme and mechanisms to facilitate networking and co-ordination of information on training needs and resources in the sector. These will be encouraged by the National Committee on Volunteering and the White Paper Implementation and Advisory Group. **4.27)**

Fostering of volunteering **(4.28 – 4.30)**

There is a need to promote the active involvement of people in Community and Voluntary groups as an essential component of a democratic society. Volunteering can be defined as *the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society, local communities, individuals outside the immediate family, the environment or other causes. Voluntary activities are undertaken of a person's own free will, without payment (except for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses).* Volunteers make an enormous contribution to the well-being of society.

Supporting volunteering **(4.31 – 4.33)**

A key determinant of the health of society is the degree to which individuals are prepared to come forward to give of their own time on a voluntary basis. Measures that promote active participation by people in the community will be promoted. These will recognise the contribution of volunteers who are disadvantaged and the particular obstacles they face and support needs they have. Volunteer centres can be a vital ingredient of support for Community and Voluntary organisations at local level.

Next year, 2001, is UN International Year of Volunteers. As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, a National Committee on Volunteering will be established. The Committee, with participation from all the relevant interests and stakeholders, will devise strategies and actions for supporting and developing volunteering, not just during the International Year, but for the longer term. **The Committee will have a budget of £1 million for initiatives to further support and develop volunteering.** **(4.34 – 4.35)**

The work of the committee will include examining and making recommendations on: **(4.36 – 4.37)**

- The possibilities for recognition and accreditation for voluntary work and for training undertaken as a volunteer
- Measures to widen pool of volunteers
- The range of supports needed in order to promote, sustain and develop volunteering

The Government is committed to encouraging individual volunteering. A range of interesting proposals to that end have been put forward in the course of the White Paper consultation process. As well as being addressed by this Committee and the White Paper Implementation and Advisory Group, these will be examined by the relevant Departments and practical action will be taken. **(4.38)**

Legal status and regulation **(4.39 – 4.44)**

As a group grows and takes on more responsibilities, the question of having a legal status independently of the members of the group becomes relevant. There are three main structures which give a group separate legal status:

- Limited Company;
- Industrial and Provident Society;
- Incorporation under the Charities Act.

The advantages of having a legal status are: **(4.45)**

- The individual members of the group are not generally responsible for the group's activities, including any debts which may arise;
- The group can own property, enter into contracts and employ people in its own name;
- The group can bring and defend court proceedings in its own name;

- The group can apply for charitable recognition (although this applies to some unincorporated groups).

It is strongly recommended that Community and Voluntary organisations should adopt an appropriate legal framework; in most cases this will - under the legal arrangements at present available - involve registering as companies limited by guarantee. The Government accepts the need for a more modern legal framework of law governing the sector. These and related charitable recognition issues will be also priorities for examination by the Implementation and Advisory Group. **(4.46 – 4.47)**

Charitable recognition and Regulation of Charities **(4.48 – 4.49)**

For tax purposes, under existing law, a charity is a body established for charitable purposes only. Charitable recognition does not confer any legal status on an organisation. The Revenue Commissioners are responsible for the administration of the applicable tax exemptions. *Charitable purposes* in this instance can be:

- The advancement of education;
- The advancement of religion;
- The relief of poverty; or
- Other works of a charitable nature beneficial to the community.

(4.50)

Regulatory framework

The Government has decided that responsibility for charity regulatory matters and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests will transfer to the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. The Government is committed to ensuring that comprehensive legislation on regulation of charities and their fundraising is produced as a priority. The sector will be consulted in the development of the legislation through the Implementation and Advisory Group.

Chapter 5 - Funding Issues

Key principles with regard to funding **(5.1 – 5.2)**

The following key principles will apply to statutory funding of the Community and Voluntary sector:

- Not all Community and Voluntary activity should be funded by the State. Statutory funding will be available to the sector for mutually agreed programmes of activities and where these programmes are consistent with Government policies and objectives, or where other public interest criteria apply.

- The form the State's support will take varies across Departments/agencies and will depend on the particular circumstances and needs involved, including where relevant, the different needs and circumstances in individual counties and regions. It includes:

    - Funding of services provided by the sector (e.g. services for the elderly, childcare facilities, respite care services, information services);

    - Support for grass-roots community development initiatives;

    - Support for community-led enterprise and job creation initiatives;

    - Support for participation by the sector in local development and other social partnership initiatives; this also involves support for umbrella bodies and representative structures for the sector at local, regional and national level as well as advocacy work; and

    - Provision of dedicated support and development units for the sector.

- The priorities for statutory funding are activities undertaken by the Community and Voluntary sector that enable individuals facing disadvantage or discrimination to access and realise their rights and potential as members of society, or that provide key services required by groups with special needs.

- The sector has a special role in developing innovative responses to social needs. Not all pilots are successful or should receive ongoing funding, but the Government is keen to mainstream the lessons from successful pilot initiatives, as resources allow, by

    - Providing continuing support for the innovative work of the sector;

- State agencies taking on direct provision of previously piloted services;
- Incorporating the lessons of pilot projects into local and national policy development.

- 100% funding will only be provided for projects with a specific focus on tackling poverty and disadvantage, where an element of self-financing could not reasonably be expected.
- Core funding (i.e. funding towards the core staff and administrative costs of the organisation) will only be provided for services to meet agreed priority needs and for priority development work, especially work focused on tackling poverty and disadvantage.
- Particular attention will be given to supporting volunteering; this will include clarifying the eligibility of volunteer expenses (out-of-pocket costs etc.) for funding under individual schemes where necessary.
- Funded organisations and groups will be expected to adhere to standards of good practice - **see appendix 2 below.**
- Each Department and agency providing funding will publish a statement of its objectives in providing such funding and a description of its specific schemes and programmes, to include clear eligibility, selection criteria and funding procedures; Statutory agencies will adhere to the proposed statement of good practice - **see appendix 3 below**.
- Improved co-ordination and clarity in relation to roles and responsibilities amongst Departments and agencies is a priority.

Overall amount of funding available **(5.3 – 5.4)**

The Government is committed to continued support for the sector. This support is set to rise very significantly over the period to 2006, under the National Development Plan and other commitments. In addition, the Government is providing £7 million to enhance the capacity of the sector to organise itself at national level, to foster the development of additional support and training within the sector and to further support volunteering.

Access to funding/eligibility/transparency **(5.5 – 5.6)**

The Government is committed to ensuring that there should be published schemes, with

clear and objective eligibility criteria, clear application and assessment procedures for ALL statutory grant schemes (i.e. as distinct from once-off special grants). Application forms and information leaflets will be as simple and clearly-written as is possible and consistent with the need to obtain sufficient information to make a proper assessment of any application. When groups apply for funding, they will be given a clear timescale for decisions.

Continuity of funding **(5.7 – 5.9)**

There is a distinction to be made between:

- Non-governmental organisations that provide social services funded by and on behalf of a statutory agency. These are mainly large service providers in the health and social service area, whose services are funded by the Health Boards. The relationship between statutory agencies and organisations in this category has been reviewed and reformed insofar as the Health and Social Services area is concerned in **Enhancing the Partnership**.

- Community and Voluntary organisations that provide other services and undertake development activities to meet social need – without being delivery agents on behalf of a statutory agency – but which statutory agencies wish to fund and support as ancillary and complementary to their own services or aims and objectives.

This Chapter is of more concern to the second category. Much statutory funding of groups in this second category has heretofore been provided on an *ad hoc* annual basis. This is unsatisfactory.

The system of three year funding commitments that operates in the case of community development and money advice projects funded by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs is a model that will be applied in other comparable areas. In addition, new statutory provisions are currently being introduced for the funding of Community and Voluntary agencies in the Health Services area, starting with the Eastern Health Board region with the establishment of the new regional health authority. It is intended to extend this provision to all health boards in due course. **(5.10 – 5.11)**

Multi-annual funding allows for a more rational approach to planning service delivery and to processing of funding applications. Adopting this approach does not of itself involve any increase in expenditure. **The Government has decided that multi-annual funding commitments should, in appropriate cases, be made available by all funding agencies to organisations providing services or undertaking development activities that are agreed to be priorities, with the budget for each specific year to which the agreement applies to be reviewed in the light of the resources available and taking into account the legal position that the Dáil votes public monies on an annual basis.** **(5.12 – 5.13)**

The Dáil determines the level of taxation and expenditure in any particular year. This may involve decisions to reduce expenditure in particular areas. Multi-annual funding commitments in specific areas will be complemented by explicit understandings in relation to service standards, performance indicators, evaluation and review. **(5.14)**

Types of funding **(5.15)**

Core funding of an organisation, or 100% funding of a specific project or service, is appropriate only for priority services or development activities with disadvantaged groups, where an element of self-financing would not be possible, or appropriate. Funding Departments and agencies will henceforth state clearly the cases where 100% funding can be provided or where a lesser percentage is envisaged as the norm. They should also distinguish between:

- Multi-annual 'core' funding for agreed priority services that are an ongoing requirement;
- Project funding for time-limited services or activities and pilot projects (but **NOT** for funding of ongoing services);
- Once-off grants for equipment, premises and other items that require occasional funding;
- Training (staff & management), evaluations, organisational reviews and other work to enhance the effectiveness of the group.

In keeping with the spirit of partnership which informs the White Paper process, the Community and Voluntary sector groups directly affected will be consulted and will have an input into decisions as to which are to be regarded as 'priority' services or programmes. **(5.16)**

Payment mechanisms and systems **(5.17 – 5.18)**

Unnecessary problems and costs are created for Community and Voluntary groups when grants that have been committed do not come through in reasonable time. The following good customer service guideline will henceforth apply in this regard:

> Individual once-off grants - once approved - will in general be paid within one month of all the necessary supporting documentation being submitted by the group concerned - the exception will be larger grants, where staged payments may be appropriate. In the case of ongoing core (or 'revenue') funding, payments will ordinarily be made in advance (quarterly, or as appropriate to the particular grant or funding scheme) and not in arrears. All Departments and agencies will use the calendar year as their financial year.

The obligations imposed by statutory funders in relation to financial accountability can be too complex. There will be an agreed protocol setting out standard requirements and good practice in relation to financial management. This will be developed under the aegis of the Implementation and Advisory Group. **(5.19 – 5.20)**

Multiplicity of funders **(5.21)**

There are a large number of individual funders and programmes. This maze of agencies and funds leads to frustration and delays for community groups. It leads to a lack of clarity amongst agencies themselves. The County Development Boards will have the lead role in bringing about greater synergy and co-ordination at local level between statutory agencies within the parameters of existing policies and programmes and in highlighting priority needs and gaps in provision for attention. The Directors of Community and Enterprise are well placed to facilitate a planned and co-ordinated response.

At national level, the Implementation and Advisory Group will have responsibility for **(5.22)**

reviewing areas of overlap or gaps in statutory responsibility with regard to support for the sector and making recommendations to resolve such situations. **This is a key institutional innovation in this White Paper. It involves creation of a mechanism that, over time, will allow Departments and agencies collectively, and working with the Community and Voluntary sector itself, to review existing programmes and schemes so as to ensure continued relevance and value for money and the provision of cohesive support to the sector. This reform process will facilitate the allocation of additional resources, as provided for in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness and within the financial parameters laid down in the agreement, to meet new and emerging needs and to strengthen existing programmes and schemes where appropriate.**

The long-term aim is to change from the existing highly-fragmented funding and support system to one based on the concept of single line funding and single line reporting mechanisms. **(5.23)**

The establishment of the County Development Boards will enhance the scope for structured co-operation and co-ordination of statutory agencies on the ground, including putting in place joint funding of projects that span the remit of more than one agency. A designated local information point to provide comprehensive information about the funds that are available across Departments and agencies might be placed within the revised local government/local development structure, or could be agreed locally by relevant State agencies. **(5.24 – 5.25)**

Comprehensiveness of funding lines **(5.26 – 5.27)**

The 'package' of funding supports under particular schemes is often incomplete. Where statutory agencies fund the delivery of particular services or activities, individual schemes should also make provision to meet essential needs – over and above the core service dimension – such as training and development needs, including support for volunteers. It needs to be made explicit that funding schemes provide a comprehensive funding package -

and not just funding for direct service provision – for any activity for which a statutory funder accepts responsibility.

Information Technology **(5.28 – 5.31)**

Community and Voluntary organisations have an important role in making the benefits of new technologies accessible to all. IT can also have a very positive impact on the work of organisations and groups in the sector, especially in the areas of communication, information sharing and research. The **Information Society Commission** has recommended that a structured programme of support be put in place for the Community and Voluntary sector. As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, there will be increased investment, to include additional funding to enable the Community and Voluntary sector to realise the potential of IT in its work and in meeting the needs of the members, customers and local communities it serves.

Taxation issues **(5.32 – 5.35)**

The Government is committed to keeping the existing tax reliefs on donations to charities under review in the light of experience of their operation. The VAT treatment of charitable organisations is a direct consequence of EU VAT law, with which Irish VAT law must comply.

Community Employment **(5.36 – 5.38)**

Consultations on funding of essential services currently provided through Community Employment will take place in a **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness** Special Working Group. Without prejudice to the Group's findings, it would appear that, **where Community Employment continues to be used as a means of support for such services, it would be more appropriate that this be the three year Job Option rather than the one year Integration Option. Ideally and as resources allow, alternative funding should be put in place (via the appropriate social Departments) to provide long-term funding of staff for such essential services. In addition, initiatives such as the Social Economy Programme should provide an opportunity through which such services**

(where they fall within the 'framework' agreed for the Programme) can be provided. These options will be pursued.

It is intended that the **Social Economy Programme** will have a strong emphasis on the economic and social development and regeneration of disadvantaged communities by supporting imaginative, locally-based initiatives. The programme will provide for an annual investment of £41 million. The programme will be funded primarily through a reallocation of funding currently committed to CE. **(5.39 – 5.42)**

National Lottery funding **(5.43 –5.44)**

A Review group was established in November 1996 to examine the method of disbursing grants from the National Lottery surplus. The Group made a number of recommendations to ensure greater transparency in the use of Lottery money, that the Lottery surplus is used exclusively in future for support of Community and Voluntary activity in the eligible areas and involve the sector itself in the decision-making process in the allocation of grants. These recommendations are very much in line with the thrust of the White Paper conclusions and were accepted by the Government.

The White Paper Implementation and Advisory Group will advise on issues relating to National Lottery allocations. This will allow the sector to raise issues about the allocation of Lottery funds between the eligible areas and to raise other issues of concern that might arise in relation to the Lottery from time-to-time. **(5.45)**

National Anti-Poverty Networks **(5.46 – 5.51)**

Future funding of the national anti-poverty networks will be by means of a programme to be administered by the Combat Poverty Agency. Up to 10 networks will be funded as part of this Programme, which will have a budget of £1 million (up from the existing allocation of *circa* £400,000). Criteria will be developed by which applications for funding to meet new emerging needs will be assessed. Funding will be on the basis of a three-year workplan to be negotiated and agreed. Criteria will be developed for ongoing assessment

of achievement by the existing national networks and by which applications for renewed funding at the end of any three-year contractual period will be determined.

Key criteria in this regard will include: **(5.52)**

- A membership base that ensures the voice of disadvantaged, marginalised groups finds expression in relevant national for a;
- Individual networks should be genuinely representative and avoid unnecessary overlaps *vis-à-vis* each other;
- Mechanisms to ensure that members are informed and consulted about activities and policy when presenting a case to Government; and
- The capacity to inform policy at local, regional and national levels.

Outcomes from an EU study "*to develop ways to involve groups representing excluded persons in the development, implementation and evaluation of national anti-poverty strategies*" will feed into these criteria and will inform the future development of policy in this area. **(5.53)**

Funding of other networks and representative bodies **(5.54)**

Funding is also provided (for example via the Health Services and Department of Education and Science) to support representative bodies in other segments of the Community and Voluntary sector. **The Government is now providing an additional £2 million for such other representative bodies and federations**.

Non-statutory sources of funding **(5.55 – 5.59)**

Community Trusts or Foundations play an important role in other countries. A number are already operating in Ireland. The Foundation for Investing in Communities was launched in November 1998 as an employer-led initiative supported by Government. One of the functions of the Foundation is to build up an endowment fund. These funds will be additional to existing State funding. The Foundation will develop its links with and

participation by the Community and Voluntary sector. The Government is committed to developing additional community funds or trusts, especially at local level. The Local Government Bill 2000 contains a provision to enable local authorities to establish a local community initiative fund.

Accessibility of information about funding **(5.60)**

A comprehensive manual of funding available from all Sectors will be published and regular updated reports on funding availability should also be published from time to time.

Chapter 6 – Implementation

Terms of reference of Implementation and Advisory Group **(6.1 – 6.2)**

The Implementation and Advisory Group will be co-chaired by the Departments of Health and Children and Social, Community and Family Affairs. In keeping with the principles in the White Paper, it will be a matter for the sector itself to agree on mechanisms to ensure appropriate representation from the sector on the Group. The Group will oversee the implementation of the decisions contained in the White Paper and identify unresolved issues arising in a national context and pursue a resolution of such issues as far as possible. Its detailed terms of reference are to:

- Advise on a programme of research which will include quantifying the full extent of Community and Voluntary activity in Ireland ;
- Agree standard protocols for financial accountability in respect of State funding of the sector;
- Monitor administrative mechanisms to underpin the effective functioning of the working relationship and discuss and agree proposals that promote integrated approaches at national level;
- Monitor developments in accreditation of training for the sector;
- Formulate practical proposals to further enhance support and training capacity within the sector and within other Sectors;
- Advise on the development of a regulatory framework for the sector;

- Examine areas of overlap or gaps in statutory responsibility with regard to support for the Community and Voluntary sector at policy and programme level and make recommendations to resolve such situations;

- Advise on the distribution of the £2 million allocation for other Federations and Networks across the eligible areas/Votes;

- Advise on issues relating to allocations from the National Lottery surplus;

- Oversee the publication of a comprehensive manual of funding and regular updated versions;

- Undertake a formal review of the workings of Group after a three-year period.

Conclusion **(6.3)**

The formal review of the workings of the Group after three years will provide an opportunity to revisit the main conclusions and decisions in the White Paper. As the overall social and economic context changes, so too must the framework for statutory support for volunteering and voluntary activity be developed and adapted from time-to-time.

The National Committee on Volunteering, being established in the context of UN International Year of Volunteers 2001, will also play a significant role in developing support for voluntarism, not just during the International Year, but for the longer term. **(6.4)**

Voluntarism and communal activity are at the heart of our democracy and a vital element in social progress. The objective is to ensure that communities and individuals are facilitated to identify and meet their own needs. The Government will continue to ensure that our policies and programmes in this area are appropriate and supportive and that individuals and communities are enabled to reach their full personal and social potential. **(6.5)**

Chapter One – overview

Voluntary Activity is an essential sign of a society where people are concerned for each other. An active Community and Voluntary sector contributes to a democratic, pluralist society, provides opportunities for the development of decentralised and participative structures and fosters a climate in which the quality of life can be enhanced for all.

1.1 Voluntary activity is an essential sign of a society where people are concerned for each other. It can range from the most informal of activity within communities to highly formal activity within the context of major national service provision and advocacy organisations. The Government recognises the worth of every type and does not believe that it should seek to regulate or be involved with every type of voluntary activity. The specific purpose of this White Paper is to deal with the formal interaction between the State and Community and Voluntary sector. The detail in later Chapters of this White Paper concerns those parts of the Community and Voluntary sector that have a formal relationship - especially a funding relationship - with one or other statutory agency. However, there are very large numbers of our people who give of their time voluntarily and without material reward in Community and Voluntary groups that don't have such a relationship with the State. These include local residents' associations, the community games movement and other sporting organisations, local cultural and heritage groups and tidy towns associations, to mention just a few.

1.2 Voluntary activity spans the whole range of social activity. It enriches us all and is a vital element of democracy. A strong democracy enhances and protects the capacity of citizens to participate directly in social life, create their own social movements to address issues that concern them and speak directly on issues that affect them. In a strong democracy people regard the State, not as the answer to every problem, or as the essential funder of every action, but as just one player among many others. All the others - the private Sector, trade unions, religious organisations, non-governmental organisations, sporting organisations, local community and residents' associations - have a pivotal role to play in our democratic life and in ensuring continued economic and social progress.

1.3 At an all-Ireland level, voluntary activity has tremendous potential to foster reconciliation and mutual understanding between the two communities in Northern Ireland and between North and South. The Government will continue to support

and encourage such work. Cross-border linkages of groups and co-operative projects have the potential to deepen the interaction of different communities and our understanding of each other.

1.4 In the Government's vision of society the ability of the Community and Voluntary sector to provide channels for the active involvement and participation of citizens is fundamental. **An active Community and Voluntary sector contributes to a democratic, pluralist society, provides opportunities for the development of decentralised and participative structures and fosters a climate in which the quality of life can be enhanced for all.**

1.5 This is a key point. The Government regards statutory support of the Community and Voluntary sector as having an importance to the well-being of our society that goes beyond utilitarian concerns to do with 'purchase' of services by this or that statutory agency. It has to do with the nature of the society we wish to foster - one which fosters active participation in its affairs by individuals, because such participation is vital to our democratic way of life. The Government's vision of society is also one which actively encourages people as individuals and as members of groups to look after their own needs - very often in partnership with statutory agencies - but without depending on the State to meet all needs.

1.6 The vital role of voluntary activity was well put by Constance Braithwaite in 1938 (**The Voluntary Citizen An Enquiry into the Place of Philanthropy in the Community**)

> *"The excellence of the work of a democratic State depends largely upon the quality of its citizens. Individuals do not become intelligent and public-spirited citizens by keeping the law, paying rates and taxes, and recording their votes at elections. They require opportunities of insight into the lives of their fellows and into the practical work of group administration. This kind of insight is given by active participation in the work of voluntary associations and of public bodies alike: it is all an expression of voluntary*

> *citizenship. The qualities of citizenship desirable in the democratic community of the future are far more likely to be developed by this kind of means than by methods of mass propaganda and deification of the State."*

and by Robert Dahl in 1998 (**On Democracy**)

> *"If citizens are to be competent, won't they need political and social institutions to help make them so? Unquestionably. Opportunities to gain an enlightened understanding of public matters are not just part of the definition of democracy. They are a requirement for democracy."*

1.7 This understanding of the importance and role of voluntary activity to the well-being of society and democracy underpins the Government's approach in this White Paper.

1.8 2001 is UN International Year of Volunteers. The International Year provides an opportunity to further raise the profile of volunteering in Ireland and progress the Government's policies with regard to development of social capital and encouragement of voluntarism. The Government is particularly keen to encourage new volunteers to come forward, including volunteers from Sectors that are under-represented, and to foster a culture of support for volunteering in schools and third level institutions. As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, a National Committee on Volunteering will be established. The Committee, with participation from all the relevant interests and stakeholders and with strong backing from the Government, will devise strategies and actions for supporting and developing volunteering, not just during the International Year, but for the longer term.

Chapter Two - Context and Background to White Paper

The White Paper seeks to formulate a coherent strategy for support of the Community and Voluntary sector. There are huge differences in scale in the sector, from small community projects, on the one hand, to large organisations representing particular groups on the other. Nonetheless, there are many shared values and identified needs. The White Paper will set in train an agenda for change which will enable these values to be strengthened and meet a range of the needs identified.

Introduction

2.1 This Chapter:

a) sets out the background to the publication of the White Paper

b) sets out the social and economic context in Ireland against which its publication takes place

c) describes relevant European Union and other international developments

d) includes a brief overview of the history and role of the Community and Voluntary sector, including concise information about the scale of Community and Voluntary sector activity in Ireland and makes proposals to address gaps in our knowledge and for further research in this area

e) notes recent initiatives that are relevant to the creation of a more coherent and cohesive policy and administrative framework for supporting voluntary activity and proposes the establishment of an Implementation and Advisory Group to oversee the implementation of the White Paper and to advise the Government on an ongoing basis in relation to issues relevant to the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

Green Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity

2.2 A Green Paper was published in May 1997 with a view to initiating a consultation process with the Community and Voluntary sector. The key issues discussed in the Green Paper included:

- The composition of the Community and Voluntary sector and some current issues;
- Clarifying the responsibilities of different Departments in relation to the sector;
- Examining the effectiveness of existing programmes and support structures;
- Establishing formal consultative mechanisms involving the sector with statutory agencies;

- Introducing Customer Charters in relation to specific social services;
- Providing training for the statutory sector;
- Statements of good practice for both statutory and voluntary Sectors;
- Funding systems; and
- Options for long-term funding of national networks of anti-poverty groups and the question of greater synergy between a number of different agencies existing to support in differing ways local Community and Voluntary activity;

Steering Group and Consultation Process

2.3 Following publication of the Green Paper, a Steering Group was brought together to advise and assist the Department. The membership of the Group is given in **Appendix 1**. Members of the Group were selected on an individual basis to give of their individual expertise and experience. A range of Departments and Agencies were also represented on the Group. The preparation of this White Paper involved an extensive consultation process with the Community and Voluntary sector itself and with other interested parties.

2.4 A three-phased consultation process was put in place as follows:

Phase 1

- Emphasis in first phase was on the dissemination of information and facilitating reading of and discussion about the Green Paper by Community and Voluntary groups and relevant statutory personnel.
- An advertisement was placed in national newspapers inviting Community and Voluntary groups to make submissions on the Green Paper. Eighty submissions were subsequently received. Funding (£200 to £2,000) was made available to groups and networks to organise information sessions/consultations within their memberships and prepare submissions.
- Each Regional Office of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, in collaboration with other relevant statutory agencies (such as Health Boards, FÁS etc.) and facilitated by DSCFA Community and Voluntary Services section (with assistance from Steering Group), hosted 30 information workshops on the Green Paper for local statutory personnel. The Combat Poverty Agency held a national seminar on the Green Paper.

Phase 2

- The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs in conjunction with other relevant agencies and with Steering Group members, organised 26 Regional seminars at end 1998/early 1999. Seminars were attended both by Community and Voluntary sector and statutory representatives. The aim of these seminars was to build on the earlier information phase and move on to analysis of issues and options for the White Paper.

- Feedback from these seminars and submissions went to the Steering Group. The discussion at the Steering Group included identification of key themes and approaches to these in the White Paper.

Phase 3

- The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (in conjunction with other Departments) and the Voluntary Sector members of the Steering Group separately prepared discussion papers on key themes for the White Paper. These included the place of voluntary activity in civil society, funding mechanisms, greater coherence in statutory support for Sector, consultation mechanisms and participation in policy making. These parallel discussion documents were synthesised into four position documents, corresponding to the four main chapters in this White Paper, which were further refined by the Steering Group.

- A National seminar for groups/individuals who were involved in phases 1 & 2, to focus on the position papers and debate/advise on the issues raised in these papers, was held on 30 March 2000.

Main Issues that have emerged in the consultation process

2.4 The following are the main issues that have emerged in the consultation process:

- Defining the Statutory, Community and Voluntary sectors and their roles

- Nature of the relationship between the sectors

- Principles and structures underpinning that relationship, including issues of consultation and representation

- Need for shared and defined vision on the parameters of the relationship between the two Sectors

- Role of volunteering

- Funding and support for the Community and Voluntary sector
- Implementation and monitoring of White Paper decisions

2.5 In formulating a strategic approach for Supporting Voluntary Activity in the 21st century, the White Paper seeks to formulate a coherent strategy and to identify the policy responses at national, regional and local level, which will most effectively address the issues raised during the consultation process.

2.6 The aim of the White Paper is to:

- **Describe the current context in which the Community and Voluntary sector operates, and the range and diversity of the sector;**
- **Set out a cohesive framework of support for the Community and Voluntary sector across Government Departments and Agencies;**
- **Promote sound principles and best practice models for the effective functioning of the State/Community/ Voluntary Sector relationship; and**
- **Make recommendations across a number of areas relevant both to the support of voluntary activity generally and to the framework (e.g. funding, enabling, administrative) necessary to support and deepen the relationship.**

Social and economic context in which the Paper is being published

2.7 At both an international and national level, there is a major shift taking place in the understanding and practice of governance (i.e. the taking and influencing of decisions). Communities and individuals are learning to live with the realities of economic globalisation, technological transformation, demographic change and political transition. These new realities are creating unprecedented opportunities for many people but increased insecurity and inequality for others. In many countries pockets of affluence co-exist with areas of high unemployment, inadequate skills provision, low incomes, environmental deterioration etc.

2.8 Civil society is coming to play a more active role in shaping socio-economic

change and addressing multi-dimensional needs. This is seen as follows:

- A more active role for civil society in adopting innovative approaches and technologies to mobilise action at both the policy and practical level;
- More co-ordinated and efficient approaches within and between Government institutions (e.g. the drive for more integrated approaches);
- Increased dialogue and consultation between Governments and non-Governmental organisations; and
- Greater transparency and accountability on the part of all the actors in terms of their activities, their priorities and outcomes.

2.9 Governance structures are changing at all levels of society - locally, nationally and globally. The way this transition is managed will have major implications for the ability of communities and countries to meet the challenges of economic competitiveness, social cohesion and sustainable development. Questions being asked about this process include the following:

- Will civil society be enhanced or undermined by the growth in new forms of governance?
- Can the capacity of civil society be developed to enable the organisations within it to play an effective role?
- How will these organisations evolve to ensure that they remain representative?
- Can the institutions of Government rise to the challenge of managing increasingly complex, cross-Sectoral relationships?

2.10 A parallel development, both internationally and nationally, is a trend in recent parallel development, both internationally and nationally, is a trend in recent years away from State 'Welfareism' towards a more pluralistic system of provision, with many Governments looking to the Voluntary Sector and to volunteers to play a larger role in the direct delivery of welfare services. In this context, the United Nations World Summit on Social Development (Copenhagen,

1995) Final Declaration and Programme of Action, made reference to the importance of "*promoting socially useful volunteer work and allocating appropriate resources to support such work*".

2.11 A recent European study (**A New Civic Europe**, by Katherine Gaskin and Justin David Smith) showed that on average, more than one quarter of people in Europe over 15 years of age engage in voluntary activity, over half of them on a regular basis. People volunteer for a mixture of reasons. The study shows, for instance, that men and younger people are particularly active in sports and recreation. Other important volunteering areas include social welfare services, in which older people and women tend to be more active, and education. Community Development and religious organisations also attract volunteers, as do organisations concerned with health, culture, the arts, citizens and advocacy groups. The study notes that there is a strong 'social welfare component' in volunteering in Ireland. There is also a high input of volunteer time in fundraising for organisations.

2.12 In a number of European countries, the growth of statutory welfare provision has been strongly linked to the voluntary welfare Sector and voluntary organisations have led the way in establishing programmes, identifying needs and setting much of the welfare agenda. Legislation for a mixed economy of welfare has been enacted in a number of countries.

2.13 A number of countries have legislation to govern regulation and organisation of the number of countries have legislation to govern regulation and organisation of the sector. This is not the case in Ireland, except in the case of recognition of charities for tax concession purposes. In fact, a comprehensive legislative framework

specifically for volunteering and volunteers, affecting the status and conditions of volunteers, including insurance, training and work conditions, is rare. France's distinctive position on volunteering is rooted in the 1901 law on associations. This stated that no association could exist without a minimum of volunteers, thereby prescribing the participation of volunteers. France is unusual in having the managing and legitimating structures of volunteering sponsored to a considerable extent by the State.

2.14 Germany has long-standing laws affecting voluntary work. Other countries trace ermany has long-standing laws affecting voluntary work. Other countries trace the origins of state recognition of volunteering back to the adoption of a constitution recognising the right of association. This occurred in 1830 in Belgium, and in 1848 in Denmark and the Netherlands, marking the starting point of democracy with guaranteed civil rights including the right to assemble and organise. The Irish Constitution also recognises the right to associate. **Overall, however, there is an underdeveloped legal and policy framework for the support of voluntary work and the contexts in which it may take place. As indicated in paragraph 4.50, the Government is committed to dealing with this situation and this White Paper is the start of such a process.**

2.15 In Ireland it is evident that despite a dramatic improvement in Irish economic n Ireland it is evident that despite a dramatic improvement in Irish economic performance, real economic and social issues remain to be resolved. State agencies are increasingly aware of the need to consult with local groups in developing appropriate responses to many social and economic problems and to involve them in delivery of such responses. Local groups have the local knowledge on which to base plans and to prioritise actions. The participation of tenant groups in local authority estate management, emergence of local home work

clubs and out-of-school services and neighbourhood responses to drug use and drug dealing (through the local Drug Task Forces), are examples of the increasing recognition by the State of the merit of bottom-up responses.

2.16 Recently, the Integrated Services Process is a practical initiative to develop best practice in ensuring that an integrated response to multi-dimensional problems of need can be provided by State services, in consultation with local community interests. Other integration initiatives include the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs' Family Services Project and the Springboard initiative operated under the aegis of the Department of Health and Children.

Re-thinking Our Vision

2.17 The rapidly changing economic and social situation in Ireland requires serious consideration on how best to influence society in order to make it socially and economically inclusive, to make it a place where equality of treatment, opportunity and access, and respect for the autonomy of the individual are the norm. There is a need to create a more participatory democracy where active citizenship is fostered. In such a society the ability of the Community and Voluntary sector to provide channels for the active involvement and participation of citizens is fundamental. Both formal, structured voluntary activity and informal volunteering are essential in this regard. A key element of the contribution of voluntary activity is that it is based on people themselves taking responsibility and coming together in as formal or informal a way as they consider appropriate. The Government values voluntary activity because it provides autonomous channels for the active involvement and participation of citizens. An active Community and Voluntary sector contributes to a democratic, pluralist society, provides opportunities for the development of decentralised and participative structures and fosters a climate in which the quality of life can be enhanced for all.

Key Principles Underlying the Vision

2.18 The process of providing a voice for all our people poses challenges both to the State and to the Community and Voluntary sector. The process of responding to the challenges has begun, particularly in large urban working class neighbourhoods, but also in rural areas and small towns. It involves evolutionary reform and is taking place at a pace directed by the realities of the economic and social context and the choice of citizens. Although the solution envisaged is not a centralised solution, it is based on the central allocation of resources within a facilitative and enabling framework which promotes the growth of 'civil society'. It requires the development of an enabling and open State which is engaged in dialogue and partnership and which allows bottom-up responses to emerge from voluntary organisations and community groups. It requires a consistent degree of commitment from Government to participate as an active partner in the process. But it also requires recognition that Government is only one of the players - all must play an active part. The following organising principles underpin the type of framework we envisage:

Active Citizenship

- Active citizenship refers to the active role of people, communities and voluntary organisations in decision-making which directly affects them. This extends the concept of formal citizenship and democratic society from one of basic civil, political and social and economic rights to one of direct democratic participation and responsibility. In this sense, citizenship is a political activity which gives citizens the opportunity to shape the society in which they live. Groups are given the opportunity to become involved in identifying local needs and developing strategies to meet these needs. Active citizenship is also about the strengthening of Community and Voluntary organisations. In modern society this process is particularly important in combating the potentially negative effects arising from centralisation of both economic and political decision-making, and the consequent alienation of significant numbers of people, such as the long-term unemployed.

  As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, the Government will institute a new Electoral Participation Initiative with the task of encouraging maximum voter participation in elections, including a voter education programme. The initiative, while aiming at encouraging active participation in the political process by all citizens, will focus particularly on communities experiencing disadvantage and on young people.

Resource Allocation and Promotion of Equality of Opportunity

- It is clear that contemporary economic and social conditions tend to exclude some groups from opportunities and resources available to the rest of society. This prevents people's voices being heard and limits the extent to which real dialogue can take place. Underlying structural causes for such exclusion (e.g. long-term unemployment, educational disadvantage) which serve to reproduce poverty and inequality into future generations must be addressed, as well as any underlying discriminatory practices.

Helping people to participate in issues which affect them

- There is a need to develop positive action programmes to target groups which are most marginalised and to support them to become involved in issues and concerns affecting themselves and their communities. There is need to support and strengthen informal neighbourhood networks and community organisations which help people not only to cope effectively with everyday life situations, such as looking after children and the elderly, coping with bereavement and illness, or the debilitating effects of unemployment and rural poverty, but also to participate in developing and implementing solutions to social and economic issues. Disadvantaged communities need, however, to be resourced to build on the infrastructure of informal neighbourhood networks and local organisations.

Respect for individual freedom in the pursuit of social goals

- It is important to foster a culture and society which respects the autonomy of the individual. In such a society, individuals are given the opportunity to realise their potential and to take responsibility for themselves and others. This means creating a climate which supports individuals and groups to make things happen rather than have things happen to them. Such a culture respects diversity and community solidarity. Interdependence is built on trust and dialogue. The freedom of the individual is not of course absolute and the aim must be to ensure that individual freedom can be pursued in tandem with the goal of ensuring effective governance of social affairs. It is important also to recognise that each individual has a particular contribution to make to the achievement of overall economic and social progress for society as a whole. It is also important to make the point again that the autonomy and bottom-up nature of voluntary activity is fundamental. The Government has no wish to structure or control voluntary activity, or channel it in any particular direction and it would be entirely wrong and counterproductive to seek to do so.

Promoting and Strengthening Social Dialogue

- Individuals and communities must be facilitated to participate in a process of dialogue involving exploration of the problems affecting them and the development and implementation of appropriate policy responses. The process of effective engagement with government agencies is crucially contingent on an open approach by officials, involving flexibility towards new, interactive ways

of responding to issues and concerns arising across society.

- It requires a philosophy reflecting what is sometimes called an **enabling state** or **assisted self-reliance** where local mobilisation is assisted through the provision of external resources and technical assistance. The promotion and strengthening of social dialogue across society involves the State developing partnerships with a wide range of bodies and organisations, including not only Community and Voluntary interests, but also employer representatives, trade unions and farming organisations. Such partnerships should reflect the civic dimension, as well as the collective bargaining function.

EU Developments

2.19 At the wider European level, there is a recognition at EU level of the need to develop counter-balancing measures and policies to combat exclusion and marginalisation and to encourage greater participation in policy development generally. The legal and financial instruments required at EU level to meet this future challenge are currently being enhanced to deal with the range of problem areas arising in the social policy arena. The Irish Government has undertaken various initiatives in this context. For instance, during the 1996 Irish Presidency, a new competence for co-ordinated EU action on social exclusion and discrimination was included in the Amsterdam Treaty.

2.20 The Government notes the forthcoming publication by the EU of a White Paper on the sector. In addition, the debate is increasing at the European level regarding Voluntary Activity and its role in developing social policy. The European Union Commission's Communication on the role of associations and voluntary organisations suggests that involvement in such bodies is of central importance to the operation of an effective and more participative democracy. Furthermore, declaration No. 23 of the Maastricht Treaty expressly refers to the necessity for close co-operation of all European institutions with the non-profit making Sector.

> *"The Conference stresses the importance, in pursuing the objectives of Article 117 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, of cooperation between the latter and charitable associations and foundations as institutions responsible for social welfare establishments and services."*

2.21 In 1994, the White Paper on European Social Policy set out the potential of that role and committed the Commission to holding a Forum to explore ways of working together on social policy issues. The Platform of European Social NGOs was established subsequently, bringing together European-level social NGOs and umbrella organisations. In March 1996, the first European Social Policy Forum was held. This set the policy objective of building a strong civil dialogue at the European level. A new budget line was created in 1997 - Co-operation with Charitable Organisations - to promote co-operation with NGOs to strengthen their capacity to engage in dialogue at the European level through networking and through exchange of information and best practice.

2.22 The Communication on **Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations in Europe** was also published in 1997. It referred to the increasingly important role that voluntary organisations play and recommended that voluntary organisations should be given the opportunity to be involved in planning services and policy making with public authorities at all levels. It also went on to state that:

> "*Relationships between voluntary organisations and public authorities should be clearer and new partnerships developed."*

2.23 Regulations for the operation of the current European Social Fund provide that Member States are required to make "a reasonable amount" of their overall Social Fund allocations available in the form of small grants to community groups and NGOs.

2.24 At the Heads of State and Government European Council meeting in Lisbon, the Irish Government supported the involvement of civil society, and those representing the socially-excluded, in advancing social objectives. The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, in conjunction with Combat Poverty Agency and anti-poverty NGOs, is currently involved in an EU-funded project. The project explores, on a transnational basis, experiences of consulting with those affected by poverty and the organisations that represent them in developing, implementing and monitoring anti-poverty strategies and guidelines.

2.25 The impact of the considerable emphasis placed by the EU Commission on the involvement of NGOs in the design, delivery and monitoring of EU funded programmes in Ireland is significant. The importance of this in contributing to the enhancement of social partnership cannot be underestimated.

2.26 The vital contribution of civil society to solving social and economic progress is he vital contribution of civil society to solving social and economic progress is also recognised in the designation of 2001 as International Year of Volunteers by the United Nations. As provided for in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, a National Committee on Volunteering will be established, with participation from relevant interests. The Committee will devise strategies and actions for supporting and developing volunteering during the Year, but also with a view to long-term support and enhancement of volunteering - see **Chapter 4**.

History and role of the Community and Voluntary sector in Ireland

Community and Voluntary sector - Historical perspective

2.27 While recognising the diversity of groups and interests involved, the term 'Sector' is used as a convenient description and form of reference in this White Paper.

2.28 The Community and Voluntary sector has a long and valued tradition of meeting social needs in Ireland. Wide-ranging changes have emerged during the past 50 years within the Community and Voluntary sector and its relationship with the State. Statutory funding has become increasingly more important in the provision of social services by the Community and Voluntary sector. The Community and Voluntary sector has developed a large presence in the development of social policy, especially in the roles of service providers, identifiers of new needs and advocates. Mechanisms for the creation of social solidarity have been established. The important role of the sector is reflected in the substantial amount of funding - almost **IR£1 billion** in 1999 (**EURO 1.267** billion) - which it received from the Irish State and EU sources as set out in the Table below:

TABLE 1

Government Department/ Agency	Irish funding	EU funding	Total	Total
	£IR million	£IR million	£IR million	EURO million
Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development	8.589	20.040	28.629	36.351
Department of Arts, Culture, Gaeltacht and the Islands/Arts Council	0.226	0.00	0.226	0.287
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment/FÁS	326.90	27.800	354.700	450.376
NOW	0.00	4.162	4.162	5.285
HORIZON	0.00	4.437	4.437	5.634
INTEGRA	0.00	3.397	3.397	4.313
YOUTHSTART	0.00	3.487	3.487	4.428
Department of Defence/Irish Red Cross Society	2.355	0.00	2.355	2.990
Department of the Environment and Local Government/ Local Authorities	44.095	0.00	44.095	55.989
Department of Education and Science/VECs	20.00	0.00	20.00	25.395
Department of Finance	5.00	0.00	5.000	6.349
Department of Foreign Affairs	28.500	0.00	28.500	36.188

Government Department/ Agency	Irish funding	EU funding	Total	Total
	£IR million	£IR million	£IR million	EURO million
Department of Health and Children/Health Boards	390.00	0.00	390.00	495.198
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	3.408	1.174	4.482	5.817
Probation and Welfare Service	5.05	0.00	5.05	6.412
Department of Public Enterprise	0.116	0.00	0.116	0.147
Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs	29.725	0.00	29.725	37.743
Combat Poverty Agency	0.976	0.00	0.976	1.239
Comhairle (NSSB)	2.271	0.00	2.271	2.884
Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation/ADM	24.710	25.650	50.360	63.994
Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (ADM, CPA)	4.003	12.001	16.003	20.320
TOTAL	895.924	102.148	997.971	1267.339

2.29 The sector is sometimes seen (NESF Report No. 6) as comprising two discrete sector is sometimes seen (NESF Report No. 6) as comprising two discrete subsections - a Community Sector and a Voluntary Sector. This reflects the

historical development of the sector, including distinct philosophical origins. The roots of the voluntary Sector can be traced back to the charitable and philantropical organisations - many church-based - of the eighteenth century. The voluntary Sector is the larger of the two, with a focus often on service delivery and a greater reliance on charitable donations and fund raising. Many voluntary Sector organisations are major service providers, particularly in the fields of health, disability and services for the elderly. Community Sector groups tend, on the other hand, to be smaller in scale and focus on responses to issues within a given community (geographical or interest based) and often with a social inclusion ethos.

2.30 In practice, the two suggested subsections represent opposite ends of a continuum and many organisations combine features of both. Just as many large voluntary Sector service providers have a strong advocacy role, so many community groups deliver practical services (e.g. childcare) in their local areas.

2.31 It is notable that the sector in Ireland not only complements and supplements State t is notable that the sector in Ireland not only complements and supplements State service provision, but is the dominant or sole provider in particular social service areas. Minimum statutory provision for social welfare and social services was provided under the Poor Laws in the 1830s. Voluntary activity, especially by religious orders and their concern with charity and the poor, played a major role in providing supplementary welfare provision. The church-based education system - at primary and secondary level - and voluntary hospitals, predate the foundation of the State. The primary role of church-based voluntary organisations and services provided by religious orders in meeting education and social welfare needs continued after the foundation of the State. Many services have been initiated and

run by religious organisations, for example, services for people with a mental and physical disability, youth services, the elderly, residential child care services and services for the homeless. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul with its roots in Catholic social teaching has 1,000 local branches comprising approximately 10,000 members and has been described as operating a shadow welfare state. Its work includes not only welfare services, but also enabling people in need to become self-sufficient and actively reflecting back to Irish society the structural inequalities witnessed by its members.

2.32 In the 1950s, the State gradually began to play a wider role in funding voluntary social welfare provision and voluntary activity. The Health Act 1953 introduced *Section 65* grants for funding of voluntary organisations providing services 'ancillary' to those provided by Health Boards themselves. This enabling provision is still an important source of funding for voluntary social service providers, although it is currently being replaced on a phased basis by a new legal framework.

2.33 Community development also has historical roots, as typified by the co-operative ommunity development also has historical roots, as typified by the co-operative movement which was designed to counteract the exploitation of the poor and to give voice and autonomy to the people. Muintir na Tíre, founded in the 1930s, also stresses the importance of self-reliance and local initiative. The 1970s saw the development of community empowerment and involvement with self-help initiatives aimed at disadvantaged groups. EU funded anti-poverty programmes were instrumental in this regard, emphasising empowerment, participation and social inclusion. The tradition of self-help as typified by the co-operative movement, evolved into a focus on disadvantage with increased citizen involvement

and community activism cumulating into a growing number of organisations representing Sectoral and geographical communities, as well as sporting, youth, arts, heritage and cultural interests.

2.34 Community development is described as an interactive process of knowledge and action designed to change conditions which marginalise communities and groups and is underpinned by a vision of self-help and community self-reliance. The challenge to the Community and Voluntary sector and State agencies is to foster local leadership and self-governing structures.

2.35 An impressive infrastructure of community and local development has been built up in Ireland both at central and local level. For example, the Community Development Programme funded by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs was established in 1990 in recognition of the role of community development in enhancing the capacity of local communities to work together to tackle poverty and exclusion. Since then the number of community development projects funded through the Programme has increased steadily to a point where there is now a strong network of almost 100 projects all over the country. The aim of the Programme is to develop a network of supported community development resource centres and projects in areas and for groups affected by high unemployment, poverty and disadvantage.

2.36 Many community groups are issue-based, rather than area-based. Examples are any community groups are issue-based, rather than area-based. Examples are lone parents groups, groups concerned with responses to homelessness or drugs and

equality issues. Many issue-based organisations have succeeded in getting issues adopted at Local Development Partnership level for incorporation into local development plans. In Ireland, anti-poverty networks and other national level Community and Voluntary sector organisations have had a significant input into recent national social partnership agreements. At EU level, their equivalent NGO networks have been active in influencing the development of EU social policy.

Changing Role of Religious Organisations

2.37 The role of religious organisations in relation to the Community and Voluntary sector is changing. There is a decline in religious vocations and a withdrawal of religious personnel from some services. This has created gaps that are increasingly being filled by the statutory sector and other voluntary organisations. Religious personnel have increased their role in, for example, encouraging and advocating State expansion in provision and support for voluntary organisations, community-based services are addressing their mission in an increasingly secular society. In a Faughnan and Kelleher study (1993), undertaken in the Eastern Health Board area, over 57 per cent of voluntary organisations displayed multiple forms of religious involvement which included religious being a founder member, providing significant finance, occupying the position of director and providing premises.

Recent developments in the Community and Voluntary sector

2.38 The sector has changed considerably since the idea of a White Paper was first sector has changed considerably since the idea of a White Paper was first mooted in the early 1990s. It has changed in terms of size, methods of operation and organisation employed, development of linkages and networks, diversity of outlook and perspective, numbers employed, etc. These changes have happened at national, regional and local level and have also involved development of transnational linkages and a greater interest in debates and issues at EU Level. At

this point the Community and Voluntary sector is active in

- delivery of essential services
- advocacy and provision of information
- contributing to policy-making
- national and local partnership arenas
- undertaking research
- creation of opportunities for members and participants to access education, training, income and employment opportunities.

2.39 Recent decades have also seen the growth in voluntary social service organisations such as voluntary housing associations, social services councils, childcare services, services for people with disabilities, day care services, care of the aged committees etc. There has also been a growth in the number of independent information-giving organisations that play a key role in creating a more inclusive and participative society. These include the national network of Citizen's Information Centres (85), Money Advice and Budgeting Services (50), Congress Centres for the Unemployed (38), and Youth Information Centres (27).

2.40 A key challenge for the future for these groups is to harness their collective energy in order to maximise their impact, both at policy development level (e.g. in relation to welfare/health issues), and at the level of their individual client base.

Definition

2.41 The Community and Voluntary sector is diverse and is difficult to categorise. Faughnan (1990) offers the following broad classification of Community and Voluntary organisations:

- Mutual support and self-help organisations;
- Local development associations;
- Resource and service providing associations;
- Representative and co-ordinating organisations; and
- Campaigning and advocacy organisations.

2.42 In its Communication on the role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations, the EU Commission suggests that 'Voluntary' organisations have a number of characteristics, including that they are:

- Distinguished from informal or *ad hoc*, purely social, or familial groupings by having some degree, however vestigial, of formal or institutional existence.
- Non-profit distributing
- Independent, in particular of Government and other public authorities
- Must be managed in what is sometimes called a 'disinterested' manner - in the Irish context this particularly relates to containing some element of voluntary, unpaid participation
- Must be active to some degree in the public arena and their activity must be aimed, at least in part, at contributing to the public good.

2.43 The Commission also makes a useful distinction between different types of organisations based on their primary activity:

- Service delivery or provision to provide to their members or clients, services such as social services, health care, training, information, advice or support
- Advocacy: i.e. organisations whose purpose is to campaign, lobby and otherwise argue on behalf of some cause or group with the aim of changing

public perception or policy

- Self-help or mutual aid: organisations typically formed by groups of individuals with some common interest or need in order to provide mutual help, information and support and co-operation

- Resource and co-ordination: so-called 'intermediary bodies' which co-ordinate the activities of, or provide information and support to, either individual organisations working in a particular field or to the sector in general. Such organisations fulfil the important function of providing an interface between the sector and public authorities.

2.44 These classifications are useful in that they illustrate the diversity of organisational types making up the sector. Faughnan emphasises, however, that any classification system only partially recognises the wide variations of size, structure, or culture embraced in each category.

2.45 While the discussion in Ireland commonly refers to the Community and Voluntary hile the discussion in Ireland commonly refers to the Community and Voluntary sector, some sources prefer to refer to look at the sector as a component part of a wider 'non-profit Sector'. The non-profit Sector can be defined as the sector that is non-market and non-state. As well as small-scale local Community and Voluntary organisations, it spans a range of specialised organisations and institutions, such as voluntary public hospitals, major mental handicap organisations, major sporting organisations, credit unions, trade unions, political parties, employer organisations, educational institutions and church-based institutions. **The principles and decisions contained in the White Paper will apply to the support of voluntary activity and to developing the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary sector and the State generally. The specific recommendations will apply to specific parts of the voluntary/community Sector, as relevant.** A

pragmatic approach to the issue of the definition of the sector is necessary, given the range of Departments and agencies that engage in relationships with a wide variety of Community and Voluntary organisations at different levels.

2.46 The constitution and scale of the non-profit Sector in Ireland is discussed in **Uncovering the Non-profit Sector in Ireland: Its Economic Value and Significance**, Donoghue et al NCI 1999. The John Hopkins Comparative Non-profit Sector Project applies a Structural/Operational definition to define the parameters of the non-state, non-profit making Sector, on the basis of including organisations that are:

- Organised: they have an institutional presence and structure;
- Private or non-governmental: they are institutionally separate from the state;
- Non-profit distributing: they do not return profits to their managers or to a set of 'owners';
- Self-governing: they are fundamentally in control of their own affairs;
- Voluntary: membership is not legally required and such organisations attract some level of voluntary contribution of time or money.

Employment in Community and Voluntary sector

2.47 While the NCI study does not define the Community and Voluntary sector in hile the NCI study does not define the Community and Voluntary sector in precisely the same way as Faughnan (it includes religious entities for example), it does shed useful light on the scale of the sector. The study shows that, in 1995, paid employment in the Community and Voluntary sector amounted to 3 per cent of the non-agricultural workforce, i.e. 32,136 paid employees. Volunteering within

the sector came to 31,919 full-time equivalents. In other words, the value of voluntary work within the sector was as much again as that of paid employment within the sector. Social services accounted for location of 42.3% of volunteers. Some 52% of the sector's funding comes from public (State and EU) sources. However, this average masks wide variations. Development and Housing organisations received 95% of their funding from public sources. Other relevant subdivisions include social services (50%), civic and advocacy (66%), culture and recreational (52%) and health (26%).

Irish and International Non-profit Sector: Comparison

2.48 The report concluded that the Irish non-profit Sector, which includes the Community and Voluntary sector, is economically significant and compares favourably to non-profit Sectors of other countries included in the study. Paid employment here, at 12.2% of the non-agricultural labour force, is second highest (after the Dutch non-profit Sector) of the countries studied. The size of the Irish non-profit workforce is well above the EU average (7%) and the international average (5.5%). Irish volunteers make up a lower proportion of the non-agricultural workforce than most other countries at 2.8% compared with the EU proportion of 4.2%. However, the significance of volunteering for certain categories such as Social Services is above the international average. The expenditure of the Irish non-profit Sector (8% of GDP) is also above the EU average (6% of GDP) and international average (5% of GDP). When volunteers are included expenditure increases to 9.5% of GDP which is slightly above the EU and international averages.

2.49 In sum, there is no agreed "definition" of the Community and Voluntary

n sum, there is no agreed "definition" of the Community and Voluntary

sector and gaps in our knowledge about its nature, scope and size. For the purposes of the White Paper, the Faughnan description (para. 2.42) is the working approach employed. It is clear, however, that there are huge differences in scale in the sector, from small community projects on the one hand to large organisations representing particular groups. Nonetheless, there are many shared values and identified needs, and the White Paper will set in train an agenda for change which will hopefully enable these values to be strengthened and meet a range of the needs.

2.50 **In addition, it is proposed that the Government will commission during 2001,** **n addition, it is proposed that the Government will commission during 2001, a** **programme of research which will include quantifying the full extent of Community and Voluntary activity in Ireland, its contribution to social development, to the economy and to employment. This will build on the previous work undertaken, e.g. by NCI and on related research proposals being developed by TCD (see paragraph 4.21).** The Government is making an allocation of £400,000 available for this purpose. The research programme will also support work that examines the Irish Community and Voluntary sector in an international context and identifies best practice abroad in relation to governance and legal issues such as incorporation, registration and charitable status.

2.51 The findings of the research programme will be important in informing the ongoing debate on the issues involved in the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

2.52 The White Paper sets out Government plans and decisions in relation to a broad

he White Paper sets out Government plans and decisions in relation to a broad range of issues that are relevant to the relationship between the Community and Voluntary sector and the statutory sector. Subsequent to its publication, there will be a need for a mechanism to oversee the detailed implementation of these decisions and to advise the Government on an ongoing basis in relation to issues that come up for resolution.

2.53 **An Implementation and Advisory Group will be established. It will have a**
n Implementation and Advisory Group will be established. It will have a mix
of statutory and voluntary and community representatives and will be co-chaired by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs and the Department of Health and Children. As well as overseeing the implementation of the decisions contained in the White Paper, the Group will identify unresolved issues arising in a national context - some of which are identified in this White Paper. It will pursue a resolution of such issues as far as possible e.g. regulatory framework, development of standard protocols for financial accountability, addressing overlaps and gaps in support for the sector. It will provide a forum for discussion of issues of general relevance to the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector and help to promote awareness in this area.

2.54 The terms of reference for the Group (see **Chapter 6**) provide for a formal review
he terms of reference for the Group (see **Chapter 6**) provide for a formal review of
its working and the White Paper after a three-year period.

Additional funding for Community and Voluntary sector supports

2.55 The Government fully recognises the valuable role of the Community and

he Government fully recognises the valuable role of the Community and Voluntary sector in the development of a mature civil society and in meeting social needs. It is committed to continued support for the sector in meeting those needs and, indeed, to the development of that support as resources allow and in the context of continued social partnership, which has proved vital in ensuring our recent economic success. Support for the sector is set to rise very significantly under the **National Development Plan** and other commitments already announced to develop and improve our health and personal social service provision. Other proposals for enhancement of funding available under individual programmes and schemes delivering particular services will be brought forward as part of the normal annual budgetary process.

2.56 The Government is bringing forward, as part of this White Paper, a package of measures, costing £7 million, to enhance the capacity of the sector to organise itself at national level, to foster the development of additional support and training within the sector and to further support volunteering. Detailed information on these additional funds is set out in Chapters 4 and 5 and summary details are contained in the Table below.

TABLE 2

Additional funding announced in this White Paper	
Amount	**Purpose**
National Anti-poverty networks	IR£0.6 million
Other Federations and Networks	IR£2.0 million
Community Sector training and supports	IR£2.0 million
Support for Community and Voluntary Fora established as part of local Government reform process	IR£1.0 million
Support for Volunteering	IR£1.0 million
Research Programme	IR£0.4 million

Chapter Three - Structures Underpinning the Relationship

It is the Government that is responsible for making key decisions on social and economic policy issues. However, the context in which these constitutionally-based powers and responsibilities are exercised is increasingly one of social partnership. This White Paper develops and makes more explicit the participation of the Community and Voluntary sector in partnership and consultation mechanisms, within the overall constitutional and legal framework that governs public administration.

The goal of the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector is to achieve the common aims of both Sectors*, while respecting the separate roles and responsibilities of each. Government Departments and State Agencies will ensure that there are administrative arrangements in place to underpin the effective functioning of the working relationship.*

Introduction

3.1 This Chapter sets out the broad principles and practical arrangements to support or underpin the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector. First it is useful to set out briefly the role of each Sector and the context in which each operates.

The role of government

3.2 The Government is collectively responsible for the Departments of State administered by Ministers. The basic law of the State is the Constitution, **Bunreacht na hÉireann**. In accordance with the Constitution, all powers of government derive from the people, whose right it is to designate the rulers of the State; the State is to be governed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution; the executive power of the State is exercised by or on the authority of the Government; and the Government is responsible to the Oireachtas, which has sole right to legislate for the State.

3.3 Cabinet subcommittees are used as a forum to address issues of particular concern to a number of Departments. The cabinet subcommittee system brings together Ministers and Departments centrally involved in particular policy issues and facilitates discussion, and co-ordinated decision-making. (For example, the Cabinet Subcommittee on Social Inclusion oversaw the formulation of the discussion papers that led to this White Paper.)

3.4 It is the Government's responsibility to determine priorities in the allocation of resources. Individual Departments and agencies are responsible for delivering good quality and value for money services to their specific customer groups, within

policy and resource parameters determined for them by the Government.

3.5 Ministers and civil servants are accountable to the Oireachtas and to the citizen. Public Servants in local authorities and other local or regional agencies are directly responsible to their elected representatives or boards. In our system, Ministers are accountable in a very direct and personal way for their decisions and the work of their Departments. Ministers - in their role as elected public representatives - have channels of communication and information direct from the citizen and thus are in an especially good position to reflect and distil a wide range of opinion and demands coming from grass roots level.

3.6 **It is the Government that is ultimately solely responsible for making key decisions on social and economic policy issues – no matter how extensive a process of prior consultation that may have taken place.** However, the context in which these constitutionally-based powers and responsibilities are exercised is increasingly one of social partnership. The way in which Ministers and civil servants work takes account of relationships with other representative parties. For example, the social partners - including representatives of the Community and Voluntary sector - have a formalised role in advising on, negotiating and agreeing a range of economic and social policies at the level of National Partnership agreements. At individual Department and agency level, the management and development of policy in relation to individual programmes or policy areas is informed by the social partners in a wide range of advisory committees and consultation mechanisms. This White Paper develops and makes more explicit the participation of the Community and Voluntary sector in partnership and consultation mechanisms.

3.7 Our system of government is underpinned by the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924, which provides that the Minister in charge of each Department is a 'corporation sole'. Essentially this means that the Minister is responsible for acts of his or her Department and officials as if they were his or her own acts. The Public Service Management Act 1997 provides a framework for the devolution of authority, responsibility and accountability to civil servants. It assigned managerial responsibility to the Secretary-General for the Department, while the Minister remains responsible for policy and determining outcomes. The Freedom of Information Act 1997 came into effect on 21 April 1998 for central Government Departments. It provides a right of access to information held by public bodies. These rights are overseen by an independent Information Commissioner who reviews decisions made by public bodies under the Act.

The changing face of the Statutory sector

3.8 Change within the Public Service is being driven by many factors, including an increased demand for quality services, more emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness in the use of scarce resources and the recognised need for the promotion of policies which will achieve sustainable economic growth, employment and social well-being.

3.9 The Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) which was launched in February 1994, required each Government Department to examine and review its performance under three main headings:

- The contribution it could make to national development
- The quality of services provided to the public
- The provision of value for money to the taxpayer

3.10 In May 1996, a report, **Delivering Better Government**, written by a Co-ordinating Group of Secretaries-General, was published. The report focused on the achievement of an excellent service for the Government and for the public as customers and clients at all levels, by building on the good service already provided. A central SMI team was set up in the Department of the Taoiseach to oversee the implementation of SMI across the civil service. This involved the production by each Department of a **Strategy Statement**, setting out its **Mission Statement, Values and High Level Goals**.

3.11 The Public Service Management Act 1997, which came into effect in September 1997, provides a new management structure to enhance management, effectiveness and transparency of the operation of Department and to increase the accountability of civil servants. The Strategy Statements, now formalised by the legislation, can be seen as a link between Government policy and its implementation. The Act underpins, among other matters, the provision of quality services, the establishment of the performance management system, the implementation of revised financial management systems and the business planning process.

3.12 Other significant legislative changes with a profound impact on our system of public administration include the Committees of the House of the Oireachtas Act 1997 and the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995, all representing significant change in governance arrangements. These reforms have implications for various groups: citizens, the Oireachtas, Ministers, Government Officials and staff working in State Agencies and non-Departmental bodies.

The role of the Community and Voluntary sector

3.13 The Government recognises that the Community and Voluntary sector plays a crucial role in a mature democratic society, quite separate to and independent of the institutions of Government. It represents the engagement by individuals in their own development, in that of their communities and of the wider society. The Government values the existence of a lively and involved Community and Voluntary sector independent and sufficiently wide-ranging to represent the many diverse elements of society. Civil society is greatly enriched when ordinary citizens come together in voluntary action, community involvement and self-help initiatives. The sector has a specific role in ensuring that the experiences and interests of marginalised communities and groups are articulated and are heard when decisions that affect them are being made.

3.14 The Community and Voluntary sector has a special role and potential to:

- Help create a vibrant civil and active society in which individuals are encouraged and enabled to participate fully. This is an essential component of a mature democracy;
- Respond to pressing social needs quickly, directly and effectively;
- Pioneer new approaches to service provision and local and community development;
- Improve the effectiveness of services through feed-back and monitoring of services by consumers and users;
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to participate and develop skills;
- Create employment opportunities through the provision of services and through the activities of community development projects, thus contributing to community infrastructure;
- Foster self-help and enable people to become active participants in shaping their future;
- Identify needs and appropriate responses tailored to the specific needs of local

communities and neighbourhoods and specific communities of interests;

- Offer new solutions where conventional approaches have failed;
- Enable people who are excluded to become involved in the regeneration process in their own communities and at a wider societal level.

The relationship between the State and the sector

3.15 The Government is not, of necessity, a player in voluntary activity and many voluntary organisations do not have a formal relationship with the statutory sector. The main areas where there is a working relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector include:

- Communicating consumers' views and requirements
- Developing new services to meet emerging needs
- Advocacy, lobbying and campaigning
- Inputs to policy development and the planning of economic and social policy or programmes
- Contracting delivery of services
- Establishing good practice
- Monitoring and evaluation of the work of specific programmes
- Ongoing role in negotiating and developing the sector's relationship with the State.

3.16 Participation in this context can be defined as an exchange between citizens and government, between those who make policy and people affected by policy choices. Participation and dialogue allow greater public involvement in governmental action. To be meaningful, participation should lead to more successful outcomes. Its precise form is shaped by the problem at hand. However,

such participation must be balanced against the democratic base of elected governments, since no group other than elected representatives has a mandate to speak for the whole of society. Participation is a way of sharing responsibility for policy choices and hence represents a wider and more participatory democracy. While retaining ultimate responsibility for decision-making with elected representatives, participation is essential in the achievement of a wider consensus. It is essential in ensuring that the interests and experiences emanating directly from communities and interests across society are heard when decisions that affect the social and economic development of our society are being made.

3.17 In a study of service provision for the OECD (Shand and Arnberg, 1996) a continuum of options for client participation was proposed. This continuum is a useful framework in shedding light on the context in which the relationship between statutory agencies and the sector takes place:

- information
- consultation
- partnership
- delegation
- control

3.18 This continuum moves from minimum to significant public participation in government choices. Consultation varies in form from simply informing people what government proposes to do (information) to various levels of empowerment (partnership, delegation and control) explicitly designed to involve those outside government in a decision.

3.19 The goal of the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector is to achieve the common aims of both Sectors, while respecting the separate roles and responsibilities of each. The relationship being outlined in this White Paper between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector will have due regard to the ultimate responsibility of the Government and the Oireachtas as decision-makers. It is important in this context to note that from time to time it is necessary and desirable for the State to bring together **conflicting stakeholders** on issues where consensus is not possible. This will continue to be the case in democratic societies made up of individuals and groups with multiple and often competing interests.

3.20 The relationship will be founded on certain principles (see 3.63). The difference between consultation, negotiation and decision-making must be acknowledged - the kind of relationship in which the sector and the State engage in must 'fit the purpose' of the particular circumstances. Logistical problems associated with developing the relationship exist and both Sectors will, from time to time, need to compromise. Both flexibility and realism are required.

Mechanisms that facilitate consultation between the sector and State bodies

3.21 The developing and widening role of the Community and Voluntary sector has already led to the establishment of a wide range of mechanisms for consultation with the State and involvement in the policy-making process.

3.22 There are a range of mechanisms that either already facilitate consultation by the sector with the State or have potential to be important in that regard:

1) National representative structures (including those that represent particular segments of the Community and Voluntary sector);

2) The Community and Voluntary Pillar, the mechanism created to participate in the negotiations leading to **Partnership 2000** and its successor, the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**;

3) Consultation mechanisms set up by individual Departments and agencies which involve the sector;

4) Local Development Agencies (e.g. Area-based Partnerships);

5) New arrangements emerging from the ongoing process of local government reform, including County Development Boards and local community fora;

6) Regional bodies;

7) National consultative bodies (NESF and NESC) on which the sector is represented alongside the other social partner and statutory interests;

8) The National Anti-Poverty Strategy.

1 National representative structures

3.23 There has been a debate within the sector in regard to the question of a formal national organisation to represent the Community and Voluntary sector as a whole - such an organisation exists in Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Activity). It may well be that given the diversity of the Community and Voluntary sector it is appropriate for it to be organised along sectoral lines. On the other hand, there may be a case for an umbrella body which can pull the various strands together. This is an issue for consideration and resolution by the sector itself, rather than by Government. Having said that, there would be advantages - in terms of more formalised and streamlined channels of communication - from the Government's point of view in a situation where one or more umbrella bodies or 'coalitions' could represent the sector, or elements within the sector, for specific purposes or in the relationship with specific Departments/agencies, or for Social Partnership purposes. Indeed this already occurs to some extent.

3.24 Sectoral organisations are now well developed in Ireland and there are many co-ordinating bodies, sometimes referred to as federations, umbrella bodies or networks. In addition to their policy formation and liaison role with statutory agencies, umbrella bodies have an important role to play in the context of the overall development of the Community and Voluntary sector. They provide support, training, information and other developmental services for the affiliated organisations. Their role is important in reconciling the inherent tension between the autonomy of individual organisations and the need for planning for the pursuit of common Sectoral interests, thus developing internal cohesion in the sector. Liaising with Government and undertaking a co-ordinating role for the sector is time consuming and resources are required for these tasks.

2. The Community and Voluntary Pillar

3.25 The **Community and Voluntary Pillar** represents a wide range of Community and Voluntary organisations which was brought together in the context of the need for a representative structure and negotiating voice for the sector in the discussions that lead up to **Partnership 2000** and the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**. The Pillar consists of the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU), the Congress Centres for the Unemployed, Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI), the National Women's Council of Ireland, National Youth Council of Ireland, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Protestant Aid and the Community Platform. The **Community Platform** consists of 22 participant organisations with a focus on social inclusion and social justice issues.

3.26 The Pillar, along with the monitoring arrangements put in place for the life of the Agreement, is an interesting model of how the voice of the disadvantaged Sectors

of society can be represented at national agreement level alongside elected representatives and traditional social partners. There has been some debate within the sector about the possible widening the range of Community and Voluntary sector participants in the national partnership arena, including the question of bringing together other platforms with a specific focus (e.g. housing, disability, environmental issues) for this purpose.

3.27 Another recent development is the emergence of **The Wheel**. This is a movement for groups and individuals who wish to explore ways and means in which the Community and Voluntary sector might come together in a more cohesive and meaningful way. It recognises the importance of education and training, of communications and of information technology in advancing this objective. It is not a voice for the sector but aims to act as a catalyst behind many voices within the sector. It recognises the good work of many organisations working in the Community and Voluntary sector and acknowledge their success.

3.28 The question of appropriate representative structures is, of course, one for the sector itself. As already stated above, the Government recognises and welcomes the diversity of the sector and recognises the right of the sector to develop appropriate structures to reflect the diversity of the sector. This has clear strengths, but also poses problems for Government in figuring out who is representing whom and may mean that a range of views must be sought. From time to time, depending on the issue to be examined, Working Groups will be set up which will include representatives from the Community and Voluntary sector. Where representative groups exist, and are agreed by the Community and Voluntary sector to have legitimacy, nominations will be called for. However, Government reserve the right to appoint individuals who have particular expertise, knowledge of an area, etc.,

particularly where it is clear that there is no representative structure, or where it is clear that there is no public agreement on a way forward on an issue.

3. Consultation mechanisms set up by individual Departments and agencies which involve the sector

3.29 These include advisory and monitoring committees that give the sector a voice in relation to policy development or management of particular programmes. They also include co-ordinating committees that seek to arrange coherent delivery of services delivered by a mix of statutory and voluntary organisations, as well as giving the latter a voice in policy and funding issues.

3.30 Co-ordinating committees have been established at Health Board level e.g. in relation to childcare, violence against women, services for people with disability. The pilot Integrated Services Process (ISP), which is being implemented in four target areas, was developed under the aegis of the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation. Area Development Management (ADM) Ltd. is responsible for the day-to-day management of the process on behalf of the Department. The ISP aims to provide a more focused and co-ordinated response by State agencies to the needs of disadvantaged urban areas, in conjunction with the local communities.

3.31 Examples of national level advisory committees can be found in the sports area (Sports Council), youth work (Department of Education and Science), community development and money advice services (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs). The National Youth Work Advisory Committee, which was established under the terms of the Youth Work Act 1997, has continued to meet with a view to advising and consulting with the Minister for Education and Science on matters relating to youth work.

3.32 Not all voluntary organisations wish to work closely with the State in consultative fora. Some regard it as a mark of their independence to have little or no contact with State agencies. In general, mutuality of interest is a cornerstone in this whole area with emphasis on consultation and participation where necessary and desirable, rather than for its own sake. The Government values the independence of the sector and will continue to encourage this, e.g. by promotion of development of additional sources of funding to support Community and Voluntary activity (e.g. by the business Sector).

Establishment of Voluntary Activity Units in Certain Government Departments

3.33 In order for dialogue to take place between the Community and Voluntary sector and State agencies, there is a need for transparency in the relationship between Government Departments and agencies and the Community and Voluntary sector. People represented by the sector must be facilitated to participate in dialogue with the State about problems, policy solutions and the implementation of policies. It is important that Government Departments which have significant contact with the Community and Voluntary sector adopt an enabling approach and that they adopt community development principles of participation and inclusion in their work. In this context, a Voluntary Activity Support Unit or Units will be designated in relevant Government Departments whose responsibility it would be to monitor that relationship. Such Units already exist in the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (Community and Voluntary Services section and the Family Affairs Unit). Units discharging similar functions also exist in other Departments. For example, a Unit has also been established in the Housing Division of the Department of the Environment and Local Government. It deals with all aspects of

the provision of housing by the voluntary housing Sector (but not liaison with the wider Community and Voluntary sector and the Department on other issues, e.g. environmental protection, local development, where separate units have responsibility). Such units could be responsible for liaising with the Community and Voluntary sector regarding policy development and service and programme delivery. As a guiding principle they should adopt a proactive approach to the sector and, as needed, provide training to their staff and develop support structures and animate where necessary new voluntary organisations.

4. Local Development Agencies

3.34 These include Leader Companies, Local Drugs Task Forces and the 38 Local Development Partnerships (LDPs) financed through Area Development Management (ADM). These agencies have become a major focus of national and EU policy.

3.35 The Local Development Partnerships, in particular, are characterised by:

- structures which are area-based;
- a partnership of local interests, including state agencies, social partners and Community and Voluntary interests;
- specific attention is given to the inclusion of the target population. Partnerships must also reflect the Government's policy on gender balance which requires that at least 40 per cent of either gender are members of the board;
- strategic planning which involves multi-dimensional integrated programmes of economic, social and cultural development.

3.36 The advent of LDPs opened up new opportunities and challenges for the

Community and Voluntary sector in that it brought the sector into involvement in planning at a broad area level. A key to the success of the Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development and other similar delivery mechanisms is that they have been highly innovative in their working methods and in preparing flexible, targeted and integrated responses to local needs. However, the institutional complexity of the range of statutory and intermediary delivery mechanisms involved has been criticised, not least by potential customers seeking to identify the most appropriate source of assistance. There is a strong need for greater integration of structures and services and the Government has now commenced a move towards an integrated local Government and local development system.

5. Local Government reform/County Development Boards

3.37 This process of reforming and revitalising local government and integrating local government and local development systems is currently underway. In June 1998, the Government established an interdepartmental Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems. The Task Force Report (August 1998) has been approved by Government and the Task Force has been continued so as to oversee implementation of the Report's recommendations.

3.38 The Task Force was concerned to develop a vision and strategy which would encompass, in an integrated way, the many State and local development agencies operating at the local level, thus significantly strengthening local input. The Task Force considered that this could best be achieved at the county/city level. This includes the establishment of a broadly representative Development Board (CDB) in each city and county local authority.

3.39 The CDB, which is local government-led, will develop a Strategy for Social,

Economic and Cultural Development for the county/city (not later than 2002) in full partnership with all interests. The Strategy will be endorsed by the county/city council. Through the County/City Development Board, the local authority, together with relevant local organisations and agencies, will discuss and agree a vision and plan for the local area, in the context of drawing up the Strategy. A Director of Community and Enterprise and support staff have been appointed by each county/city authority to assist each CDB in preparing and implementing the Strategy.

3.40 As part of the process of establishment of the CDBs, in each city and county area, Community and Voluntary Fora have been set up to select the sector's representatives on the Board and its supporting groups, as well as to more generally feed into the work of each Board. The Fora encompass a broad range of groups and organisations, including those with a focus on social inclusion and also groups with a focus on sporting/cultural/recreation and heritage type work.

3.41 The Fora were established in recent months following an extensive consultative process led by the Directors of Community and Enterprise in each county/city and facilitated by the local authorities, local development agencies and community/voluntary groups within the wider community. Structures and resources are being put in place to facilitate a two-way dialogue between Fora members and the community interests they represent and to support the sector's representatives on the Boards.

3.42 These Fora also have the potential to facilitate an interface with a wide range of State bodies outside of the local government area. The Government will ensure that the necessary financial resources are made available to the Fora so that this

potential can be developed. **A sum of £1 million per annum is being made available for this purpose in the Vote of the Department of Environment and Local Government**. Agencies will, where appropriate, be encouraged to consult with the local fora where seeking feedback or input in relation to their policies or initiatives from a wide range of Community and Voluntary sector interests at county level. Local authorities have also established new Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), finding new ways of involving local people more closely in their work. New guidelines for the establishment and operation of SPCs have issued to all local authorities.

3.43 The Task Force had detailed discussions on implementation with local government/local development interests and the four pillars under social partnership. The process of implementation is underway viz.: Directors of Community and Enterprise were recruited in the latter part of 1999 for County/City local authorities. Inaugural meetings of CDBs were held between February and May 2000. The Task Force published guidance on the County/City Strategies in May 2000.

6. Regionally-Based Bodies

3.44 These include the Western Development Commission and the new Regional Assemblies for the Border, Midlands and Western Region and the Eastern and Southern Region set up in the context of the National Development Plan (NDP). Regional bodies such as these have considerable potential to foster greater collaboration and consultation between statutory agencies and Community and Voluntary groups operating in their regions. The two regional Assemblies are the managing authorities for their respective Operational Programme under the NDP. Each Operational Programme will be supervised by a Monitoring Committee,

which will include representation from the Community and Voluntary sector.

3.45 The Monitoring Committees will be responsible for decisions regarding EU co-financed measures in the Operational Programmes including decisions on the reallocation of co-funded expenditure between measures within the Regional Operational Programme. They will also be responsible for the mid-term review of the Operational Programmes in conjunction with the Department of Finance.

3.46 The Western Development Commission was established on a statutory basis on 1 February 1999. It is responsible for promoting the economic and social development of the Western Region (the Counties of Connacht, plus Clare and Donegal). The Western Development Commission has an important co-ordinating role in relation to the activities of public and private bodies operating in the Region.

3.47 The Western Development Commission will operate the Western Investment Fund for which the Government is providing £25m. The Fund will provide loans and take equity in a small number of strategically important investments in business start-up and growth oriented small and medium enterprises and in community based developments aimed at encouraging enterprise establishment. It will be an additional, complementary support providing funding which is geared to the enterprise environment in the region.

7. National consultative bodies (NESF and NESC) in which the sector participates as a social partner

3.48 The National Economic and Social Council was established in 1973. Its main task is to provide a forum for discussion of the principles relating to the efficient

development of the national economy, and the achievement of social justice, and to advise the Government on their application. Over 100 reports have been published by the Council on such areas as general economic and social policy, industrial policy, housing, social service priorities, agriculture, rural development and emigration. Since the mid-1980s, the Council has published a series of strategy reports to identify in a holistic way a range of interrelated measures necessary to foster economic progress and social inclusion.

3.49 Membership of the Council includes five nominees of the Community and Voluntary sector, nominated through the Community and Voluntary Pillar.

3.50 The National Economic and Social Forum was established by Government in 1993 to contribute to the formation of a wider national consensus on social and economic policy initiatives, particularly in relation to unemployment. Since its reconstitution in 1998, the Forum's terms of reference are focused on evaluating the implementation of policies dealing with equality and social inclusion. Membership of the Forum is drawn from four broad strands:

- Members of the Oireachtas
- Employer, Trade Union and Farming Organisations
- The Community and Voluntary sector, nominated via the Community and Voluntary Pillar
- Central Government, Local Government and Independent members.

3.51 It is intended that the NESF will carry out its work programme through the use of Project Teams reflecting the Forum's new focus on policy implementation and constitute a new way of working. The Teams, whose membership is drawn from

all strands of the Forum, will take a project-based approach to the evaluation of specific topics.

3.52 The Government has indicated our intention to place both the NESF and the NESC on a statutory basis within a new Office for National Economic and Social Development. This will ensure closer co-ordination and links between the two bodies within an overall framework of support.

8. National Anti-Poverty Strategy

3.53 Arising from commitments made at the UN World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, the Irish Government approved the development of a National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS). The ten-year strategy was launched in April 1997 following wide-ranging consultation with and participation by the social partners. Such consultation with and involvement of the Community and Voluntary sector, users of services and those with first-hand experience of poverty was a central feature of the development of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy. The key themes of the Strategy were identified following a series of consultation seminars. A Working Group was then established to develop each key theme - income adequacy, long-term unemployment, disadvantaged urban areas, rural poverty and educational disadvantage - and bring forward detailed recommendations for action. The Government is committed to continuing this process of participation and consultation in the development, ongoing implementation and review of NAPS.

Target Setting

3.54 The global target of the NAPS, updated in June 1999, is as follows:

"*Over the period 1997-2007, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy will aim at considerably reducing the numbers of those who are 'consistently poor' to less than 5%, as measured by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).*" Consistent poverty is defined as being below 60% of average household income and experiencing enforced basic deprivation (measured through the identification of the presence of at least one of eight indicators, e.g. two pairs of strong shoes; not having recourse to debt to meet ordinary living expenses, etc.).

3.55 While NAPS looks at poverty in a global context, it also examines specifics within key themes, each with its own subsidiary targets and timeframes. The original NAPS themes were unemployment, income adequacy, educational disadvantage, urban disadvantage and poverty. The Government has asked the IDPC to draw up new targets to reflect the changed social and economic environment, for example in relation to education and adult literacy, and to consider action targets in relation to particular groups such as children in poverty. The input of the social partners will be particularly valuable in the area of target setting.

3.56 This announcement showed the Government's consideration of moving into a new phase with the NAPS, encompassing a broader social inclusion strategy to rebase the original targets and begin to consider new areas where a strategic response could be used to alleviate exclusion. This process was continued in the context of negotiating the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**. It is agreed in the Programme that the NAPS be updated, the underlying methodology reviewed, and the existing targets reviewed and revised where appropriate. In particular, new targets will be considered under the themes of child poverty, women's poverty, health, older people and housing/accommodation.

Proposed Future NAPS Developments

3.57 The poverty proofing process is due to be reviewed following the completion of the pilot phase. Also, the potential for introducing an appropriate training module for Government officials on the NAPS and poverty proofing will be considered.

- The Combat Poverty Agency produced its first assessment of progress to date which highlighted key issues for consideration in the further implementation of the NAPS. The NESF is also producing an opinion on the implementation of the NAPS and has an ongoing role in its monitoring.

- Ways of extending NAPS to local authorities will be examined and implemented.

- Progression of EU-assisted transnational study - led by the Combat Poverty Agency and including the NAPS Unit - for the development of guidelines for the involvement of excluded persons and the organisations which represent them in the development, implementation and evaluation of social inclusion and anti-poverty strategies.

- Resources will be allocated to health research. Data systems will be adapted to enable disaggregation of health access and outcomes across NAPS target groups.

- A working group will identify the scope for developing a NAPS framework within the health Sector.

Further mechanisms for broadening the consultation

3.58 The Government is keen to widen the opportunities for individuals working in Community and Voluntary groups to participate in the process of influencing policy. The range of consultation mechanisms discussed above is being augmented by a Government decision that relevant Departments and agencies will undertake to hold regular policy fora in future to allow for wider consultation and participation in the policy-making process.

3.59 An example of what is proposed is the series of Family Fora for Community and

Voluntary groups who work with families at a local level being undertaken by the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs. The Fora were initiated in late 1998. The Fora provide groups with an opportunity to discuss with the Minister and officials the issues they encounter in the course of their work with families. To date, over 1,000 people have attended the Fora throughout the State.

3.60 In order to provide for a range of views on substantive issues, the Government has decided to extend this initiative. It is proposed that such policy Fora will be held on particular theme issues (e.g. childcare, the arts). These could be organised on a local level, or nationally - annually or every two years. They could be linked in with consultation mechanisms under the Social Inclusion Strategy. The Government expects that relevant Departments and agencies would take the lead in organising such Fora.

3.61 Government Departments and State Agencies will ensure that there are administrative arrangements in place to underpin the effective functioning of the working relationship. Each Department and Agency will outline its role and future plans that relate to the sector and publish information on a regular basis.

Best Practice in consultation

3.62 Government Departments and agencies will adhere to the ‘best practice' guidelines in relation to consultation by statutory agencies with the sector set out in **Appendix 3**.

Principles that should inform the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary Sector and the State.

3.63 The following are a set of principles or commitments that emerged from the

wide-spread consultation process leading up to publication of this White Paper.

The Government suggests that these should be seen as basic principles informing the relationship between the State and the sector.

Joint Principles applying to both the Statutory sector and the Community and Voluntary sector

1 Both Sectors value openness, accountability and transparency in the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

2 Services and programmes will be informed by the principles of respect for the individual's dignity, privacy and confidentiality. They will also be informed by the rights of users to quality services that are accessible to them, e.g. people with disabilities. Services and programmes should have regard for commitments under the Constitution, EU and International Treaties and Conventions.

3 There is a shared commitment by both the State and the sector to ensure the involvement of consumers and people who avail of services in the planning, delivery, management and evaluation of policy and programmes. This applies at all levels: national, regional and local.

4 There is a commitment by the State and the sector to focus on the needs of the most disadvantaged.

5 The sector and the State are committed to paying particular attention to the needs of groups experiencing discrimination, especially those named in Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty.

6 There is a commitment to achieving equality of opportunity, access, treatment by both the State and the sector and to the development of mechanisms to do this. This includes the commitment to affirmative action for particular target groups.

7 There is a joint commitment relating to fostering co-operation and the co-ordination within and across each Sector as well as between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector.

8 There is a commitment on the part of both the State and the sector to provide access to, and to share, information relevant to the pursuit of shared objectives.

9 The State and the sector commit themselves to carrying out regular monitoring

and evaluation of their individual actions and of the co-operation between them.

10 The State and the sector each recognise their mutual right to constructively critique each other's actions and policies.

11 f both the State and the sector to create and support the appropriate mechanisms, institution and conduits to enable the State to relate to the sector and its component parts.

12 There is a commitment to developing mutual understanding of the culture and operating principles of each Sector and to take practical steps to achieve this. Both Sectors commit themselves to using working methods that are flexible and efficient in the context of the growing demands and range of tasks posed by modern society.

Principles Informing the State

1 The State recognises and validates the sector as a core component of a vibrant civil society and the effort to build a broader, more participative and more accountable democracy in Ireland.

2 The State commits itself to respect the autonomy and diversity of the Community and Voluntary sector and acknowledges its role as a legitimate social partner. This relates to a variety of partnership arenas. In particular, the State recognises that Community and Voluntary groups, who providing services or undertake community or local development work with statutory funding, have a right to be consulted about policy in relation to the design and delivery of services/programmes.

3 The State recognises and welcomes the diversity of the sector.

4 The State acknowledges the right of the sector to organise and represent itself

5 The State acknowledges the role of the sector in inputting to policy-making and the pursuit of common objectives. This includes proposed legislation, development of relevant policies (i.e. policy areas of immediate interest and having an impact on the work of both), monitoring of existing policies and consultations with end-users of public services. The State will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to give effect to this.

Principles informing the Community and Voluntary sector

1 The sector recognises and values its diversity as well as recognising and valuing its commonly held features. Appropriate structures to reflect this should be developed.

2 The sector will continually develop itself as a Sector, enhancing communication and building co-operation between its component parts.

3 The sector will maintain its ethos as a Sector distinct from the State, albeit acknowledging a role in supplying services on contract from the State.

4 The sector is accountable for any resources received from the Exchequer, EU or private sources.

5 The sector will engage in work and actions designed to impact at policy level.

6 The sector recognises that public authorities as statutory bodies have legal responsibilities in delivering services.

Chapter Four- Enabling the sector

There has been an enormous growth in the Community and Voluntary sector in recent years. This has created increased needs for training and other technical supports to enable groups to do their work more effectively.

A key determinant of the health of society is the degree to which individuals are prepared to come forward to give of their own time on a voluntary basis. The Government is committed to encouraging individual volunteering. Measures that promote active participation by people in the community will be promoted. Next year, 2001, is UN International Year of Volunteers. A National Committee on Volunteering will be established to devise strategies and actions for supporting and developing volunteering, not just during the International Year, but for the longer term.

Introduction

4.1 The Community and Voluntary sector is a very diverse Sector, made up of very many separate groups and organisations of widely differing size, constitution, resources and focus, working at local, regional or national level. This diversity demands a flexible and nuanced response, not only in the provision of funding by Government, but also in the availability of other kinds of supports to realise the full potential of the sector in contributing to our national life at all levels.

4.2 Funding is clearly a vital part of enabling the sector to realise this potential, but the issue is also much wider than funding alone. Aside from funding, which is discussed in Chapter 5, the task of **enabling the sector** encompasses the following distinct elements:

Technical Supports

- Provision of direct supports to the sector by Departments, specialised national agencies and local statutory agencies
- Provision of dedicated support structures for local groups and projects participating in certain funding programmes (e.g. the Community Development Programme regional and specialist support agencies) and the encouragement of the emergence of other voluntary Sector-based training and support services for the wider Sector

Volunteering

- Support and fostering of volunteering

Legal and regulatory issues

- A supportive legal and regulatory framework

4.3 This Chapter discusses each of these areas as set out below.

Technical Supports

Overview

4.4 There has been an enormous growth in the Community and Voluntary sector in recent years. This has created increased needs for training and other technical supports to enable groups to do their work more effectively, which have not always been matched by increased provision of resources.

4.5 The precise technical support needs of individual voluntary organisations and community groups will vary depending on the focus of the specific group and/or its stage of development. The range of supports needed within the sector can be categorised as follows:

- Management and organisational development and personal/professional development of staff;
- Support for the relationships with statutory agencies;
- Support for networking;
- Support for the role of contributing to policy formation, including research;
- Evaluation and review;
- Support for volunteers and volunteering;
- Training and support in community development skills and in the involvement and participation of the most marginalised;
- Support for information dissemination, to the public, opinion and policy-makers and to membership, as may be relevant;
- Production of resource materials and provision of technical advice.

4.6 Clearly, the primary responsibility for identification of their training and support needs rests with individual groups and organisations in the sector themselves. Just

as not all voluntary activity will, or should, be funded by the State, it follows that the training and support needs of all Community and Voluntary sector organisations should not be met either by direct statutory provision or by grant aid. As indicated in **Chapter 5**, statutory support will be available to the sector for mutually agreed programmes of activities and where these programmes are consistent with Government policies and objectives, or where other public interest criteria apply.

4.7 The separate discussion in **Chapter 5** about comprehensiveness of funding lines and the need to ensure that funding is made available for staff training, management training and development, service evaluation and organisational reviews as well as main business of service delivery or community development and local development work, is very relevant here. This approach to funding will ensure that resources are available across a wide range of Community and Voluntary organisations for training and support needs, including the vital area of training and supporting volunteers.

Training of statutory personnel

4.8 One of the issues identified in the consultation process leading to the White Paper is the need for suitable training for statutory personnel whose work involves them in contact with the Community and Voluntary sector. Such training could include, as necessary, short-term familiarisation placements in the Community and Voluntary sector. Also training courses/seminars could be organised jointly by the State and the Community and Voluntary sector on themes of mutual interest. Statutory agencies and Community and Voluntary groups should adopt a proactive approach in ensuring that relevant staff have an understanding of the ways in which the sector works and the ethos and statutory framework that shape their roles.

Direct support

4.9 The State enables voluntary activity, not only by means of direct funding, but also by provision of direct supports. Many Health Boards, Local Authorities, VECs and other agencies employ development staff to support voluntary organisations working in their respective fields. While difficult to quantify, this direct support in kind and in staff resources is enormously important in making for a fruitful working relationship between statutory agencies and voluntary bodies and in more effectively meeting social need.

4.10 In addition to the supports provided by local and regional agencies, two statutory agencies, Comhairle (formerly the NSSB) and the Combat Poverty Agency, as well as ADM, an EU-funding intermediary body, provide support, including training, advice, resource materials and assistance in development of policy responses, to the sector. The support provided through State agencies complement other provision and broadens the options available to the sector, by providing specialist inputs, including research and publications.

Comhairle (formerly the National Social Services Board)

Comhairle is a statutory body whose mission is to ensure that all have easy access to the highest quality of information on social services. The Board has three strategic priorities - Information, Social Policy and Support to the Community and Voluntary sector. In line with the Board's mission, information is the pre-eminent strategic priority. In fulfilling its functions, the Board currently makes a significant contribution to the development of the Community and Voluntary sector including:

- Support for the development of the independent information Sector through the Citizens' Information Database and through the development and support of Citizens' Information Centres (CICs) and other independent information providers throughout the country;

- Community and Voluntary organisations in general through its training

programme, production of training materials/resources, social mentor programme, range of publications on social services and entitlement, development of a voluntary Sector databank and other support services for voluntary organisations, e.g. insurance schemes, pension schemes;

- Support for the Money Advice and Budgeting Services (MABS) through its Training and Community Education Service;

- The development of social policy by processing feedback from providers and users of information and advice services and providing feedback to the relevant service providers as appropriate.

The Comhairle Act 2000 provided for the establishment of a new organisation (Comhairle) to combine the National Social Service Board (NSSB) with certain disability, information and support functions of the National Rehabilitation Board (NRB). The Agency came into being on 12 June 2000. This is one of a series of measures being undertaken by the Government to mainstream the provision of services for people with disabilities. Comhairle will be responsible for the provision of independent information, advice, support and advocacy services for all, including people with disabilities.

Combat Poverty Agency

The Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) is a statutory agency under the aegis of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. The Agency has four main functions as laid down in the Combat Poverty Agency Act 1986:

- Advise and make recommendations to the Minister on all aspects of economic and social planning in relation to poverty;

- Initiate and evaluate measures aimed at overcoming poverty;

- Examine the nature, causes and extent of poverty along with the promoting, commissioning and interpreting of research;

- Promote greater public understanding of the nature, causes and extent of poverty and the measures necessary to overcome it.

The Agency's functions also include the collection and dissemination of information on poverty and community development and acting as a centre for counselling and training in relation to community development as a means of overcoming poverty, fostering and assisting (whether by means of the provision of financial or material aid or otherwise) projects of community development and activities to overcome poverty.

The Agency's work includes collection and dissemination of information on community development, piloting and providing training and other technical supports to a number of anti-poverty programmes, supporting the role of the sector in the NESF, supporting community representatives on the local Partnership Boards, publication of a range of resource materials and supporting training initiatives. The CPA is currently providing expert advice to the Inter-Departmental Policy Committee implementing the National Anti-Poverty Strategy. It also - along with ADM - acts as an intermediary funding body under the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation.

The CPA also has a major programme of research and public information.

Area Development Management Ltd.
Area Development Management Ltd. (ADM) was established on a non-statutory basis by the EU Commission and the Government. The mission statement for the Company is

> *"to support integrated local economic and social development through managing Programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and exclusion, and promoting reconciliation and equality".*

The Programmes which ADM manages have grown significantly in recent years:

- In 1994, ADM was given responsibility for the management of £105 million under the Sub-programme entitled Integrated Development of Designated Disadvantaged and Other Areas 1994-1999. This funding is used to support local development activities of Partnership Companies and Community Groups, aimed at tackling disadvantage and social exclusion. Under the National Development plan this funding will amount to £220 million over the next six years. Partnerships and Community Groups employ about 700 people.

- In 1994, ADM was also given responsibility for the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Under the National Development Plan, the funding available will be £250 million. This is a very substantial increase in the level of funding and much of this will be allocated towards staffing grants to local projects.

- In 1995 ,ADM was given responsibility for a range of measures under the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. Details regarding a Peace II Programme are in the process of negotiation at present.

- In 1997, ADM was nominated as a channel of funding for certain elements of Local Drugs Task Force funding on behalf of the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation.

- In 1997, ADM was also given responsibility by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform for providing support to a number of Disability Information Projects which operate through Partnerships and Community Groups. The Department also gave responsibility to ADM for providing support to Accessible Transport Projects.

- In 1998, ADM was given responsibility for the day-to-day management of a pilot Integrated Services Process (ISP) which is being implemented in four deprived urban areas and aims to develop a best practice approach to the delivery of State services in disadvantaged urban communities, in conjunction with the local residents. The Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation has overall responsibility for the ISP which is not a funding scheme.

4.11 The Government is committed to strengthening the specialist technical supports that the State provides for the Community and Voluntary sector. This will include further supporting the services for the sector that have been developed by Area Development Management Limited (ADM), the Combat Poverty Agency and Comhairle. In doing this, it will encourage continued and enhanced co-operation between these three agencies. The three organisations will be asked to come together to develop specific proposals for the further development of such supports in ways which will ensure clarity and definition in respect of the roles of each agency and which will maximise synergy between them.

Programme Support structures

4.12 Examples are the regional support structure for the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs' Community Development Programme and the overall support structure for the Women's Education Initiative (WEI) funded by the Department of Education and Science and located in the Work Research Centre,

and the work carried out by AONTAS as one of the WEI projects to network and support women's community education groups.

4.13 This has proved to be a very successful model of providing training, organisational development and employment practice support to the local projects participating in that Programme. Its features are:

- A local and accessible service in response to the expressed needs of the projects themselves and the Programmes' strategic objectives;
- A commitment to high standards and to key community development principles and practices and to on-going evaluation and monitoring in that regard; and
- Support is an integral part of the funding programme, but delivered at one remove from the funder itself; thus support agencies work in partnership with the funding Department and the local projects, while maintaining their independence.

4.14 The CDP support structure has been extended to the projects participating in the DSCFA's two other Community Development Support Programmes (Family and Community Services Resource Centre Programme and Core-funded Community and Family Support Groups Programme).

4.15 It is also being extended to focus on support for policy work within the Programmes. Each Regional Support Agency needs to have access to a broad range of technical and analytical skills to assist groups and organisations with community profiling, needs identification, policy analysis, organisational analysis, group facilitation, community participation and strategic planning.

4.16 This is a very successful model which is being emulated in the current ESF funding round in Northern Ireland. It can also serve as a useful approach to support local

groups in other funding programmes in the State.

Developing other support availability within the sector, including enhancing the capacity of other Federations and Networks

4.17 There are many national networks and umbrella bodies and local networks that provide support to their member groups - many of which are in receipt of statutory funding. A number of other, specialised training and support organisations have also emerged in recent years from within the sector. While a prime function of many umbrella bodies is representation, they also undertake significant work in providing support systems and services for member organisations, or for organisations doing like work.

4.18 The main kinds of support service offered include:

- Provision of information and guidance for member groups;
- Provision of education and training programmes for volunteers and staff;
- Assistance with organisational and management development, standards development;
- Specialist assistance in areas such as recruitment and legal incorporation.

4.19 Umbrella organisations and specialist training and support agencies can offer an independent but knowledgeable and sympathetic support to affiliated organisations and groups they work with respectively. This can be particularly important for the smaller organisations located around the country, which may lack the resources to deal with the more complex issues which arise from time to time.

4.20 An additional fund of £2 million will be provided to develop other support

and training availability within the Community and Voluntary sector. This new allocation will foster the availability of additional training and other support services to Community and Voluntary sector groups from within the sector itself.

Links with Third Level and other educational Institutions

4.21 Many third level institutions have developed education and training courses or research initiatives directed at meeting the specific needs of the Community and Voluntary sector. These include NUI Maynooth, TCD, NUI Galway, NUI Cork, University of Limerick, the National College of Ireland and DCU. There is a growing demand for further development by third level institutions, particularly in relation to non-degree courses, of education and other supports for the Community and Voluntary sector. A number of interesting initiatives have developed in this area, e.g. TCD and Limerick University distance learning programmes. The Implementation and Advisory Group will monitor developments in this area and act as a catalyst in ensuring that good ideas 'find a home'.

Accreditation of learning in the Community and Voluntary sector

4.22 The volume and range of education/training courses provided to, and through, the Community and Voluntary sector is considerable and growing. Courses vary in their content and are wide-ranging in scope and format. Many courses run in the Community and Voluntary sector do not adhere to strict skill categories characteristic of mainstream education and training courses. Courses are delivered within local communities by organisations themselves and through consultation with VECs, FÁS, external agencies and institutions. The institutes of technology, second level schools, other third level colleges and universities can all contribute to the variety of courses available to learners in the Community and Voluntary sector.

More open and Distance Learning opportunities are developing to meet the needs of individuals in terms of time, pace and location.

4.23 A number of issues have been identified in relation to developing accreditation appropriate to the needs of the Community and Voluntary sector and within the broader educational context including:

- The Ethos of the Community and Voluntary sector
- The demand and type of accreditation
- Accreditation models and options
- Reference to National Standards/mainstream structure/s
- Resources/support required.

4.24 A review of the content and delivery of training to those in the Community and Voluntary sector should be undertaken. The value of this training should be verified and appropriately rewarded. A priority for the National Qualifications Authority will be to put in place appropriate accreditation arrangements for the Community and Voluntary sector. The NQAI will work closely with the Community and Voluntary sector Accreditation Forum and with bodies such as AONTAS and NALA to progress this area.

4.25 The role of the Community and Voluntary sector in life-long learning is affirmed in the White Paper on Adult Education **Learning for Life**. It is important now that links are developed between the Adult Learning Council and the National Qualification Authority as appropriate. The Implementation and Advisory Group will monitor progress in this area.

Accessing the capacity within the sector and within other Sectors

4.26 Ways in which the members of groups and organisations can access the capacity within the sector and within other Sectors include

- A 'skills exchange' bureau, through which organisations could draw in personnel with the required skills on a mentoring or consulting basis, and, in return, provide their own skills back to the bureau;
- An 'Investors in People' programme through which business organisations could support or mentor individuals within organisations who want to develop new skills or share their skills with others;
- Mechanisms to facilitate networking within the sector and between Sectors through which people and agencies can exchange experience and have access to peer support;
- Co-ordination of information on training needs in the sector, and available resources/programmes including the development of resource manuals.

4.27 These will be encouraged by, in particular, the National Committee on Volunteering and the White Paper Implementation and Advisory Group, as appropriate.

Support and fostering of volunteering

Fostering of volunteering

4.28 There is a need to promote the active involvement of people in Community and Voluntary groups as an essential component of a democratic society. While Ireland is well served by the number and range of voluntary organisations, there is some evidence that younger people are less likely than heretofore to get involved on a voluntary basis in community life. Concern has also been expressed that the availability of statutory and EU funding for paid staff can tend to lessen the

potential for, or inclination of, volunteers to participate.

4.29 Volunteering can be defined as *the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society, local communities, individuals outside the immediate family, the environment or other causes. Voluntary activities are undertaken of a person's own free will, without payment (except for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses)* (Volunteer Resource Centre). Volunteering benefits society as a whole, individual communities and the volunteers who offer their services. The contribution of volunteers to the broad range of community and social services throughout the country should be recognised. The role of the volunteer is at the heart of the sector's work and, indeed, participation of volunteers is a defining characteristic of organisations in the sector.

4.30 Volunteers make an enormous contribution to the well-being of society. An NCI study (Uncovering the Non-profit Sector in Ireland, its economic value and significance) showed that the imputed value of volunteering was worth some £470 million to the 'non-profit' (defined more widely than the definition of the Community and Voluntary sector followed in the Green Paper) Sector in 1995. In the same year, the same study shows that organised voluntary work was the equivalent of some 31,919 full-time jobs (FTE) in the Community and Voluntary sector. The focus of this White Paper is on voluntary activity within an organisational setting. It is important to make the point that informal volunteering (i.e. volunteering not within an organisational setting) is also of enormous benefit to society and to the creation of a sense of active citizenship. If informal volunteering is included then the FTE is much higher, almost 100,000.

Supporting volunteering

4.31 A key determinant of the health of society is the degree to which individuals are prepared to come forward to give of their own time on a voluntary basis. Measures that encourage active participation by people in the community will be promoted. These will recognise the contribution of volunteers who are disadvantaged and the particular obstacles they face and support needs they have.

4.32 Volunteer centres (e.g. Tallaght Volunteer Bureau, North West Community Volunteers, Fingal Voluntary Exchange Bureau) can be a vital ingredient of support for Community and Voluntary organisations at local level. They have the capacity to support organisations and volunteers, through a placement service, and to publicise the potential of volunteering to citizens. They can provide advice and information about local opportunities. One of the roles of a volunteer centre is to work in tandem with national volunteer development initiatives (e.g. the Volunteer Resource Centre) to encourage volunteering among underrepresented groups. Centres also undertake specific programmes to encourage volunteering among marginalised groups.

4.33 The then NSSB undertook a study in 1998 on **Supporting, promoting and facilitating Volunteering** primarily aimed at assisting the Board in developing its objectives in relation to supporting the voluntary Sector. The study focused on exploring three volunteering models with which it has a supporting relationship. The three projects were Focus Ireland Community Service Volunteer programme, the Volunteer Resource Centre in Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups, Dublin and the Tallaght Volunteer Bureau. The study identified a number of key issues that effect volunteering and recommended the development of a policy framework for volunteering and development of an infrastructure that supports volunteering.

4.34 Next year, 2001, is UN International Year of Volunteers. As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, a National Committee on Volunteering will be established. The Committee, with participation from all the relevant interests and stakeholders, will devise strategies and actions for supporting and developing volunteering, not just during the International Year, but for the longer term. Its work will take account of the importance of proactively fostering a culture of support for volunteering in schools and third level institutions. The International Year provides an opportunity to further raise the profile of volunteering in Ireland and progress the Government's policies with regard to development of social capital and encouragement of voluntarism. The Government is particularly keen to encourage new volunteers to come forward, including volunteers from Sectors that are under-represented.

4.35 The Committee will have a budget of £1 million for initiatives to further support and develop volunteering.

4.36 The work of the committee will include examining and making recommendations on:

- The possibilities for recognition and accreditation for voluntary work and for training undertaken as a volunteer;
- Measures to widen pool of volunteers;
- The range of supports needed in order to promote, sustain and develop volunteering.

4.37 The work of the Committee will also be informed by the results of an All-Ireland Conference held in 1992 on the subject of Volunteers - the Vital Link. The

Conference made a number of recommendations on supporting volunteering. These recommendations, which are still relevant today, are addressed to organisations that directly involve volunteers in their work, to agencies and organisations that provide support for such organisations and to relevant Government Departments and agencies that provide funding. The recommendations call for greater support and resourcing of volunteering and organisations that involve volunteers in their work.

4.38 The Government is committed to encouraging individual volunteering. A range of interesting proposals to that end have been put forward in the course of the White Paper consultation process. As well as being addressed by this Committee and the White Paper Implementation and Advisory Group, these will be examined by the relevant Departments and practical action will be taken.

Legal and regulatory framework

Legal status and regulation

4.39 Cousins (1994) makes the point that "*structures of some sort tend to become relevant to Community and Voluntary groups at an early stage of their development*". Many groups initially adopt a written constitution. For the purposes of Government funding and support, a group is usually required to have a written constitution. As a group grows and takes on more responsibilities, the question of having a legal status independently of the members of the group becomes relevant. It is necessary to protect members from personal liability for the activities of the group.

4.40 There are three main structures which give a group separate legal status:

- Limited Company;
- Industrial and Provident Society;
- Incorporation under the Charities Act.

4.41 **Limited Company**: A group can form a company in accordance with the rules laid down by the Companies Acts and thus acquire a legal status separate from that of its members. This is known as incorporation. The provisions of the Companies Acts provide for a company limited by shares or a company limited by guarantee. Community and Voluntary groups adopt the latter - a company limited by guarantee. There are no shares and the personal liability of members is limited to a nominal amount. This is the most common form of incorporation used by Community and Voluntary sector organisations.

4.42 **Industrial and Provident Society:** In order to be registered as an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) a society must be formed "for carrying on any industries, businesses or trades". While this covers non profit-making groups or service providers, it would appear to exclude campaigning bodies. The categories of societies registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1893 - 1979 include agricultural producer societies, group water schemes, housing co-operatives. The standard rules of an IPS allow profits to be distributed among its membership, although this is not always so. The approved standard rules for housing co-operatives, for example, prohibit the distribution of any profit or dividend to members.

4.43 The Friendly Society is separate and distinct from the IPS. Societies registered under the Friendly Societies Acts include mutual insurance and assurance bodies

which provide a variety of life assurance, sickness and death benefits for their members and benevolent societies and other societies formed for purposes such as the promotion of science, literature and education. These do not have limited liability status. Cousins (1994) is of the opinion that this form of organisation has little relevance to the Community and Voluntary sector.

4.44 **Incorporation under the Charities Acts**: A body which is a charity can apply to the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests to be incorporated, i.e. granted separate legal status. However, Cousins (1994) is of the opinion that this is a slow and relatively expensive process. It also requires a deed of trust which is an inflexible structure for a voluntary organisation.

4.45 Cousins summarises the advantages of having a legal status:

- The individual members of the group are not generally responsible for the group's activities, including any debts which may arise;
- The group can own property, enter into contracts and employ people in its own name;
- The group can bring and defend court proceedings in its own name;
- The group can apply for charitable recognition (although this applies to some unincorporated groups).

4.46 It is strongly recommended that Community and Voluntary organisations should adopt an appropriate legal framework; in most cases this will - under the legal arrangements at present available - involve registering as companies limited by guarantee. For this purpose, it is proposed that the Companies Office would provide guidelines for registration.

4.47 In this regard the Government accepts the need for a more modern legal framework of law governing the sector. It welcomes the review of charity legislation being carried out at present by the Law Society and looks forward to publication of that report in due course. This area and the related charitable recognition issues discussed below will be also priorities for examination by the Implementation and Advisory Group.

Charitable recognition and Regulation of Charities

4.48 For tax purposes, under existing law, a charity is a body of persons or a trust which is established for charitable purposes only. *Charitable purposes* in this instance can be:

- The advancement of education;
- The advancement of religion;
- The relief of poverty; or
- Other works of a charitable nature beneficial to the community.

4.49 Charitable recognition does not confer any legal status on an organisation. Neither is the acquisition of charitable recognition an alternative to acquiring a legal status, rather it is related to fund-raising and tax issues. The tax code provides for tax exemptions in respect of certain income and/or property of charities. The Revenue Commissioners are responsible for the administration of the relevant exemptions and, for this purpose, determine whether a body of persons or trust claiming the benefit of any exemption is established for charitable purposes only.

Regulatory framework

4.50 Preparatory work on the preparation of new legislation in this area - following from the work of the **Report of the Committee on Fundraising Activities for Charitable and Other Purposes** (Costello Report) and a Working group set up under the previous Government - has been undertaken in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Government has now decided that responsibility for charity regulatory matters and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests will transfer from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. This responsibility fits better with the community brief of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. It is appropriate that the follow-up by that Department to the White Paper should include progressing issues in relation to regulation of charitable fund-raising and in relation to incorporation and regulation of charities generally. The Government is committed to ensuring that comprehensive legislation on regulation of charities and their fundraising is produced as a priority. The sector will be consulted in the development of the legislation through the Implementation and Advisory Group.

Chapter Five - Funding Issues

The Government has decided that multi-annual funding commitments should, in appropriate cases, be made available by all funding agencies to organisations providing services or undertaking development activities that are agreed to be priorities, with the budget for each specific year to which the agreement applies to be reviewed in the light of the resources available and taking into account the legal position that the Dáil votes public monies on an annual basis.

There are a large number of individual funders and programmes. This maze of agencies and funds leads to frustration and delays. The long-term aim is to change from the existing highly-fragmented funding and support system to one based on the concept of single line funding and single line reporting mechanisms.

Introduction

5.1 Unsurprisingly, funding issues emerged from the consultation process as being of major importance. This Chapter of the White Paper sets out the key principles that are applicable to funding of the sector by statutory agencies and announce a range of practical measures and understandings to give flesh to these key principles.

Key principles with regard to funding

5.2 The following key principles will apply to statutory funding of the Community and Voluntary sector:

- Community and Voluntary sector organisations are autonomous. They are free to set up and initiate activities and services without reference to any statutory agency. Conversely, it is important that there be no expectation that all Community and Voluntary activity should be funded by the State. It is the responsibility of Government to determine priorities in the allocation of scarce resources. In essence, this means that statutory funding will be available to the sector for mutually agreed programmes of activities and where these programmes are consistent with Government policies and objectives, or where other public interest criteria apply. Government funding is only available for services and activities that it has agreed to fund.

- The State's role is that of enabler. The form the State's support will take varies across Departments/agencies and will depend on the particular circumstances and needs involved, including, where relevant, the different needs and circumstances in individual counties and regions. It includes:

  - Funding of services provided by the Community and Voluntary sector (e.g. services for the elderly, childcare facilities, respite care services, information services);

  - Support for grass-roots community development initiatives;

  - Support for community-led enterprise and job creation initiatives;

  - Support for participation by the sector in local development and other social partnership initiatives; this also involves support for umbrella bodies and representative structures for the sector at local, regional and

national level as well as advocacy work; and

- Provision of dedicated support and development units for the sector, including ADM, the Combat Poverty Agency and Comhairle, and specialised support structures for specific programmes, such as the National Community Development Programme's support agency structure.

- The priorities for statutory funding are activities undertaken by the Community and Voluntary sector that enable individuals facing disadvantage or discrimination to access and realise their rights and potential as members of society, or that provide key services required by groups with special needs.

- The Community and Voluntary sector has a special role in developing new and innovative responses to social needs, very often with statutory funding. Not all pilots are successful or should receive ongoing funding, but the Government is keen to mainstream the lessons from successful pilot initiatives, as resources allow, by:

  - Providing continuing support for the innovative work of the sector;

  - State agencies taking on direct provision of previously piloted services;

  - Incorporating the lessons of pilot projects into local and national policy development.

- Statutory agencies will not automatically provide 100% funding; 100% funding will only be provided for projects with a specific focus on tackling poverty and disadvantage, where an element of self-financing could not reasonably be expected. In other cases, Community and Voluntary groups funded will be expected to raise a portion of the necessary monies from other sources, including local fund-raising and private Sector contributions.

- Core funding (i.e. funding towards the core staff and administrative costs of the organisation) will only be provided for services to meet agreed priority needs and for priority development work, especially work focused on tackling poverty and disadvantage.

- Particular attention will be given to supporting volunteering; this will include clarifying the eligibility of volunteer expenses (out-of-pocket costs etc.) for funding under individual schemes where necessary.

- Funded organisations and groups will be expected to adhere to standards of good practice - **see appendix 2 below.** These include a commitment to

openness, transparency and accountability in their work, having an effective management structure, a commitment to customer participation, where relevant, in planning, delivery and design of services and having appropriate monitoring and evaluation procedures.

- Each Department and agency providing funding will publish a statement of its objectives in providing such funding and a description of its specific schemes and programmes, to include clear eligibility, selection criteria and funding procedures; Statutory agencies will adhere to the proposed statement of good practice - **see appendix 3 below**.

- Improved co-ordination and clarity in relation to roles and responsibilities amongst Departments and agencies is a priority. This will primarily involve Departments and agencies working together more closely to ensure that policies and programmes dovetail at the point of delivery, but it may, in the case of irresolvable overlaps and ambiguities, involve institutional change. The Directors of Community and Enterprise and County Development Boards are being given the lead role in bringing about greater synergy and co-ordination at local level. The Implementation and Advisory Group will have responsibility for reviewing areas of overlap or gaps in responsibility coverage and making recommendations to resolve such situations.

Overall amount of funding available

5.3 The Government fully recognises the valuable role of the Community and Voluntary sector in the development of a mature civil society and in meeting social needs. It is committed to continued support for the sector in meeting those needs and, indeed, to the development of that support as resources allow and in the context of continued social partnership, which has proved vital in ensuring our recent economic success. Support for the sector is set to rise very significantly under the National Development Plan and other commitments already announced to develop and improve our health and personal social service provision. Other proposals for enhancement of funding available under individual programmes and schemes delivering particular services will be brought forward as part of the normal annual budgetary process.

5.4 As indicated in **Chapter 2**, the Government is bringing forward a package of measures, costing £7 million, to enhance the capacity of the sector to organise itself at national level, to foster the development of additional support and training within the sector and to further support volunteering.

Access to funding/eligibility/transparency

5.5 As evidenced by the **Freedom of Information** legislation, the Government is committed to bringing about greater openness, accountability and transparency to our system of public administration. In particular, the Government is committed to ensuring that there should be published schemes, with clear and objective eligibility criteria, clear application and assessment procedures for **ALL** statutory grant schemes (i.e. as distinct from once-off special grants).

5.6 Application forms and information leaflets will be as simple and clearly-written as is possible and consistent with the need to obtain sufficient information to make a proper assessment of any application. When groups apply for funding, they will be given a clear timescale for decisions.

Continuity of funding

5.7 There is a distinction to be made between:

- Non-governmental organisations that provide social services funded by and on behalf of a statutory agency that has a statutory responsibility in relation to those services. These are mainly large service providers in the health and social service area, whose services are funded by the Health Boards. Service agreements between such organisations and the funding body will set out arrangements for allocation and review of annual budgets, service levels and standards, monitoring and inspection and review of the contract by both parties. They will also provide that services and activities may be undertaken by the voluntary organisation, funded by its own fund-raising, over and above the level of services agreed to be funded by the statutory

agency.

The relationship between statutory agencies and organisations in this category has been reviewed and reformed insofar as the Health and Social Services area is concerned in **Enhancing the Partnership**.

- Community and Voluntary organisations that provide other services and undertake development activities to meet social need – without being delivery agents on behalf of a statutory agency – but which statutory agencies wish to fund and support as ancillary and complementary to their own services or aims and objectives.

5.8 This Chapter is of more concern to the second category, although the principles and decisions set out here are of relevance to the relationship between the statutory sector and a very wide range of Community and Voluntary organisations.

5.9 Much statutory funding of groups in this second category has heretofore been provided on an *ad hoc* annual basis. This does not allow groups to plan ahead. It also means that considerable time and energy is spent on a constant and debilitating pursuit of funding. This is detrimental to the service being delivered and is wearing on the enthusiasm and commitment of volunteers. It is makes for additional administrative costs and militates against the ability of Departments and agencies to plan ahead.

5.10 The system of three year funding commitments that operates in the case of community development and money advice projects funded by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs is a model that will be applied in other comparable areas. In addition, new statutory provisions are currently being introduced for the funding of Community and Voluntary agencies in the Health Services area, starting with the Eastern Health Board region with the establishment of the new regional health authority. The Health (Eastern Regional Health

Authority) Act 1999 provides that:

- Section 26 of the Health Act 1970 and section 65 of the Health Act 1953 (which are the provisions that govern Health Board funding of Community and Voluntary groups) will not apply to the Community and Voluntary groups funded by the new authority.

- Instead, these sections are replaced by a new funding provision, section 10(4) of the new Act. This section provides that all funding of non-statutory agencies will be in the context of written service agreements, which provide for annual renewal and review of funding. These agreements will cover a period of between three and five years, set out the principles by which both parties agree to abide and set out standards relating to efficiency, effectiveness and quality of service to be provided.

5.11 It is intended to extend this provision to all health boards in due course.

5.12 Multi-annual funding benefits the funding Department or agency as well, in that it allows for a more rational approach to planning service delivery and to processing of funding applications. It is important to be clear that adopting this approach does not of itself involve any increase in expenditure. However, the use of *ad hoc* annual grants to fund essential services and development work is becoming more and more anachronistic in the context of the parallel administration by Departments of EU funded schemes, which are funded on a multi-annual basis and demand a like contractual commitment from Departments/agencies, and in the context of SMI and the Public Service Management Act, which demand long-term planning and improvements in effectiveness and efficiency from Departments.

5.13 The move by the Government towards a multi-annual budgeting system in the public service will facilitate Departments and agencies in giving greater assurances as to funding to be made available in the -term to fund agreed priority services and

programmes of activities. In this context, the Government has decided that multi-annual funding commitments should, in appropriate cases, be made available by all funding agencies to organisations providing services or undertaking development activities that are agreed to be priorities, with the budget for each specific year to which the agreement applies to be reviewed in the light of the resources available and taking into account the legal position that the Dáil votes public monies on an annual basis.

5.14 It is the prerogative of the Dáil to determine from time-to-time the level of taxation and expenditure in any particular year and to reduce expenditure where individual programmes are no longer priorities, or where the overall economic circumstances facing the Exchequer so dictate. Multi-annual funding commitments in specific areas will be complemented by explicit understandings in relation to service standards, performance indicators, evaluation and review.

Types of funding

5.15 As indicated above, core funding of an organisation, or 100% funding of a specific project or service, is appropriate only for priority services or development activities with disadvantaged groups, where an element of self-financing would not be possible, or appropriate. In other cases, more limited funding to assist with services or projects, or annual or once-off grants will be appropriate. In the interests of transparency, maximum clarity and understanding by applicants, funding Departments and agencies in their budget lines and schemes will henceforth state clearly the limited cases where 100% funding can be provided and where a lesser percentage is envisaged as the norm. They should also distinguish between:

- Multi-annual 'core' funding for agreed priority services that are an ongoing requirement;
- Project funding for time-limited services or activities and pilot projects (but **NOT** for funding of ongoing services);
- Once-off grants for equipment, premises and other items that require occasional funding;
- Training (staff and management), evaluations, organisational reviews and other work to enhance the effectiveness of the group.

5.16 While it is ultimately a matter for Government to determine the priorities for allocation of resources, existing consultation mechanisms and the new mechanisms put in place by this White Paper will provide fora at Department and agency level, and review mechanisms at national level, by which the implementation of the overall framework announced in this White Paper can be discussed at Department, agency or programme level. It is important to state, in keeping with the spirit of partnership which informs the White Paper process, that the Community and Voluntary sector groups directly affected will be consulted and will have an input into decisions as to which are to be regarded as 'priority' services or programmes.

Payment mechanisms and systems

5.17 Unnecessary problems and costs are created for Community and Voluntary groups when grants that have been committed do not come through in reasonable time. The following **good customer service guideline** will henceforth apply in this regard. Individual once-off grants - once approved - will in general be paid within one month of all the necessary supporting documentation being submitted by the group concerned - the exception will be larger grants, where staged payments may be appropriate. In the case of ongoing core (sometimes referred to as 'revenue') funding, payments will ordinarily be made in advance (quarterly, or as appropriate

to the particular grant or funding scheme) and not in arrears.

5.18 The Government has decided that Departments and agencies will all use the calendar year as their financial year, to avoid situations arising in which groups need to provide different audited accounts for different statutory funders, at additional expense to the group.

5.19 The obligations imposed by statutory funders in relation to financial accountability can be too complex. An example is the obligation to maintain separate bank accounts for each separate funding agency/stream. Groups attracting funding from a number of different funding sources can have many separate bank accounts (14 in one case recently commented on by DSCFA Internal Audit Unit). This has no control value for the group or for the funder (in fact it probably acts to the contrary effect) and is unnecessarily complex and expensive in time and bank charges.

5.20 There will be an agreed protocol setting out standard requirements and good practice in relation to financial management. This will be developed under the aegis of the Implementation and Advisory Group.

Multiplicity of funders

5.21 There are a large number of individual funders and programmes (most Government Departments, regional and other statutory bodies (Health Board, Local authorities, FÁS, VECs, Comhairle, CPA), EU programmes (NOW, INTEGRA, Urban, LDP, Leader, Peace). This maze of agencies and funds leads to frustration and delays for community groups in applying to various sources for support for individual pieces of work. It leads to a lack of clarity amongst agencies themselves as to where responsibility lies for particular areas and as to where the boundary between

agencies lies in particular cases. As indicated above, the County Development Boards will have the lead role in bringing about greater synergy and co-ordination at local level between statutory agencies within the parameters of their existing policies and programme activities and in highlighting priority needs and gaps in provision for attention. The Directors of Community and Enterprise will have a key role in fostering greater co-ordination amongst statutory agencies and are well placed to facilitate a planned and co-ordinated response by them, including joint funding where appropriate, in respect of individual projects or the needs of particular target groups.

5.22 At national level, the Implementation and Advisory Group will have responsibility for reviewing areas of overlap or gaps in statutory responsibility with regard to support for the sector at policy and programme level and making recommendations to resolve such situations. **This is a key institutional innovation in this White Paper. It involves creation of a mechanism that, over time, will allow Departments and agencies collectively, and working with the Community and Voluntary sector itself, to review existing programmes and schemes so as to ensure continued relevance and value for money and the provision of cohesive support to the sector. This reform process will facilitate the allocation of additional resources, as provided for in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness and within the financial parameters laid down in the agreement, to meet new and emerging needs and to strengthen existing programmes and schemes where appropriate.**

5.23 The long-term aim is to change from the existing highly-fragmented funding and support system to one based on the concept of single line funding and single line reporting mechanisms.

5.24 The establishment of the County Development Boards will enhance the scope for structured co-operation and co-ordination of statutory agencies on the ground, including putting in place joint funding consortia of projects that span the remit of more than one agency. Departments and agencies will need to bring about adequate delegation of decision-making within agencies so that people assigned to CDBs will be able to deliver on behalf of their agency.

5.25 The question of a need for a designated information point in each local area/county to provide comprehensive information about the funds that are available across Departments and agencies and to provide advice and support to groups on how and where to apply for support, has been raised. Such a unit/person might also have a role in the initial reception of applications and referring applications on to the appropriate funder. This role might be placed within the revised local government/local development structure, or could be agreed locally by relevant State agencies.

Comprehensiveness of funding lines

5.26 The 'package' of funding supports under particular schemes is often incomplete. While funding for the primary service which a funder wants to support and a voluntary organisation wants to provide can be available, other funding necessary to the effectiveness of the organisation might not be available. For example, to be effective, and to deliver value for money for the funder and a good service for the customer/client, Community and Voluntary organisations need to undertake staff training, management training and development, service evaluation and organisational reviews. These require resources. Where statutory agencies fund the delivery of particular services or activities, individual schemes should make

provision to meet such training and development needs.

5.27 It needs to be made explicit that funding schemes provide a comprehensive funding package - and not just funding for direct service provision - for any activity for which a statutory funder accepts responsibility. Such would include funding for necessary training and support of volunteers, for example, who deliver the service in question.

Information Technology

5.28 Familiarity with Information Technology is fast becoming regarded as a new literacy, i.e. an essential prerequisite to full participation in modern society and the economy. The **Information Society Commission**, in its **Report on IT Access for All** concludes that

> *"to work effectively to empower disadvantaged groups to gain benefit from new technology it will be necessary to work with the groups and organisations who understand their needs and already provide support and services to them. The Community and Voluntary sector is active across all areas of society, providing a wide range of services to many groups of people, including those disadvantaged or vulnerable in society. Given the large and disparate nature of this* Sector *the use of information and communications technology, and in particular the Internet and email, could have enormously positive effect by adding to the communications capability, cohesion and efficacy of Community and Voluntary groups".*

5.29 Alongside relevant statutory agencies, libraries, schools and post offices, Community and Voluntary organisations have an important role in making the benefits of new technologies accessible to all. IT applications can also have a very positive impact on the work of organisations and groups in the sector, especially in the areas of communication, information sharing and research.

5.30 The Information Society Commission has recommended that a structured programme of support be put in place for the Community and Voluntary sector. This would require additional funding being made available from the Information Society Fund for equipment, training and technical support. The Commission has recommended the Canadian Voluntary Sector Network Support Program (VolNet) as a possible model for an initiative here in Ireland to develop the Community and Voluntary sector's access to information technology. The VolNet service package includes:

- Internet access and support services;
- Computer equipment needed to connect to the internet;
- Basic internet skills development.

5.31 As provided for in the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, there will be increased investment to provide a phased roll-out of community-based access to the Information Society. This will include additional funding so that the relevant funding Departments, in line with the decisions earlier in this Chapter on comprehensiveness of funding lines, can ensure that the Community and Voluntary sector is enabled to realise the potential of IT in its work and in meeting the needs of the members, customers and local communities it serves. The Government considers that strengthening the capacity of the Community and Voluntary sector in this area is of key importance.

Taxation issues

5.32 Section 848 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 provides tax relief, at the standard rate, for personal donations between £200 and £750 per annum to designated third world charities. The tax relief goes to the charity, rather than the

donor and is given by means of a top-up payment by the Revenue Commissioners to the charity of the tax associated with the donation. The charities are designated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs with the consent of the Minister for Finance.

5.33 Section 486A of the Act provides tax relief for company donations to eligible charities. An eligible charity is one authorised by the Revenue Commissioners and which has been granted exemption from tax for three years prior to its application for approval. Relief is given where the donation to any single charity by a company is not less than £250 and not more than £10,000 in any 12 month accounting period. The upper limit for donations from a single company to all charities in a 12 month accounting period is the lesser of £50,000 or 10% of the company's profit.

5.34 The Government is committed to keeping these under review in the light of experience of their operation.

5.35 The VAT treatment of charitable organisations is a direct consequence of EU VAT law, with which Irish VAT law must comply. Under the Sixth VAT Directive, a wide range of charitable and voluntary activities are deemed to be exempt for VAT purposes. This means that the organisations involved do not charge VAT on their services but, as a necessary corollary, they are unable to recover the VAT they bear on the goods and services that they purchase in the course of their activities. Generally speaking, VAT can only be recovered by registered businesses who charge VAT to their customers. This position cannot be altered unilaterally by the Government in view of the EU provisions.

Community Employment

5.36 Community Employment Schemes have been a valuable source of support for a very large number of Community and Voluntary organisations. They have facilitated training and development opportunities and provision of important services in local communities. However, community employment is not an ideal mechanism for funding core staff to provide essential care services such as childcare, care of the elderly, etc. Inevitably, there is a tension between the interests of the Community Employment participant in getting skills and experience and progressing to a job in the open labour market and the interests of the sponsors and users of the services in building up expertise and continuity.

5.37 Consultations on the ongoing funding of essential services currently provided through CE, such as the caring services provided by Community and Voluntary organisations, will take place in a Special Working Group to be established in the context of the **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness**, comprising the social partners and representatives of Government Departments. The work of this Group will include:

- Identifying the key essential services currently provided through CE;
- Assessing the implications of those services for CE in terms, *inter alia*, of a reduction in places and of the overall objectives of CE (which include provision of community services).

5.38 The findings of the Working Group will then be considered by Government. Without prejudice to these findings, it would appear that, **where Community Employment continues to be used as a means of support by organisations providing such services, it would be more appropriate that this be in the form of the three year Job Option rather than the one year Integration Option. Ideally and as resources allow, alternative funding should be put in place (via**

the appropriate social Departments) to provide long-term funding of staff for such essential services. In addition, initiatives such as the Social Economy Programme should provide an opportunity through which such services (where they fall within the 'framework' agreed for the Programme) can be provided. These options will be pursued.

The Social Economy Programme

5.39 Following on from a commitment in **Partnership 2000**, and a report from a Working Group set up to undertake a detailed examination of the potential of the social economy, the Government decided in July 1999 to approve the introduction of a Social Economy Programme through the -

- Phasing in of a dedicated Social Economy Programme with effect from 1999 and
- Establishment of a National Implementation and Advisory Group representative of the social partners to oversee the development and implementation of the social economy programme.

5.40 It is intended that the Social Economy Programme will have a strong emphasis on the economic and social development and regeneration of disadvantaged communities by supporting imaginative, locally-based initiatives. The innovative aspect of the programme is that while the social economy model has a joint product - the provision of services to disadvantaged communities and employment opportunities and experience to individuals distanced from the labour market - the primary emphasis is on the community rather than the individual. Three categories of projects will be funded under the new Programme:

- **Community businesses**, ultimately financed from trading income alone;

- **Deficient demand social enterprises**, where the demand for particular goods and services within a community is not matched by resources to pay for these, due to poverty or low density of population;

- **Enterprises based on public service contracts**, where public services in disadvantaged areas and communities are subcontracted to local social economy enterprises.

5.41 The Working Group defined the social economy as having the following characteristics:

- Ownership within a community or community of interest (e.g. Travellers) and responding to market demand regardless of source of income;

- Focus on the economic or social development of a community or community of interest;

- Operation benefiting the community and individual members;

- Providing for employment experience and employment opportunities which are sustainable, but which might nonetheless be dependent on State support.

5.42 When fully operational, the dedicated social economy programme will provide for an annual investment of approximately £41 million. The programme will be funded primarily through a reallocation, on a phased basis, of a proportion of funding currently committed to CE. The Programme will be managed operationally at national and local level by FÁS, in partnership with relevant interest groups. Technical support will also be provided by FÁS.

National Lottery funding

5.43 Issues in relation to the National Lottery have been a long-standing concern to the sector. A Review group was established in November 1996 to examine the method of disbursing grants from the National Lottery surplus. The Group reported in

1997. It made a number of recommendations, of which the following are particularly important in the context of the White Paper:

- Given that there is already, in all of the sectors towards which lottery funding is directed, a considerable statutory infrastructure and involvement, the desirability of achieving optimum integration of lottery-funded and exchequer-funded expenditures, and the accountability of Ministers to Dáil Éireann, allocation of National Lottery funds for purposes approved under the National Lottery Act 1986 should continue to be made by the Government rather than by an independent body. The subsequent disbursement of lottery funds at agency or Department level should be made in partnership with the Community and Voluntary sector.

- The lottery funds, apart from any monies in the reserve fund, should in future be devoted entirely to the support of Community and Voluntary activity in the areas of youth services, sports, the arts, the Irish language, welfare, health, social services and community development. This recommendation aimed to end the practice of lottery funds being used to fund statutory agencies' own activities and ensure maximum transparency in the identification of the final beneficiary of lottery expenditure. It also aimed to ensure that, as the lottery surplus grows in future years, so too will the allocation to Community and Voluntary bodies.

- The most disadvantaged groups within the Community and Voluntary sector should be given priority in the allocation of lottery funds within individual programmes and due regard should be had to gender and regional balance.

- Application procedures for support for programme funded by the Beneficiary fund should be standardised and means of access to them made more publicly visible.

- The Government should itself from time-to-time publish more details of how the funding is distributed over the various Sectors

- Decision-making on applications should reflect a commitment to the principle of partnership with the client base. This should involve participation in the setting of objectives and criteria and should also encompass participation in assessment of and making recommendations on funding applications as in the arrangements in place in the sports area (Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation) and community development area (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs). As part of its statement of strategy in supporting the Community and Voluntary sector, each relevant Department will set out the arrangements it has put in place to

give effect to this requirement.

- The National Lottery Act should be amended to provide for the procedures to be followed when the National Lottery funds are being allocated. The elements to be given a statutory basis should include:

  - There should be a written statement of the objectives of each lottery-funded scheme, the criteria for assessment of applications and allocating grants and the procedures by which groups can apply for or become eligible for funding. (*This is now a legal requirement, in relation to all schemes (not just Lottery-funded grant schemes) under the Freedom of Information Act*.);

  - The requirement to involve the client base in the decision-making process on a partnership basis.

- A National Lottery Fund Monitoring Committee be established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations made in the report and to maintain a continuous oversight of the disbursement of the Beneficiary Fund.

5.44 These recommendations were accepted in principle by the Government. The Department of Finance has issued an instruction to Departments to implement those recommendations that can be applied on an administrative basis. The recommendations in relation to greater transparency and to participation of the Community and Voluntary sector in decision-making are very much in line with the thrust of the White Paper conclusions.

5.45 An outstanding issue is the National Lottery Fund Monitoring Committee, which has been set up on an interdepartmental basis, and the question of extending it to include Community and Voluntary sector representation. It is proposed not to continue with a separate interdepartmental Lottery Monitoring Committee, but instead to assign this function to the White Paper Implementation and Advisory Group - on which the sector will be represented. This will allow the sector to raise issues about the allocation of Lottery funds between the eligible areas and to raise

other issues of concern that might arise in relation to the Lottery from time-to-time.

National Anti-Poverty Networks

5.46 The Green Paper looked at the long-term funding arrangements for national networks of anti-poverty groups funded by the Combat Poverty Agency.

5.47 The networks involved are

- **Community Workers Co-operative**
- **European Anti-Poverty Network**
- **Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed**
- **Irish Rural Link**
- **Irish Traveller Movement**
- **Forum of People with Disabilities**
- **One Parent Exchange and Network**

5.48 **Partnership 2000** (4.13) provided that

> *"Funding of the national anti-poverty networks will be continued. The Green Paper on Voluntary Activity ... outlined options for permanent funding arrangements for these networks and other national networks concerned with equality and social inclusion. Final decisions on further funding arrangements and levels will be made in the light of the consultations and discussion to follow publication of the White Paper".*

5.49 The **Programme for Prosperity and Fairness** provides that the level of funding for existing networks will be reviewed and arrangements for funding of new emerging needs will be considered.

5.50 The Green Paper discussed four options for long-term funding of the networks:

- **Funding through the Combat Poverty Agency**
- **Funding through Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs**
- **Funding by relevant parent Department**
- **Independent Community Trust**

5.51 The Government has decided that the preferred option for future funding of these networks is a programme to be administered by the Combat Poverty Agency. Up to 10 networks will be funded as part of this Programme, which will have a budget of £1 million (up from the existing allocation of *circa* £400,000). The Combat Poverty Agency will develop criteria by which applications for funding to meet new emerging needs will be assessed. In future, funding of the national anti-poverty networks will be on the basis of a three-year workplan to be negotiated and agreed between the network concerned and the Agency. Criteria will be developed for ongoing assessment of achievement by the existing national networks and by which applications for renewed funding at the end of any three-year contractual period will be determined.

5.52 Key criteria in this regard will include:

- A membership base that ensures the voice of disadvantaged, marginalised groups will find expression in relevant national fora;
- Individual networks should be genuinely representative and avoid unnecessary overlaps *vis-à-vis* each other;
- Mechanisms to ensure that members are informed and consulted about activities and policy when presenting a case to Government; and

- The capacity to inform policy at local, regional and national levels.

5.53 The Combat Poverty Agency, Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, and the national anti-poverty networks, are partners in an EU transnational study "*to develop ways to involve groups representing excluded persons in the development, implementation and evaluation of national anti-poverty strategies*". Outcomes from this study will feed into the criteria outlined above and will inform the future development of policy in this area.

Funding of other networks and representative bodies

5.54 Funding is also provided (for example via the Health Services and Department of Education and Science) to support representative bodies in other segments of the Community and Voluntary sector. The Government is now providing an additional £2 million for such other representative bodies and federations. Where necessary, the criteria for such funding and access routes for new representative structures will be clarified in the formal statements to be published by each Department/agency setting out its objectives and a description of its specific schemes and programmes.

Non-statutory sources of funding

5.55 Community Trusts or Foundations play an important role in resourcing the Community and Voluntary sector in other countries. Essentially, the concept is of an independent foundation that raises donations from the private Sector, but also from Government. Government funds can be significant initially as seed money in allowing a Trust to become established and build up a sufficient capital base to generate an income for disbursement to the sector. In addition to funds for a

foundation, Trusts in some cases also seek 'pass through' funding which consists of monies usually provided by major private foundations or Government and is expended on receipt. Such funding is sought for a number of reasons. It enhances the foundation's role as a grant maker and it can also help with the operating costs through administrative fees.

5.56 A number of Trusts or Foundations are already operating in Ireland, including the Ireland Funds, the People in Need Trust, the Stephen's Green Trust, the Katherine Howard Foundation, Allen Lane Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. A recent development in this area is the Foundation for Investing in Communities, which was launched in November 1998 as an employer-led initiative supported by Government. Grant aid of £750,000 was provided by Government in the 1998 Budget to the Foundation, with a further £300,000 provided in the 1999 Budget.

5.57 One of the functions of the Foundation - an independent body - is to build up an endowment fund, through corporate and private donations and bequests, from which, over time, funds will be distributed to the Community and Voluntary sector. In addition to this, the Foundation is currently examining the potential for establishing a Children's Trust which will also build an endowment fund to support disadvantaged children. These funds will be additional to existing State funding. The Foundation will develop its links with and participation by the Community and Voluntary sector.

5.58 The Foundation will also encompass the work of The Enterprise Trust (now known as Business in the Community) in developing local enterprise networks with an added emphasis on support for Community and Voluntary groups and

disadvantaged children.

5.59 The Government is committed to developing additional community funds or trusts, especially at local level. The Local Government Bill 2000 contains a provision (section 108) to enable local authorities to establish a community initiative fund. Local authorities will be encouraged to accept donations into the fund from private sources towards the cost of initiatives in the community, including construction of community facilities and support of community development activities generally.

Accessibility of information about funding

5.60 Access to timely and accurate information about the range of national Government, EU and private Sector funding that is available is an important issue for the Community and Voluntary sector. **The Government has decided that a comprehensive manual of funding available from all Sectors will be published and regular updated reports on funding availability should also be published from time to time.** This information will be available in a number of formats, including braille. A key task for the Implementation and Advisory Group will be to set this in train.

Chapter Six – Implementation

Voluntarism and communal activity are at the heart of our democracy and a vital element in social progress. The objective is to ensure that communities and individuals are facilitated to identify and meet their own needs. The Government will continue to ensure that our policies and programmes in this area are appropriate and supportive and that individuals and communities are enabled to reach their full personal and social potential.

Introduction

6.1 This White Paper lays out a substantial body of work for the Implementation and Advisory Group. The Group will be co-chaired by the Departments of Health and Children and Social, Community and Family Affairs. It is envisaged that membership of the Group will be drawn from the relevant Departments, statutory agencies and from a wide range of interests in the Community and Voluntary sector. In keeping with the principles enunciated in the White Paper, it will be a matter for the sector itself to agree on mechanisms to ensure appropriate representation from the sector on the Group. The two Departments concerned will now initiate a process of consultation with the sector with a view to having the Group established as soon as possible.

Terms of reference of Implementation and Advisory Group

6.2 The overall purpose of the Group is to oversee the implementation of the decisions contained in the White Paper and identify unresolved issues arising in a national context - some of which are identified in the White Paper - and pursue a resolution of such issues as far as possible. It will provide a forum for discussion of issues of general relevance to the relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector and help to promote awareness in this area. Its detailed terms of reference are to:

- Advise on a programme of research which will include quantifying the full extent of Community and Voluntary activity in Ireland; (2.51)
- Agree standard protocols for financial accountability in respect of State funding of the sector; (5.20)
- Monitor administrative mechanisms to underpin the effective functioning of the working relationship and discuss and agree proposals that promote integrated approaches at national level; (2.55)

- Monitor developments in accreditation of training for the sector; (4.25)
- Formulate practical proposals to further enhance support and training capacity within the sector and within other Sectors; (4.27)
- Advise on the development of a regulatory framework for the sector; (4.50)
- Examine areas of overlap or gaps in statutory responsibility with regard to support for the Community and Voluntary sector at policy and programme level and make recommendations to resolve such situations; (5.21)
- Advise on the distribution of the £2 million allocation for other Federations and Networks across the eligible areas/Votes; (5.54)
- Advise on issues relating to allocations from the National Lottery surplus; (5.45)
- Oversee the publication of a comprehensive manual of funding and regular updated versions; (5.60)
- Undertake a formal review of the workings of Group after a three-year period. (2.55).

Conclusion

6.3 The Group is charged with keeping the implementation of this White Paper under review and pursuing developments in a number of key areas as set out above. The formal review of the workings of the Group itself after three years will provide an opportunity to revisit the main conclusions and decisions in the White Paper. As the overall social and economic context changes, so too must the framework for statutory support for volunteering and voluntary activity be developed and adapted from time-to-time.

6.4 The National Committee on Volunteering, being established in the context of UN International Year of Volunteers 2001, will also play a significant role in developing support for voluntarism. It will devise strategies and actions for

supporting and developing volunteering, not just during the International Year, but for the longer term, with particularly emphasis on encouraging new volunteers to come forward.

6.5 The point was made at the start of this White Paper that voluntarism and communal activity are at the heart of our democracy and a vital element in social progress. The objective is to ensure that communities and individuals are facilitated to identify and meet their own needs. The Government will continue to ensure that our policies and programmes in this area are appropriate and supportive and that individuals and communities are enabled to reach their full personal and social potential.

Appendix 1

MEMBERSHIP OF THE WHITE PAPER STEERING GROUP

Deirdre Carroll (Chairperson)	Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
Mary Kennedy	Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
Deaglán Ó Briain	
John Collins	Department of Health and Children
Mary Butler	Department of the Taoiseach
Laura Behan	Department of Environment and Local Government
Tara Wharton/Lucinda Mac Mahon	Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation
Máire Ní Fhlaithearthaigh	Department of Education & Science
Leo Sheedy/Geraldine Hurley	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Michael Mc Ginley	North Western Health Board
June Meehan/Liz Sullivan	Combat Poverty Agency
Geraldine Cullen/Leonie Lunney	National Social Service Board
Peter Kavanagh	Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Liam O Dwyer	Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Paddy Donegan	Senior Citizen's National Parliament
Mary Redmond	Solicitor
Kate O Sullivan	Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups
Roger Acton	Disability Federation of Ireland
Bernard Thompson	National Association of Building Co-operatives
Chris Mc Inerney/ Siobhán O Donoghue	Community Workers Co-Op
Jim Quigley	Muintir na Tíre
Frank Mulcahy	National Council of People with Disabilities
Ann Colgan Jean Tubridy	Consultants

Secretariat

Edel Higgins	Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
Tina Stallard	

Appendix 2

Good practice standards for the Community and Voluntary sector

Having regard to the overall availability of funding, the inevitably limited resources available under specific grant schemes and programmes and the need to prioritise spending proposals, the following principles are suggested to inform organisations in the Community and Voluntary sector:

- There should be openness, accountability and transparency in the work of the sector, while having regard to necessary confidentiality in the relationship with clients and statutory agencies;
- Groups in receipt of statutory funding should publish annual reports and accounts, which will include details of the number of members, branches and meetings of the organisation and remuneration of the CEO and other key management staff;
- Organisations should maintain high standards of governance and accountability and commit themselves to adhere to relevant legal obligations and standards;
- Services and programmes should be informed by the principle of respect for the individual's dignity, privacy and confidentiality. They should also be informed by the right of users to quality services which are accessible to them, such as people with disability or women with children;
- Where relevant, customers and people who avail of services should have an input into the planning, delivery and management of services;
- Customer service charters should be published by service providers. Where relevant, these should be produced on a partnership basis between voluntary service providers and relevant statutory agencies;
- There should be equality of treatment for men and women and non-discrimination in relation to groups who are marginalised;
- There should be co-operation between Community and Voluntary organisations within particular Sectors and where appropriate across Sectors in relation to policy development and programme and service delivery;
- Community and Voluntary organisations should consider registering as companies limited by guarantee. For this purpose, the Companies Registration

Office will provide guidelines for registration for Community and Voluntary organisations;

- Monitoring and evaluation should be carried out regularly in order to ensure effectiveness and value for money. Reports should be made available to the funders on the extent to which the programme or project is achieving its objectives and the difficulties, if any, which are experienced. The report should also outline the adequacy of supports available to the programme or the project, and the lessons learned which have implications for policy development and service or programme delivery and implementation;

- Insofar as financial arrangements are concerned, voluntary organisations should adopt similar purchasing and tendering principles to those applied by statutory organisations, including competitive tendering for supply of goods and services as appropriate.

Appendix 3

Good practice standards for the statutory sector

Funding

- Each Department/agency providing funding will publish a statement of its objectives in providing such funding and a description of its specific schemes and programmes; the statement will also outline future plans in that regard;

- Government Departments and State agencies will outline clear criteria and procedures for their funding arrangements for the Community and Voluntary sector. These procedures should be set out in an explanatory leaflet;

- All statutory grant schemes should be advertised and eligibility criteria should be published;

- Application forms should be brief, simple and accompanied by clear guidance notes and a timetable for decisions;

- There should be a named contact for inquiries for each application;

- Applications should be acknowledged promptly with the acknowledgement giving a timescale for consideration of the application;

- Each grant offer should state clearly the purpose of the grant, its conditions and monitoring arrangements;

- Difficulties in relation to uncertainty of future statutory funding may be exacerbated by payment systems operated by statutory funders which result in delays, leading to high bank charges and the need for bridging finance. All statutory agencies should review their arrangements for awarding grants to Community and Voluntary groups with a view to streamlining their administrative procedures, minimising the time taken to process applications and ensuring the timely payment of grants or grant instalments - in line with the good customer practice statement outlined in this Paper.

- As much information as is possible and appropriate should be made available both in relation to the application and assessment process, and to decisions in relation to particular organisations. Voluntary organisations should be informed as soon as possible where their applications are not successful;

- A list of grant-aided recipients, showing the purpose for which the grants were allocated, under any scheme should be available on request;

- In providing funding to Community and Voluntary organisations who provide an agreed, priority service on behalf of, or in partnership with a statutory agency, the Government's approach will be to provide an agreed budget adequate to meet the staffing and other costs of the service, including adherence to high standards of care and service to customers. The budget should also be adequate for the provision of reasonable working conditions and salary levels for the employment of such staff as are agreed to deliver the service, including adherence to national wage agreements and provision for appropriate pension arrangements;

- The requirement that Government Departments and statutory agencies publish clear criteria and procedures for funding applies to all grant schemes, including those funded by the National Lottery surplus;

- It is desirable that a set of standard rules in relation to financial accountability should be applied by all statutory agencies. These will be developed by the Implementation and Advisory Group. This initiative will result in clarity and consistency and benefit both the Community and Voluntary organisations and funders;

Consultation Mechanisms

- Government Departments and State Agencies will ensure that there are effective administrative mechanisms in place to underpin the functioning of the working relationship. These mechanisms need to be appropriate to the particular circumstances. Each Department will outline its role and future plans with the sector - in areas of relevance to it - and publish relevant information on a regular basis. In the large Departments, a Unit may be necessary to support the relationship.

- Provision for 'feedback' mechanisms will be introduced e.g. mechanisms to ensure that groups consulted will be informed why proposal X cannot be implemented. This will apply to major proposals.

- Major policy decisions should, where relevant, indicate their potential impact on the communities they serve and on the Community and Voluntary sector itself. This will integrate with and be informed by the experience of poverty and equality proofing and other proofing mechanisms.

- At local level: the experience of existing Government initiatives to promote integrated approaches will be taken on board in policy development and will be used to inform the more effective delivery of public services. At national level,

the Implementation and Advisory Group will be a mechanism for ongoing consultation.

Customer Service

- Each Department and agency will, in partnership with voluntary Sector providers where relevant, introduce customer charters in relation to specific social services

Policy Review

- Each Department will assess whether or not its policies in relation to particular areas of Community and Voluntary sector activity are clearly stated and in which areas there is need for policy development. Departments will take a proactive approach to policy development and be open to new ways of providing services which respond to needs as identified at local community level;

- Each Government Department will publicise at regular intervals (e.g. as part of SMI Strategy Statements or annual reports), comprehensive and accessible information on policies and services relevant to the Community and Voluntary sector;

- Each Government Department should identify the core services it is responsible for and where relevant the role of the Community and Voluntary sector in the provision of these services;

- Government Departments will, where relevant, adopt mechanisms to check the impact of existing policies and proposed developments on the Community and Voluntary sector. This will be informed by and will integrate with the existing poverty proofing and equality proofing mechanisms and with other such mechanisms. Relevant questions to be asked might include:

  - impact, if any, on the voluntary Sector;

  - the extent to which the policies encourage a contribution from the voluntary Sector and their impact on the activities of volunteers;

  - the extent to which the views of the sector have been sought;

  - the extent to which the Community and Voluntary sector have difficulty complying with the requirements of new policies. Consideration needs to be given as to whether or not exemptions need to be made in some circumstances;

- Where appropriate, in relation to concerns of the Community and Voluntary sector, Inter-Departmental co-operation, both at national, regional and at local area level should be encouraged;

- Mechanisms should be developed to link local development groups and community/voluntary groups vertically to regional and national policies and programmes.

Appendix 4

FUNDING OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

The Community and Voluntary sector has a long and valued tradition of meeting social needs in Ireland. Statutory funding has become increasingly more important in the provision of social services by the Community and Voluntary sector. The Community and Voluntary sector has developed a large presence in the development of social policy, especially in the roles of service providers, identifiers of new needs and advocates. Powerful mechanisms for the creation of social solidarity have been established. The important role of the sector is reflected in the substantial amount of funding - almost **IR£1** billion or **EURO 1.267** billion in 1999 - which it received from the Irish State (to include National Lottery funding) and EU sources. The Table on **pages 71 and 72** outlines the Government Departments and statutory agencies that provide funding to the Community and Voluntary sector and the amount of funding provided by each Government Department in 1999.

Background to Funding Table and outline of Consultative mechanisms

Below are details of the funding provided by individual Departments and statutory bodies. This appendix also outlines current examples of mechanisms and the process used by statutory bodies in consulting with the Community and Voluntary sector.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

LEADER

The LEADER II programme (1994 - 1999) applies in all rural areas. In 1999, £28.629 million was paid by LEADER II in support of Community and Voluntary activities. Total public funding of £98 million was provided to 37 groups (34 area-based and 3 with a Sectoral remit) to implement their business plans. A total of some £110 million will be available to support LEADER - type activity in the period 2000 - 2006. Some £5.4 million of this is to be provided by the EU in respect of the LEADER+ programme. LEADER+ will be confined to a limited number of rural areas and the essential aim of the measure will be to encourage the emergence and testing of new approaches to integrated and sustainable development. Expenditure under LEADER in 1999 of £28.629 million comprises 70% EU funding and 30% Exchequer funding.

The Western Development Commission (WDC)
The Western Development Commission will operate the Western Investment Fund for which the Government is providing £25 million. The Fund will provide loans and take equity in a small number of strategically important investments in business start-up and growth oriented small and medium enterprises and in community based developments aimed at encouraging enterprise establishment. It will be an additional, complementary support providing funding which is geared to the enterprise environment in the region.

Consultation Mechanisms
There are specific arrangements for consultation with farmer interest in relation to Agenda 2000. Considerable consultation has been involved in the process of preparation of the White Paper on Rural Development, involving both development NGOs and farmer organisations. There is a formal consultative structure within the LEADER programme, by which representatives of the local delivery bodies have regular opportunities to comment on progress and influence policy.

Formal consultative fora convened in relation to Agenda 2000 and LEADER II in which the relevant social partners, including the Community and Voluntary sector, participate in advising the Minister and Department and in reviewing progress in operational programme matters. A specific consultation process was put in place in relation to the White Paper to give interested groups and members of the public an opportunity to have their views heard.

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, CULTURE, GAELTACHT AND THE ISLANDS
In 1999, funding in the total amount of £225,682 was provided to Community and Voluntary organisations under the Cultural Development Incentives Scheme (CDIS). The CDIS is a part of the Operational Programme for Tourism and was primarily designed to assist the four main categories of the visual and performing arts - arts centres, theatres, galleries and museums. The total amount of funding available under the Scheme is £18.5m and this amount, together with matching finance from successful project promoters, is enabling a total capital infrastructure of over £45 million to be put in place in the period to 2000. Funding provided to Community and Voluntary groups are part of an overall programme of 38 projects around the country.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
Irish Red Cross Society
The Irish Red Cross Society is a statutory body which receives funding for the costs incurred in relation to HQ salaries and related expenses and also for expenses incurred in the care of refugees. The Government also makes an annual contribution to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. The contribution for 1999 to the International Committee of the Red Cross was £100,000 and the contribution for 1999

for the Head Quarters of the Society was £475,000.

Civil Defence Branch
The total contribution for 1999 was £1.78 million.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

Youth Work Service
The Youth Affairs Section is concerned with the non-formal education of Ireland's young people and provides support by way of financial and other assistance to those providing youth work programmes and services. Youth Work is provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations, and presents valuable opportunities for the social and personal development of young people.

In 1999, funding was provided to over thirty major national youth organisations, approximately 160 special projects for disadvantaged youth, a network of youth information centres, and the new Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund. In 1999 over £15m was expended on the youth work service, with an additional £2.586 million expended by the Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund.

Adult Education
Funding is provided to the Community Education Scheme (£1 million p.a.), AONTAS and the National Adult Literacy Agency (approx. £450,000 p.a.), Community and Voluntary organisations for specific services (approx. £700,000 p.a.) and the Education Equality Initiative (£500,000 in 2000).

The Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centre programmes, implemented through the VECs as part of the statutory system and through FÁS via Community Training Workshops, provides complementary support in this area, by providing an out-of-school education and training programme (approx. 7000 places in 150 centres) for young people who have left school early. This is not included as part of the Community and Voluntary sector expenditure shown for the Department.

The Department of Education and Science also provides grants for adult education and adult literacy, which are allocated in the main to statutory providers. In relation to Adult Literacy, funds are allocated to the VECs but there is a very substantial volunteer input, co-ordinated through the VEC system. £1 million per annum is allocated to VECs for Community Education. The recent White Paper on Adult Education includes a number of measures to increase and support the role of community education as one of a range of providers within the adult education Sector.

The **Special and Further Education Sections** of the Department of Education and Science provided £58,600 as grant-in-aid to ALCD for disadvantaged children and adults for the provision of classes for those with learning difficulties (dyslexia).

Social Inclusion Unit
The section plays a key role in liasing with social partnership interests, particularly the Community and Voluntary sector members, in co-ordinating and reporting on the Department's element of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, in liaising with ADM, and in

working closely with the Integrated Service Projects.

Consultative Mechanisms
The National Youth Work Advisory Committee, established under the provisions of the Youth Work Act, 1997, comprises representation from statutory bodies, with a remit in youth work and the voluntary youth work Sector. Its role is to advise and consult with the Minister for Education and Science in relation to youth work. A number of programmes funded by the Department and other Statutory Bodies with representation from the voluntary youth Sector e.g. an advisory committee on Traveller Education, the National Youth Information Monitoring Committee, the Youth Health Programme, the Youth Arts Programme.

In the adult education sphere the Department has extensive contacts with Community and Voluntary sector interests via participation in National Social Partnership fora and working groups, participation in EU Monitoring Committees, consultations following the Green Paper, and steering/advisory committees in a range of areas such as the Advisory Group on the Development of an Educational Adult Guidance Service, the Inter-Departmental Group on Literacy for the Unemployed, the steering group for the Educational Equality Initiative (previously Women's Education Initiative). It also maintains close operational links in relation to delivery of such programmes as VTOS, Youthreach and Traveller Training Centres. Representation for the sector has been included in the White Paper on Adult Education proposals, in relation to the National Adult Learning Council and Local Adult Learning Boards as part of the approach.

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

Funding provided
The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment provided some £354.7 million in 1999 to the Community and Voluntary sector. This was increased in the 2000 estimate to £362.4 million. The above figures represent the total direct costs of the following programmes:

	Outurn 1999	**Estimates 2000**
	IR£m	IR£m
Community Employment	295.8	287.6
Job Initiative	19.4	28.6
Social Economy		10.1
Community Training	19.7	18.7
Community Training Workshops	16.6	16.8
Community Enterprise Programme	2.5	
CO-OP Development Unit	0.7	0.6

These programmes are making a substantial contribution to community-based local

activity. £326.9 million was provided by the Exchequer in 1999, the remaining £27.8m was EU funding. For 2000, £351.4 million were provided for in the Exchequer estimates.

In addition, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment also co-ordinates important EU Initiatives. The EMPLOYMENT initiative is broken into four strands, NOW, YOUTHSTART, INTEGRA and HORIZON. These initiatives provide funding for local people to become involved in community based activities throughout the country, as well as providing training opportunities to develop skills. NOW is concerned with fostering opportunities for women to access vocational training and employment opportunities. YOUTHSTART provides funding for projects for early school leavers. INTEGRA is targeted at disadvantaged groups and aims to respond to the persistence and prevalence of social exclusion. HORIZON is aimed at funding innovative projects which assist people with disabilities and others considered as disadvantaged.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Funding provided
The expenditure in 1999 in respect of the Community and Voluntary sector was £44.095 million against a provision of £56.709 million. However, with the Government's commitment to expanding the role of the Community and Voluntary sector over the period 2000 to 2006, the provision in 2000 is almost £77 million, up 74% on the 1999 outturn. Funding is mainly provided to voluntary organisations in the Housing and Environment areas. Examples of funding for service provision include the voluntary housing Capital Assistance and Rental subsidy Schemes and provision of accommodation for the homeless.

Services for Homeless Persons: The Housing Act 1998 defined homelessness for the first time in housing legislation and provided local authorities with additional powers to secure accommodation for homeless persons. Expenditure has increased significantly from £7,000 in 1989, to £3 million in 1996, and to over £22 million in 1999. Part of this increase in expenditure is due to the provision of emergency accommodation for asylum seekers. Of the £22 million spent in 1999, approximately £12 million was in respect of emergency accommodation for asylum seekers.

Subsidies to Voluntary Organisations to Engage in Policy Development: The Department of the Environment contributes to the administrative and general expenses of a number of co-ordinating bodies or organisations engaged in research, including the representative body for the voluntary housing Sector, the Irish Council for Social Housing, the National Association of Building Co-operatives, Threshold, Focus Point, Respond and Rural Resettlement Ireland.

Consultative Mechanisms
A number of formal consultation fora on housing issues have been established, including

a Housing Forum (under the **PPF**), a Consultative Committee to advise the Department's Housing Unit, a National Consultative Committee on Traveller Accommodation issues. These mechanisms are mirrored at local level. A number of local authorities have also set up homeless fora with the local Health Board and relevant voluntary bodies. Informal consultation and access to senior officials and Ministers is also important. In the past, consultation with environmental NGOs has been on an *ad hoc* basis. This has become more structured with the establishment of Comhar - the national sustainable development partnership (with full social partnership representation). Social/community NGOs, as well as environmental NGOs are represented on Comhar. There are also mechanisms for consultation with urban review/Tidy Town Groups in the context of preparation of development plans under the urban and village renewal subprogramme of the LDP.

The process involves formal consultation in drawing up accommodation programmes, providing drafts of documents for views, discussion of options for future policy etc. consultation on development of local plans.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Charitable Lotteries Fund: The Department administers a fund of approximately £5 million per annum from the proceeds of the National Lottery. The objective of the scheme is to supplement the income of the promoters of private charitable lotteries whose products are competing directly with National Lottery products. 12 organisations received funding under this Fund in 1999.

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Funding provided

	1999 Outurn IR£m
Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Fund	12.0
Emergency Preparedness and Post-Emergency Rehabilitation Fund	6.0
NGO Co-Financing Scheme	7.0
Human Rights and Democratisation Scheme	1.5
Reconciliation Fund	2.0

Ireland Aid is the Governments development co-operation programme and expenditure under the programme comes from the vote for International co-operation. It has been the policy of successive Irish Governments to work closely with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and in particular with the Irish based NGOs, many of who have a long and distinguished record in providing development assistance. The partnership between Irish Aid and NGOs is intended to benefit both the NGOs, through financial support, and the Bilateral Aid Programme, through the experience and local contacts of the NGOs. The Partnership recognises the close contact which many NGOs have with

local communities and the potential that this creates for reaching the poor and involving them in determining the course of their own development.

Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Fund
The objective of the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Fund is to provide emergency relief to countries experiencing major crises as a result of natural or manmade disasters, e.g. war, drought, famine. Assistance is provided through NGOs or international relief agencies.

Emergency Preparedness and Post-Emergency Rehabilitation Fund
The objective is to provide support for Irish and Irish linked NGOs in implementing development projects. In addition to projects funded under the main NGO Co-Financing Scheme, funding is provided under a NGO Block Grant Scheme for larger Irish NGOs and an In-Country Microprojects Scheme, which focuses on activities on indigenous NGOs.

Human Rights and Democratisation Scheme
The objective of this scheme is to assist the development of democratic processes and institutions and the promotion and protection of Human Rights in developing countries.

Reconciliation Fund
Over 60 organisations were allocated funding totalling £2 million from the Reconciliation Fund in 1999. These organisations were involved in a wide range of cross-community and cross-border programmes in such areas as education, research, outreach, community activities and capacity building.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND CHILDREN

The Health Boards disburse £390 million to community/voluntary agencies (excluding acute hospitals). This funding is provided through:

Section 26 of the Health Act 1970
Section 65 of the Health Act 1953
Section 10 of the Child Care Act 1991.

Health Boards are accountable for the disbursement of these funds. They are required to allocate funds in line with services priorities established in their annual service plans, prepared under the Health (No 3)(Amendment) Act, 1996. New statutory provision for the funding of Community and Voluntary agencies is being introduced on a phased basis, beginning in the Eastern Health Board Region with the establishment of the new Regional Authority. The Health (Eastern Regional Health Authority) Act, 1999, provides that:

Section 26 of the Health Act 1970 and Section 65 of the Health Act 1953 will not apply to agencies funded by the new authority. This includes all Community and Voluntary agencies.

These sections are replaced by a new funding provision, Section 10(4) of the 1999 Act. This section provides that all funding of non-statutory agencies will be by way of written service agreements. These agreements will:

- Cover a period of between 3 and 5 years;
- Set out the principle by which both parties agree to abide;
- Standards relating to efficiency, effectiveness and quality of service to be provided.

Consultation mechanisms
Advance mechanisms through committee structures for consultation with the major voluntary providers have been developed and are now formalised. Further development is envisaged especially in the child care area. The Health (No. 3)(Amendment) Act 1996 provides specific statutory recognition of the requirement for co-operation with the Community and Voluntary sector. There is also on-going dialogue at local level between individual local Community and Voluntary agencies and Health Boards.

The trend of partnership and accountability is now well established in the health Sector. The diversity and number of smaller organisations remains the main challenge to the State in seeking to obtain representative views in a consultation process which must be coherent, time limited and acceptable, in terms of outcome, to all parties.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM

Funding provided

Programme	**1999 outturn IR£m**
Childcare programme	3.550
Offenders Training Programme	0.086
Victims Support	0.651
National Women's Council of Ireland	0.295
Probation and Welfare Service	5.050

Childcare
The funding is administered by Area Development Management Ltd. on the Department's behalf. The Department developed the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme in 1998 which secured a budget of over £6 million (includes EU funding) for the 2 year

period 1998 and 1999 to support a range of measures from social inclusion and equal opportunities perspectives. £1.25 million was provided from exchequer funding in 1999 towards the Community Support Initiative under which grants were issued to 25 flagship community-based childcare projects. £0.4 million was invested for Training and Development initiatives including funding projects for National Voluntary Childcare Organisations, local Partnerships and community groups. 25% of this funding was provided by the EU. £ 1.9 million was provided under the Capital Infrastructure scheme, which provided funding to community groups for the establishment, upgrading or enhancement of community, based childcare facilities. 46% of this funding was provided by the EU.

The Department secured additional funding of over £5 million (combines ESF and Exchequer funding) in June, 1999 from the Human Resources Development Operational Programme to support training and development initiatives up to June, 2000. This strand of funding includes supports for the training of childcare personnel in community groups and local Partnerships, grants to support the development of the National Voluntary Childcare Organisations and support for the enhancement of the National Childcare Census and Database and training for childcare staff in drug service locations.

Childcare was identified as a priority area for investment in the National Development Plan, 2000 to 2006, and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has been allocated over £250 million over the next 7 years to support the development of childcare service provision, much of which will be targeted at community based projects which facilitate parents, particularly women to avail of employment, training and education opportunities.

Equality

The National Women's Council of Ireland is recognised by Government as the body that promotes women's concerns and perspectives. As such it receives an annual Exchequer grant directly from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform towards its operating costs. In 1995 this grant was £140,000; £170,000 in 1996 and 1997, in 1998 £200,000 and in 1999 £270,000 was provided. A grant of £400,000 has been provided for in respect of 2000.

Travellers

In 1998, the Government allocated a sum of £900,000 to fund a Traveller Communications Programme over a 3 year period: 1999 to 2001. The objective of the programme is to address the underlying causes of mistrust between Travellers and the settled community and to promote a greater understanding between both communities.

Training for Offenders

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform promotes social inclusion through employment by providing training and related education for people in custody in prison. The total expenditure in 1999 on the programme was £86,356. This expenditure was part funded by the EU Employment Programme - INTEGRA initiative.

Victims of Crime
The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform provides funding to the Irish Association for Victim Support as part of its commitment to giving victims of crime a central place in the criminal justice system. Funding for 1999 was £651,000.

The Community and Voluntary sector also receives funding under the Strategy for the Travelling Community, Irish Council of People with Disabilities, Pilot Community Service Projects, Youth Diversion project, Free Legal Advice Centres.

Probation and Welfare Service
The Probation and Welfare Service provided £5.05 million from the Exchequer in 1999 to assist Voluntary Groups, either established by the Service or working in association with the service, to provide a range of services, primarily for offenders.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISE

Energy Action is a Dublin based voluntary organisation, which is partly funded by the Department of Public Enterprise, and which offers energy conservation and home insulation services to the elderly and low income groups. The grant paid to energy action in 1999 was £116,000.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL, COMMUNITY AND FAMILY AFFAIRS

Funding provided

Programme	**1999 Outturn IR£m**
Community Development Support Programmes and Once-Off grant schemes	13.265
Summer Student Jobs scheme	5.2
Money Advice and Budgeting Service	4.2
Scheme of Support for Older People	3.0
Marriage, Child and Bereavement Counseling Services	2.16
Independent Foundation for Investing in Communities	0.3
Society of St. Vincent de Paul	1.1
Protestant Aid	0.05

Community Development Support Programmes (CDSP) concentrate on a wide range

of support for local self-help groups, community development, welfare rights and information work, and on the provision of seed money to enable community groups to pilot initiatives identified as meeting new and emerging community needs. Expenditure in 1999 under the CDSP was £11.08 million. The CDSPs were included in the National Development Plan with a commitment of over £100 million over the lifetime of the plan. This Department's support Programmes were included in the special Sub-Programme for Social Inclusion in the Regional Operational Programme, which provides for overall investment in the order of £220 million.

The total allocation for 1999 under the **annual grants schemes** was £2.185 million and the allocation for 2000 is £2.225 million.

Money Advice and Budgeting Service is designed to target families and individuals identified as having problems with debt and moneylending. The budget allocation for 1999 was £4.2 million and for 2000 is £4.542 million (50 projects).

The Scheme of Support for Older People aims to improve the security and social support of vulnerable older people. £17.6 million has been allocated to this scheme since 1996 which allowed some 68,444 individuals up to the end of 1999 to receive assistance under the scheme. £3 million was paid in 1999 and a sum of £5 million has been provided for the Scheme in the Department's estimates for 2000.

Grants for Marriage, Child and Bereavement Counselling Services - some 307 voluntary organisations providing marriage, child and bereavement counselling/support services received funding in 1999. A total of £3.75 million has been allocated in Budget 2000 for the further development of this programme, representing an increase of £1.59 million on the allocation in 1999 and a fourfold increase from 1997. This includes an amount of £50,000 in respect of the Rainbows Programme.

The Independent Foundation for Investing in Communities was established in November 1998 as a joint venture between employers and the State. Over £1 million pounds has been invested in this initiative.

Consultative mechanisms

Mechanisms include formal consultative meetings, participation in seminars, advisory groups, consultative fora, seeking written submissions, Steering Group membership, customer panels. The National Advisory Committees for the Money Advice and Budgeting Service and the Community Development Programme include representatives of the funded projects and others and give an opportunity to raise issues of concern to them and influence development of policy.

The process ranges from formal meetings at which groups can express their views (pre-budget forum and Working Group on Joint Custody), to working in joint committees (CDP and MABS Advisory committees), to regular meetings and consultation with particular groups on specific issues of interest to them (Disability Consultative Forum and

Customer Service Panels). The role of the CDP and MABS Advisory Committees goes beyond consultation and includes development of consensus approaches to operational and structural issues within the Programmes, joint management of certain operational tasks (e.g. organisation of events, development of actions to influence relevant policy in other agencies, management of research and evaluation). While there is a clear distinction between matters that can be agreed at Advisory Committee level (e.g. codes of practice for projects) and matters that cannot (e.g. funding levels), in practical terms these committees are mechanisms by which the Department and funded projects work together on policy and operational matters.

Combat Poverty Agency

In 1999, the Combat Poverty Agency allocated £0.976 million in direct support to the Community and Voluntary sector. This included £345,000 in respect of core funding of the seven national networks. The CPA is also one of the intermediary funding bodies with responsibility for the allocation of grant aid under the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (see below).

The Agency considers that consulting with and involving those experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the organisations that represent them on an ongoing basis is essential to developing effective policies and programmes to combat poverty and social exclusion. The Agency uses a range of different methods of consultation, depending on the particular project or issue under consideration. These include inviting written submissions, hosting consultative seminars, focus groups, advisory committees.

Comhairle /The National Social Service Board:

Comhairle (formerly the National Social Services Board) provided £2,271,468 in direct support to the Community and Voluntary sector. This consists of £1,966,851 to Citizens Information Centres. Support was provided for computerisation also for CICs to total £249,976. Citizens Information Projects (i.e. Citizens Information Development Project: Dublin CIC for the Deaf and the Refugee Information Service) received £58,000. Materials and Insurance to CICs cost £40,375. Grants were made for Information Projects to total £123,819 and Training grants to twenty different voluntary organisations totalling £16,738. Three volunteering initiatives (i.e. Volunteer Resource Centre, Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups, Tallaght Voluntary Bureau and Focus Ireland - Community Service Volunteer Programme) received £106,000. As well as direct grant aid, the Board also provides a range of *indirect* supports to CICs, MABS and other voluntary organisations.

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION

Funding provided

Programme	**1999 Outturn IR£m**
Operational Programme for Local,	

Urban and Rural Development 1994 - 1999	27.9
Operational Programme for URBAN 1996-1999	6.3
Sports Activities	16.16

The Operational Programme for LURD and URBAN both receive 75% funding from the European Commission and 25% funding from the Exchequer. It is not possible to give a breakdown of actual expenditure on the Community and Voluntary sector as funding is not directed solely to the sector. The Programme provides supports for integrated local action plans covering economic development, social integration and environmental measures designed to tackle exclusion and marginalisation in disadvantaged areas.

Operational Programme for Local, Urban & Rural Development (LURD) (1994 - 1999)

Under Sub-Programme 2 of the Operational Programme, Area Development Management (ADM) has managed funding to 38 Area Based Partnerships and 33 Community Groups. ADM allocates funding based on Area Plans submitted. Partnerships and Community Group projects promote voluntary activity under a range of activities including community development actions to enable marginalised groups organise and develop their capacity to become involved, funding to support local community organisations that are working to address the needs of the most marginalised, working with tenants and local authorities to make decisions together on the refurbishment, security and tenant management of local authority estates, environmental projects involving the refurbishment of parklands or planting of derelict sites.

Operational Programme for URBAN 1996 – 1999

The aim of URBAN is to act as a catalyst in providing community assistance to support integrated action plans covering economic development, social integration and environmental measures designed to improve living conditions.

Sports Activities

The Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation administers the Sports Capital Programme which is aimed at assisting sports clubs and Community and Voluntary organisations to develop sport and recreational facilities. The Programme prioritises the needs of disadvantaged areas in the provision of facilities and encourages the multi-purpose use of facilities at national, regional and community level by clubs, community organisations and by the National Governing Bodies of Sport. Under the 1999 Sports Capital Programme approximately £20 million in grants were allocated to projects throughout the country. It is envisaged that a similar amount will be allocated under the 2000 Programme. The Irish Sports Council provides grants to sports organisations under a variety of programmes. The Department also administers the Local Authority Swimming Pool Programme, which provides assistance towards the provision of new pools and the refurbishment of existing ones. Proposals under this Programme can only be made through local authorities. The Programme is exchequer funded and the budget for 2000 is £15 million.

Consultation mechanisms
Examples of existing mechanisms include Partnerships, the Integrated Services Process, the National Sports Council and consultations with National Governing Bodies of Sport.

PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

Measures administered by ADM	IR£9.82m
Measures administered by CPA	IR£6.183m

In July 1995, the Irish Government and the EU announced that Area Development Management Ltd. would be one of the intermediary funding bodies with responsibility for the allocation of grant aid under the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) was another designated body. ADM and CPA have implemented a joint management approach to delivering the Programme and will continue to do so in the post 2000 period. The EU provides 75% of total funding for this programme. Funding is allocated based on the appraisal of applications. The Community and Voluntary sector are eligible to apply under all Sub-Programmes. Most applications from the sector relate to the Social Inclusion Sub-Programme, the Community Led Development Measure and the Cross-Border Reconciliation Measure.

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