

East London Third Sector Workforce Development: Evaluation of the Pilot Workforce Development Tool

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Executive Summary

Importance of Workforce Development in the Third Sector

- Workforce development is more important than ever for employers. Good quality, safe and accessible services are dependent upon properly skilled and qualified staff and volunteers. Therefore employers, including those in the third sector, need to carefully consider effective workforce development.
- In London, and the London Thames Gateway area specifically, the predicted increase in population will increase demand for many of the services that the government expects the third sector to provide. Overall levels of supply will have to increase, opening the field to many new providers. National inspection frameworks will maintain quality standards.
- Commissioning and procurement processes will demand evidence of staff skills, and while for an initial period some flexibility will be necessary, in the longer term those organisations which cannot provide such evidence are unlikely to be awarded contracts.

Meeting the Challenge

- In such an increasingly competitive environment, with limited resources, the third sector needs a strategic approach to workforce development to meet gaps and shortages. Therefore the sector requires a mechanism that enables organisations to readily access data on current staff skills and organisational needs so that deficiencies can be easily identified and provision planned for.
- A key role in the support of the third sector is to facilitate the provision of appropriate training and development to their staff, volunteers and trustees, and to encourage the availability of resources to enable this. To ensure such an adequate supply of the right training and resources requires a picture of gaps and shortages across the area.
- The Workforce Analysis software (known as WAN) developed by Computing Help Limited and adapted for use with the third sector under the direction of East London CVS Network, Thames Gateway London Partnership and other members of the East London Workforce Development Coalition aimed to support third sector organisations to manage staff development, prove commitment to quality initiatives and collect information about the workforce development needs of the sector in the sub-region.

Testing the WAN

- The WAN has been tested in order to identify whether it meets these needs. It was promoted to the third sector across the London Thames Gateway in a pilot that aimed to install it in 500 voluntary and community organisations. These organisations were asked to submit their data to a central pool. The pilot was managed by the Workforce Development Coalition.
- The evaluation of the pilot has identified whether the WAN software effectively met its aims. Participants' feedback has been gathered, data

analysed and the effectiveness of the East London Workforce Development Coalition in delivering the pilot has been assessed. Options for the future structure and the roll out of the tool have been considered in light of developments underway in the sector and current government and local initiatives.

Summary of Findings

- The majority of voluntary and community organisations are working on performance improvement and recognise the need for effective data production to support funding regimes. Nevertheless, while they are committed to workforce development, limited resources and front-line pressures mean that it is often not prioritised or addressed strategically.
- There was initially a considerable level of enthusiasm and interest displayed by many of the participants. However, for many voluntary and community organisations the WAN programme required a level of IT capacity and understanding from participants which was not present, particularly in smaller organisations. In addition the benefits of the WAN were not always obvious, or immediate, to most voluntary and community organisations and therefore did not warrant the investment in time required of them to input the data. The lack of a dedicated project coordinator meant that these problems were not addressed.
- The pilot was ambitious in its scope but lacked the resources to ensure adequate capacity for effective delivery. There were significant problems with the planning, management and coordination which had a considerable impact on the success of the pilot. In addition, the timing of the pilot coincided with a number of other initiatives which meant that sufficient 'buy-in' from key organisations was not forthcoming.
- The pilot of the WAN identified many useful learning points, although it failed to deliver the intended outcomes.
- There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the WAN, with some modifications, could support workforce development in the third sector.

Recommendations

- Options should be explored to run a follow on 'phase two' of WAN building on lessons learned in first pilot.
- Phase Two should still be run as a pilot.
- Phase Two should have a smaller, more focused, target of participant third sector organisations.
- Ensure adequate resources are in place to provide appropriate planning, management and coordination of the project
- Give sufficient consideration in advance to the project design.
- Amend the WAN software and provide supporting material.
- Run an event or series of workshop(s) with key people to develop Phase Two.
- Promote greater investment in workforce development within the third sector.

1. Introduction

1.1 Aims

Tricia Wass Associates were commissioned by Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP) on behalf of the East London Workforce Development Coalition to conduct an evaluation of the Workforce Development Pilot Project

The aims of the evaluation were to identify:

1. The effectiveness of the tool in supporting individual organisations to develop internal workforce and skills development needs.
2. The effectiveness of the tool in supporting workforce and skills development sub regionally.
3. How could the data be best used to influence resource allocations?
4. How effective has the partnership been in developing and implementing the pilot and what should any future structure look like, if the tool is rolled out?
5. In light of developments underway in the sector, through a range of government and local initiatives, consider the fit and value of how and if the tool could be rolled out more widely, Pan London or nationally, linking with the Workforce Hub.

1.2 Workforce Development Pilot

East London CVS Network (ELN) led the pilot phase of a Workforce Analysis software tool (WAN) which sought to engage 500 voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) over eight months in using and submitting data from software which collates information on staff, volunteers and board/management committee members within organisations.

The WAN had two objectives:

- To support participating VCOs to manage staff development and help prove commitment to Investors in People (IIP)¹ and PQASSO² (Charitable Evaluation Services (CES), Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations), for those organisations developing quality standards.
- To collect information about the workforce development needs of VCOs in the sub-region³.

The aim of the pilot was to test whether the WAN could meet its objectives and thereby enable the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in East London to demonstrate quality service provision meeting minimum standards required by commissioners, as well as providing baseline information for the development of the East London CVS Workforce Development Strategy and influence funders to target training money and opportunities at VCOs who returned their training needs data.

¹ www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

² www.ces-vol.org.uk

³ East London includes the boroughs of Havering, Barking & Dagenham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Hackney, Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham and the City.

Investment for the pilot came from ChangeUp, North East London Strategic Health Authority and LDA via a number of partners.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology used to evaluate the WAN Pilot involved:

- Desk research and review of existing material relating to the background, development and implementation of the pilot, as well as any relevant contextual material including relevant government and local initiatives that would impact on the future use and outcome of the tool.
- Assessment of data submitted to determine profile of organisations who submitted data, quality of the data submitted, level to which the data meets the objectives of the tool and provides the necessary information for action and quality and impact of data analysis.
- Interviews with organisations involved in developing and implementing the pilot identifying their own initial view of the pilot, its value and relevance, how far it has met, or not met the stated aims, perceived blocks and drivers and any views about its future use.
- Interviews with participating VCOs to gather both qualitative and quantitative information on pilot process, use and usefulness of the software and what improvements they might like to see in the future.
- Stakeholder Workshop to engage these stakeholders in testing assumptions and issues, identifying solutions and opportunities and assessing options for the future development and use of the tool.

1.4 Limitations

In the course of the evaluation it became apparent that there was not a lot of written material such as project initiation documents or a project plan, or hard data readily available. Therefore much of the evaluation relied on people's memory and perceptions of events. This situation was compounded by the time lapse between the end of the pilot and the commissioning of the evaluation. The pilot finished at the end of August 2006 and the evaluation began in March 2007.

The aim to use the data collected in order to be able to inform strategic workforce development planning sub regionally and influence funders did not happen within the lifetime of the pilot and therefore this aspect of the pilot could not be evaluated.

1.5 Structure and Definitions

This report is structured as follows:

- **Section One** introduces the evaluation and the pilot, including a brief description of the methodology.
- **Section Two** provides the context for the pilot, identifying national and regional and sub-regional initiatives which drive the need for workforce development in the third sector.
- **Section Three** describes the pilot, its development and implementation.
- **Section Four** considers the data gathered in the evaluation and analyses the 'hard' information collected by the WAN.

- **Section Five** provides the evaluation of the pilot, including stakeholder and participant feedback.
- **Section Six** concludes the evaluation and identifies a number of future options and opportunities.
- **Section Seven** makes seven recommendations.

The report uses the terms 'third sector' and voluntary and community sector (VCS) or voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) interchangeably to include organisations which are 'not for profit' and independent of the state. Distinctions are sometimes made between social enterprises, including housing associations which operate more as businesses reinvesting their profits for their social cause, and voluntary or community organisations which have traditionally relied on grants and voluntary donations. However, as this report reflects, this division is becoming increasingly unclear.

2. Context

The need to create a tool that would assist the third sector to improve workforce development and to develop an effective sub-regional workforce development strategy is driven by a number of external factors, both national and local. These are only touched on here as other reports including those mentioned below, provide more detail.

2.1 Third Sector as Service Provider

2.1.1 National policy

The Government's broad agenda for the voluntary and community sector is based on two main roles, the first of which is that of mainstream service provider. Futurebuilders⁴ and ChangeUp⁵ are government initiatives that support this and the latter in particular recognises the need to ensure that the VCS has adequate capacity and infrastructure to deliver quality services.

2.1.2 Funding Environment

The role of the third sector as service provider is accompanied by an opening up of procurement and contracting processes in statutory agencies, making service contracts more accessible and available to the third sector. Initiatives such as Local Area Agreements⁶, the Compact⁷ and Futurebuilders all reflect this. The NHS is also now more fully embarking on this route and will bring a considerable commissioning budget to the market.

Indeed, there has been an almost wholesale move by the statutory sector away from grant funding and towards commissioning and contracting services from the third sector. This is at a local and regional level. VCOs have increasingly to compete for these contracts and are required to demonstrate how they meet certain standards.

Funders are increasingly looking for evidence and solid data to support applications for resources. Proof of need, as well as a clear and considered approach to meeting that need, is just as important when applying for resources to support workforce development as it is for any other application.

2.1.3 Workforce

In order to take advantage of these opportunities and continue to secure the resources to deliver much needed services, it is more important than ever that the third sector has a workforce with the right skills.

In addition, in a market where the VCS often can not compete with the salaries offered by other sectors, other benefits and the retention and development of staff is increasingly important. Attracting and retaining volunteers and management committee members is becoming more difficult and workforce development can assist here too.

⁴ www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk

⁵ www.changeup.org.uk

⁶ www.communities.gov.uk/laa

⁷ www.thecompact.org.uk

2.2 Performance Improvement and Skills

The UK Workforce Hub⁸ is one of the six 'national hubs of expertise' set up by the Government as part of its ChangeUp agenda. The UK Workforce Hub in England exists to help voluntary and community organisations ensure they have staff, volunteers and trustees with the skills they need. Their work falls into four main areas: learning and skills; human resources and employment practice; leadership; working and volunteering in the voluntary sector. The hubs work with infrastructure organisations to promote and support shared learning and good practice.

The Learning and Skills Councils⁹ (LSC) are a government initiative responsible for making England better skilled and more competitive. They are responsible for planning and funding vocational education and training, and work closely with businesses to ensure their training needs are met. There are five local LSCs in London. VCOs are both training providers funded by LSCs and 'businesses' receiving services from LLSC. However it seems very few VCOs access services from the LSC.

Train to Gain¹⁰ is a service launched in 2006 and run by the LSC to help improve the productivity and competitiveness of businesses by ensuring staff have the right skills to do the job. It uses Skills Brokers to: provide advice, match training needs to providers, and ensure training is delivered to meet need. This includes the Broker working with the business to carry out a review and analysis of the business to assess what skills are held already and what will be needed in the future. The Broker then makes training recommendations and helps the business develop a training programme. The Skills Broker gives advice on where to get funding for the training, and some free training is available (inc all to NVQ 2 or equivalent). The Broker then continues to offer support and reviews progress. It is too early to say how many VCOs will consider the support appropriate for them and take up the offer of Skills Brokers.

Sector Skills Councils¹¹ (SSCs) are independent, employer-led organisations, set up on the invitation of government to articulate the training needs of their sector and be responsible for training and workforce development. There are 25 in total. There isn't one specifically for the VCS, but VCOs can be part of the others. Particularly relevant ones include: Skills for Care and Development for social care, children and young people; Skills for Health; LifeLong Learning UK; Creative and Cultural Skills. The National Workforce Hub encourages VCOs to build a dialogue with the SSCs wherever possible in order to influence traditional learning providers to develop the courses needed for staff and volunteers as well as getting access to advice and information. It is worth noting that in doing this VCOs will need hard evidence to back up their arguments. In October 2005 the Sector Skills Council 'Skills for Care' launched the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care¹² (NMDS-SC) to

⁸ www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk

⁹ www.lsc.gov.uk

¹⁰ www.traintogain.gov.uk

¹¹ www.ssda.org.uk

¹² www.nmds-sc.org.uk/nmds.asp

provide information about the social care workforce. Every social care employer in England has been asked to record vital information on their organisation and workforce. If they are CSCI registered (see below) they are required to provide it. Their aim is 'to generate improved sector wide strategic workforce intelligence to support the strategic planning of Skills for Care and stakeholders in the wider social care sector'.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection¹³ (CSCI) registers, inspects and reports on social care services in England on behalf of the government in order to improve social care and stamp out bad practice. They register and inspect: care homes that provide personal care or nursing care (or both); adult placement schemes; domiciliary care agencies (home care agencies); nurses' agencies. Children's services have now been transferred to Ofsted¹⁴. Registration means that, before any of the above services can start operating, CSCI must be satisfied that the service will be run in line with the regulations and standards set by the Government. The information CSCI asks for about the care service includes details about staff and this is where the NMDS is used.

2.3 Local Conditions

With the predicted population increase and corresponding rise in public service provision in the Thames Gateway area, all these issues are particularly pertinent for the VCS in East London. Three recent reports commissioned by TGLP during the period of the pilot provide the context and identify drivers for the development and piloting of the WAN.

2.3.1 Building World-Class Childcare in the Thames Gateway¹⁵

This was the first of the three reports to be published between March and November 2006. It concluded that the planned increase in jobs and housing in London Thames Gateway would require the recruitment of a large number of new workers, many of whom would need childcare in order to work. It identified a current shortage of childcare places and forecast that this would increase, in part due to the lack of suitably qualified childcare workers. While the report did not look specifically at the role of the VCS in childcare provision, it included many examples and references to community provision.

2.3.2 Strategy for Building a World-Class Third sector in London Thames Gateway¹⁶ This report identifies three main roles for the VCS in East London:

- Strategic advisor and coordinator of partnerships
- Agent of service design, delivery and reconfiguration
- Advocate and promoter of community cohesion and a civil society.

It states that 'Delivering the vision set out for the London Thames Gateway will require transformational and comprehensive interventions, not incremental change and piecemeal projects', and it recognised that a well-resourced third

¹³ www.csci.org.uk

¹⁴ www.ofsted.gov.uk

¹⁵ www.thames-gateway.org.uk

¹⁶ www.thames-gateway.org.uk

sector will be key to making the area a place where people want to live and work both now and in the future. It estimated that there were between 10,000 –15,000 VCOs in East London employing close to 50,000 people, and this was excluding volunteers. It also noted that the recent push from funders both at regional level such as London Councils and the London Development Agency, as well as locally to introduce a “commissioning” approach to funding third sector service provision has caused some anxiety and confusion.

2.3.3 Building a World-Class Third Sector Workforce in East London¹⁷

This report set out to outline the rationale for, and way forward to, developing the third sector workforce in East London as part of the wider regeneration of the Thames Gateway and provide a strategy and implementation plan for this. It followed the identification of the need for a workforce development strategy in the East London ChangeUp Plan. It was intended originally that this report would draw from the findings of, and particularly the data from, the WAN pilot. Unfortunately this was not possible as the data was not available.

The report did however identify:

- The scale and profile of the sector in the area
- The importance of the sector in service provision
- Skills and staff gaps in the paid workforce
- Governing body skills and gaps
- The importance of workforce development to address these gaps and the need for resources to support this.
- Leadership skills.

Significantly, this report identified the need for increased awareness of third sector skills gaps in order to address these gaps and shortages.

2.3.4 East London ChangeUp Plan

The East London Infrastructure Investment and Development Plan [EL II&DP] was written in 2005 in response to ChangeUp: the government’s initiative to improve the infrastructure of the voluntary and community sector. It was produced to ensure that infrastructure organisations within the East London sub-region fully consider how to configure and deliver improved services to frontline organisations. The Plan identified that there needs to be a clearer understanding of the sector, its contribution [both economic & social], and its projected development needs. It identified 16 themes for investment one of which was workforce development and it recognized that there was no coordinated activity in this field at that present time. The Plan also identified the need for accurate figures on the numbers, skills level and training needs of people working within the sector.¹⁸

The development of the WAN is clearly timely and has the potential to generate considerable interest across the region and nationally. It is important then that the pilot provides effective learning for the future usage of the tool.

¹⁷ www.thames-gateway.org.uk

¹⁸ www.elcvnetwork.org.uk/change/subregional/subregional-plan.pdf

3. Describing the Pilot

The pilot consisted of an eight month process aiming to install the Workforce Analysis System WAN software into 500 third sector organisations in East London and collect information about the workforce development needs of this sector to inform the sub regional strategy. The various stages that represent this pilot are as follows:

3.1 Background

The East London Changeup Partnership provided a forum for discussion around third sector development generally and specifically around supporting the development of infrastructure. A number of members started discussing the need to gather information to form the basis of a sub regional Workforce Development Strategy and were able to bring ideas and resources to the table.

The Skills for Care North East London were looking at ways that Care Homes could collect data to satisfy the requirements of the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) to meet the requirements of CSCI (Skills for Care). Software designed by Computer Help Limited (CHL) had been identified as a possible solution. The Director of CHL had both a social work and an IT background and was able to use these areas of expertise to develop this software to be a useful tool for care providers to collate a wide range of HR and organisational data. North East London Strategic Health Authority bought this software and worked with CHL to develop the WAN tool specifically for use with the VCS.

The East London CVS Network (ELN) was formed in 2004 to support a coherent voice for the third sector and address strategic issues in the sub region. Its members are the ten¹⁹ CVSs in the sub region. Under ChangeUp, all CVSs and CVS Networks produced a ChangeUp Infrastructure Development Plan and this identified workforce development as a key priority. The CVS were tasked with leading on the development of ChangeUp at a local level & did so by forming local consortia of organisations for both the voluntary and public sectors, which then oversaw the writing of local ChangeUp Plans [see ELN website for details]. Funding for ELN comes from London Councils [not local councils] ~ to address a range of sub-regional issues, not just ChangeUp. ELN was tasked with co-ordinating ChangeUp at a sub-regional level & with writing a sub-regional ChangeUp Plan.

The Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP) convenes and chairs a Third Sector Sub Regional Strategy Group which looks at broad issues impacting on the VCS in East London, including workforce development (WFD). TGLP employ an officer to work on health, childcare and voluntary sector development and had commissioned a report looking into the childcare implications of the growing workforce in TGL. They also wanted to develop strategy for the third sector in East London generally and recognised WFD was key to this.

¹⁹ Although City was not included in this pilot project

The Workforce Development Coalition (WFDC) was brought together by TGLP and East London ChangeUp Partnership and other key partners were invited to join. The members of this group became the main stakeholders for the pilot and therefore a key group of interviewees for this evaluation. (See Appendix 1 for a list of coalition partners)

‘ We recognised the need for improved workforce development in third sector ... and thought that developing a WFD Strategy for the sector was what we needed to do first’

Discussions within the WFDC regarding developments underway within, and impacting on, the third sector (see context above) inspired the group to develop the pilot in order that the WAN software could be used across the region within the third sector and its ability to collect the data to inform the WFD sub regional strategy tested. The tool would also provide individual organisations with free software to support their own internal HR systems, workforce development, ability to meet minimum standards and therefore support funding applications.

3.2 Coordination

So in October 2005 ELN and the WFDC liaised with CHL to explore the feasibility of using the WAN software across the third sector in East London. The tool was further adjusted to become compatible for the third sector organisations and funding was drawn together for the pilot. This came from ChangeUp (£10,000) SHA (£25,000), LDA (£5,000).

The WFDC monthly meetings were to provide direction and support for the pilot and receive reports on its progress. Coordination and ongoing management was to come from a specific project officer post reporting to the Coordinator at ELN. This post was filled initially by a secondment from another organisation which lasted for approximately three months and then two further changes of personnel occurred.

The original aim of the pilot was to install the software in 500 organisations, as this would represent 5% of the known sector, and a process was defined that used ‘volunteers’ from CVSs and other organisations to install the software in these organisations. It was also hoped that this would build local ownership. Volunteers would be required to initially install the software in 10 organisations and then their organisation would receive payment for further installations. This volunteer process was designed to provide local support for VCOs from their CVSs and to ensure that installers had a good knowledge of the organisation and local environment, coupled with an understanding of the software and its value.

‘We also hoped that eventually the software would become embedded into the work of CVS development workers ...an integral part of organisational development’

At the beginning of 2006 a consultant responsible for establishing a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) sub regional network, joined the WFDC to help ensure

BME organisations were part of the pilot. The consultant was able to offer referrals to organisations she was working with and gave advice on stimulating interest in BME groups. For BME organisations in particular, 'cold calling' could raise suspicion and greater success would be achieved if groups received calls from people they could relate to.

3.3 Promotion

Promotional and publicity literature was used to alert the third sector in East London to the availability of the software and to encourage them to agree to have it installed. This included the distribution of flyers at events and through mail outs, articles in CVS newsletters, information on websites, e-bulletins sent out by CVS information workers and others, an article in Skills for Care newsletter, emails to infrastructure organisations and to LEAD project co-ordinators (some of whom were involved in the project).

Several tranches of promotion were rolled out and it was anticipated that information would cascade through the various networks and VCOs would come forward to take up the free software. It was also hoped that by publicising the WAN in this way, calls by installers would not be received cold.

3.4 Implementation

In November 2005 a press release was issued and an information and training event, at which CHL demonstrated the software, was held to recruit and train volunteers. This event was attended by 25 people. A subsequent publicity and training event was held in March 2006. Information packs were provided at these events. Installation of the software began following the November event.

The volunteer programme was successful in installing the software in some organisations but ultimately this became too time consuming due to the complexities and problems incurred with installations and coordination, and the volunteer programme broke down. As a result CHL were contracted to install the majority of the software. In order to engage the organisations and recruit them into the pilot, a variety of methods were employed including emails, phone calls and word of mouth.

Initially each organisation received a CD-rom to install, but it was later decided that the installer would keep hold of the CD and not leave it with the organisation. This ensured that the correct version of the installation disc went out to the right organisation. Installation took around two hours per organisation and this included a short 'training' session on its use.

The actual inputting of the data was usually left for the organisation to complete after the software had been installed. This was often not available in a state ready to input, and therefore collecting and inputting the data became an additional task. Some organisations employed a named person on a short term basis just to input the data, while in other organisations this was an additional task. This was usually the most senior employee, director / co-ordinator, or an administrator, or a member of the HR team. A decision was

taken mid-way through the project that installers would stay with the organisation until some information was inputted and submitted.

'Took a bit longer but meant we were actually getting information through!'

3.5 Gathering data

The WAN software offers an electronic source of information on staff and volunteers, including trustees and management committee members. This includes basic details such as age, gender, ethnicity and contact details as well as professional qualifications, training and appraisal. Once inputted and as long as it is kept up to date, it provides the organisation with ready access to HR information and the basis to develop a recruitment, training and development strategy.

The use of this data outside of an organisation is of value for third sector workforce development and planning on a wider scale. To this end, as part of the pilot, the organisations were asked to submit data in an anonymous format to a central source. The gathering and submission of this data is automated by the WAN software and requires the organisation to agree to send the data file in an email to CHL, where it is entered into a central database and can be subject to analysis.

Initially a WFDC member agreed to receive the data and conduct the analysis but due to personnel changes this did not happen, so CHL agreed to receive and collate the data and provide this on request for analysis. Updates on the quantity, quality and overview of information were provided to the ELN Coordinator.

4. Analysis of Data

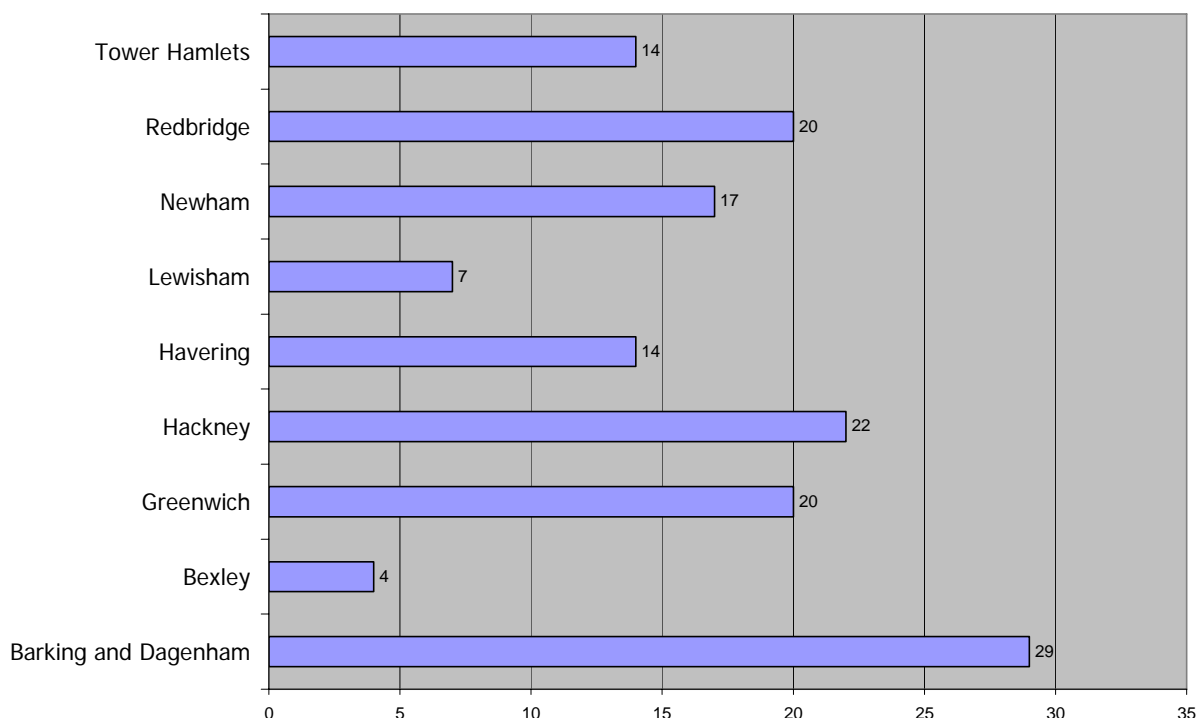
4.1 Application of software

The main source of information about the practical side of installation and implementation of the WAN came from CHL. At the beginning of the pilot they had identified approximately 4,500 voluntary sector organisations to contact and logged the contact process and their progress over the period of the pilot. A more detailed description of this process can be found in the report written by CHL in September 2006 at the end of the pilot entitled 'Report on the pilot WAN installation exercise, (conducted between December 2005 and August 2006²⁰)'.

Over 3,500 organisations were contacted by the end of the pilot. According to CHL, an average of three contacts were made to organisations who did not want the software and on average 13 contact (email, telephone and visits) were made with each organisation where the software was installed. This proved to be a labour intensive and time consuming process for a disproportionate reward.

99 organisations had the software installed before the end of the pilot in August 2006, 48 subsequently had WAN installed between September and February 2007²¹ a total of 149 installations.

Figure 1 - A breakdown of WAN installed by Borough



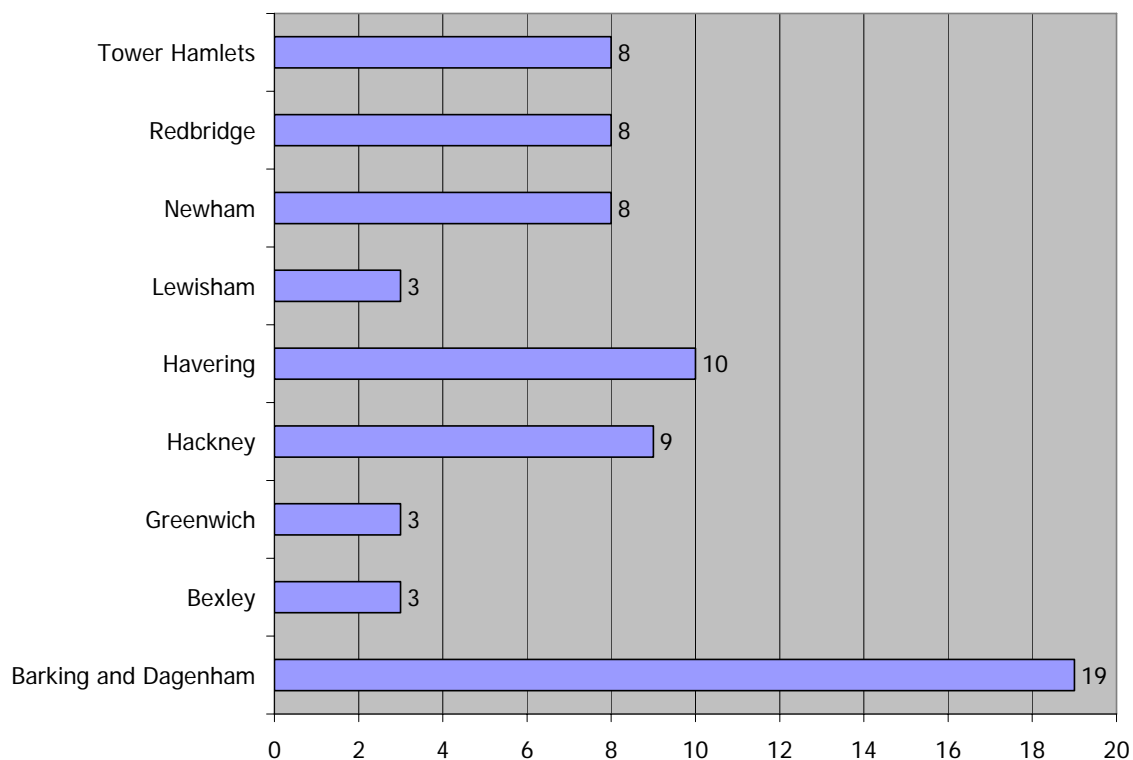
²⁰ Available from the ELN office www.elcvnetwork.org.uk

²¹ Despite the pilot ending at the end of August 2006, CHL has continued to install WAN if requested and to support those organisations with WAN already installed.

4.2 Data Submitted

71 organisations had submitted data to CHL at the time the evaluation of the pilot began.

Figure 2 - A breakdown by borough of the data received by CHL.



No formal analysis had been done on the data received as there had been no request during the lifetime of the pilot for any breakdown of information. Following the pilot, collations of data were sent to the ELN.

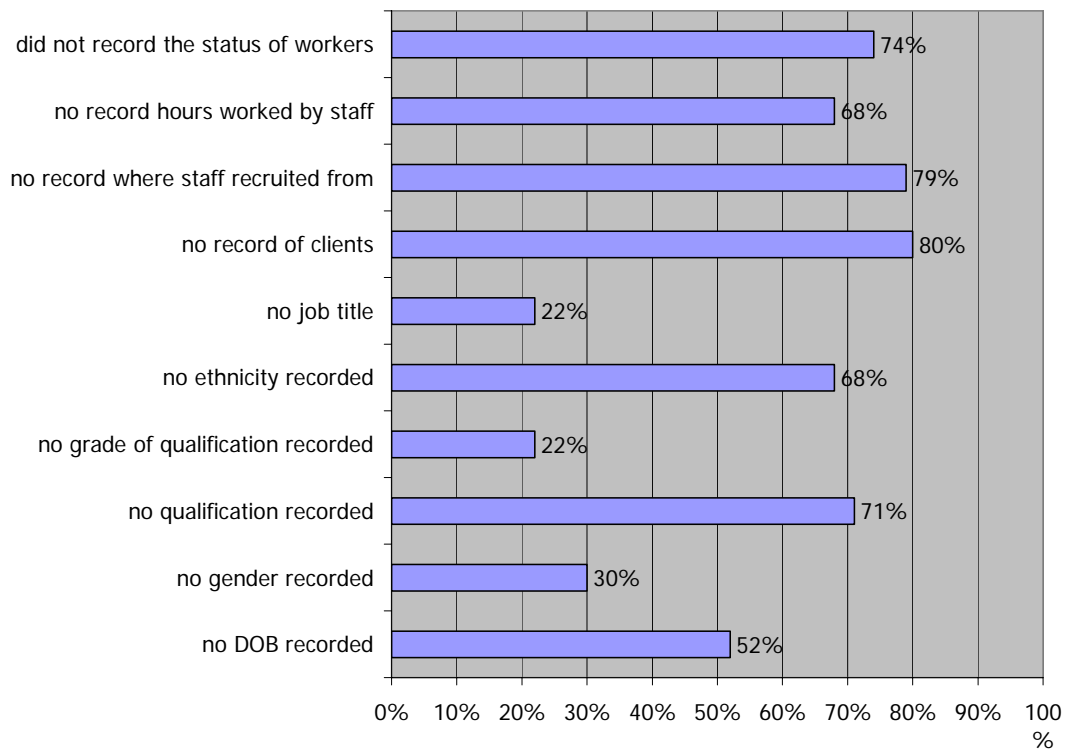
As part of the evaluation a breakdown of some of the data received was asked for in order to make a preliminary assessment of the quality of the data submitted.

Job title in the software was offered as a free text option so there was no consistency in description of jobs and many of the titles did not conform to the NMDS list of acceptable job titles. This meant that over 10% (248) were one off titles not duplicated in any other organisation.

The following figures are based on the submission of 169²² organisations and information on 2,441 staff.

²² At the time of writing this report the number of organisations submitting data had risen to 169 and our quality analysis was based on these figures

Figure 3 - Data Quality of 2,441 individual records:



As a result of this finding in the pilot the WAN software was modified so that organisations as well as using free text for job titles also had to choose an equivalent title from the NMDS list. This would ensure conformity for any future analysis.

Unlike job titles, the inputting of qualifications is chosen from a list and is therefore consistent and conforms to existing statutory qualifications. However much is missing so it is difficult to comment on the quality of the data.

A data report had been provided to ELN on qualifications. This listed qualifications per organisation and per member of staff; however there is no way of knowing if the qualifications are relevant to the position held. The report suggests that many staff have 'no qualifications' but it is unclear whether this actually means that there were no qualifications documented. In addition, because, as stated above, the job titles are not tied to consistent job titles as with NMDS, the qualifications cannot be allied to them.

A more recent version of the WAN is amended in this respect, so in the future it would be possible to compare qualification requirement with actual qualification.

In order to carry out workforce planning both in an individual organisation and at a local or sub-regional level, there is a need for better data quality. However as will become apparent below, the incentives or benefits were not sufficient to outweigh many of the challenges and so basic data input and submission became a problem. There wasn't the impetus to put all their staff data on to WAN on an individual organisation level for their individual purposes so therefore there wasn't the impetus to collect for the purposes of more global uses.

5. Evaluation

The purpose of any pilot is to test out a methodology and to learn from the things that work and from the things that don't work to avoid repeating mistakes in the future. Consequently this section points to some evident gains and to some useful lessons that can be learned about ways forward.

The aims of the evaluation, as set out in the Introduction, are grouped into two distinct stages (with one aim being split between both). The first set of criteria was designed to identify and evaluate the outcomes of the pilot, and the second set was designed to explore the future use of the tool.

Stage One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effectiveness of the tool in supporting individual organisations to develop internal workforce and skills development needs. • The effectiveness of the tool in supporting workforce and skills development sub regionally. • The effectiveness of the partnership in developing and implementing the pilot .
Stage Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could the data be best used to influence resource allocations? • What should any future structure look like, if the tool is rolled out? • In light of developments under way in the sector, through a range of government and local initiatives, consider the fit and value of how and if the tool could be rolled out more widely, Pan London or nationally, linking with the Workforce Hub.

Two groups of 'stakeholders' were identified to be interviewed. Firstly the third sector organisations who participated in the pilot by having the software installed, and secondly the partner organisations who were involved in developing and implementing the pilot. Comments from both groups are combined in 5.3 and 5.4 below.

5.1 Third Sector Participants

5.1.1 Contacting participants

CHL provided contact lists of organisations who had had the software installed, and those that had submitted some data. Sixty organisations were selected from these lists to include a balance by borough and, as far as it was possible to tell, a mix of organisations by size, specialist client group and service provided. In addition, partner organisations were asked for names of organisations that might provide useful experiences. In each borough the aim was to contact at least one organisation who had also submitted data.

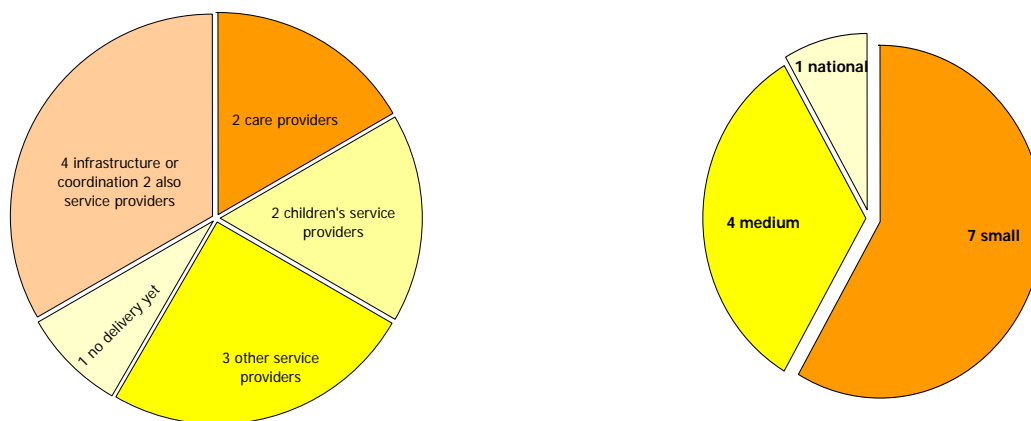
The intention was to interview up to 20 organisations, asking a series of questions using a questionnaire pro forma (see Appendix 6). Each of the 60

organisations was contacted at least three times and a total of 12 telephone interviews conducted. More interviews than these were arranged but appointments not kept and further contact not responded to. In a number of organisations there was no longer anyone who knew anything about WAN. A significant number contacted were too busy to talk or did not want to be interviewed. The remaining organisations either did not answer, did not have an answer machine or email address or did not respond after three emails messages were left.

The evaluation and project completion were so far apart that this may have contributed to the lack of interest in taking part in the evaluation expressed by some organisations.

5.1.2 Profile of participant interviewees

Figure 4 – Analysis of the 12 organisations interviewed



8 were service providers, 2 of which were care providers
 2 were children's service providers, 1 of which had not yet commenced delivery.
 4 were coordination or infrastructure organisations, 2 of which also delivered services.

7 described themselves as small, 4 medium and 1 as a national organisation

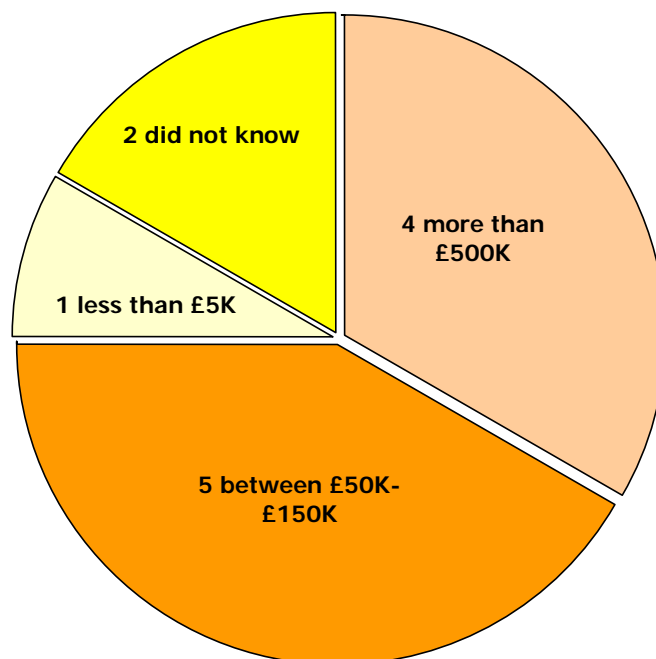
2 were local branches of national organisations.

5 had 1-5 staff, 4 had 10-20 staff and 3 had 20+ staff

5 had 1-10 volunteers, 3 had 11-50 volunteers and 1 had 117 volunteers.

Funding came mostly from local borough councils, 2 had lottery funding, 2 had central government funding and 2 also had private or charitable funding.

5 organisations' main client group were from the BME community, 5 were borough wide with no specific client group. Other client groups served were children, older people and disabled people.



4 organisations had an annual turnover of more than 500K, 5 between 50K and 150K and 1 less than 5K. 2 interviewees did not know their annual turnover.

5.1.3 Summary of quantitative findings from participants

- 10 organisations felt the training was good or very good
- 10 described WAN as easy or very easy to use
- 10 described themselves as competent or very competent with IT
- Only two people interviewed found it difficult to input data

The first objective of the WAN was to support participating VCOs to manage staff development and help prove commitment to Investors in People and PQASSO for those organisations developing quality standards

Only six of the organisations spoken to had used the WAN since installation. This was due to a variety of reasons; computers crashing; moving premises; staff changes and not having time to input the data necessary. All organisations recognised that the software would be useful as an HR tool but most are not using it as such, however there was a positive attitude to the potential of the software,

“my workload would have halved if the software was up and running”

“I have a business planning session to look at future planning and am going to use this tool and its headings to help me think through some of the future HR needs of the organisation”.

Three organisations were working to PQASSO and three organisations were working towards IIP. These organisations all had some regulatory or inspecting body for whom they had to produce basic data but none of them were using WAN for this. They all had paper based recording systems or simple electronic systems.

“We’re in the process of applying for IIP and think it will be helpful for that”

None of the organisations spoken to were CSCI registered and so they currently had no statutory reason for collecting the data as set out in the National Minimum data set. Five organisations were aware that in the future they may have to produce this data, two organisations were recruiting suitably qualified staff in preparation but the rest did not have any plans to prepare for this or felt that it was applicable to their situation. No organisations could yet attribute any securing of funding or resources to the use of the WAN. However, several organisations recognised that it would help their funding opportunities to have their HR data electronically available.

“It’s a weakness of the voluntary sector that data is poor on staff and service provision so [WAN] could really help to plan, to build up a picture.”

5.2 Partner Organisations

TGLP provided a list of partner organisations that had been involved in the development and implementation of the pilot. Most of these were members of the WFD Coalition from an early stage. This list was discussed at the inception meeting in order to provide useful insights into levels and type of involvement.

The intention was to interview six stakeholders, asking a series of questions using a questionnaire pro forma (see Appendix 5). 11 people were actually interviewed, some by phone and some were interviewed face to face with follow up telephone interviews. The focus of these interviews was to evaluate two aspects of the pilot; the effectiveness of the partnership in developing and

implementing the pilot, and what any future structure should look like, if the tool is rolled out.

5.2.1 Profile of stakeholder interviewees

Of the 11 stakeholders interviewed

- 7 are major stakeholders/partners involved in setting up the project and of these 2 are directly employed by CHL
- 1 was involved in the East London BME Network
- 2 were directly involved in the installation process
- 2 have an ongoing interest in working with the tool and/or are currently using the tool in another initiative
- 3 are LEAD coordinators
- 6 would be likely to be involved in a future roll out.

5.2.2 Summary of quantitative findings from participants

- 6 felt that the partnership was effective
- 8 said they are committed to the tool
- 2 had some misgivings about the tool and in particular its appropriateness to non care agencies
- 2 expressed concerns about the promotion and its accessibility
- 11 raised shortcomings about the management and development of the pilot
- 7 are enthusiastic that if phase two is focused effectively then it could be more successful
- 7 think that there is a value in developing a sub regional WFD strategy
- 7 are aware and/or involved in other drivers that could usefully be linked with the WAN tool.

The majority of partners interviewed were committed to WAN, felt it was effective and were enthusiastic to continue the pilot.

5.3 Evident gains – What worked well.

Overall there was a commitment to the scope of the tool, both within organisations and sub regionally. This initial enthusiasm for the tool set the tone for good working relationships within the partnership. TGLP and ELN proved to be robust partners. Colleagues were prepared to facilitate the pilot as an additional task. Some champions already exist from within this partnership.

'I really believe in this tool'

CHL was found to be flexible, helpful and committed with knowledge about both IT and health and social care. The Director was certainly prepared to commit over and above what was expected of him to try to make this ambitious pilot effective.

Once initial suspicion had been overcome, organisations were enthusiastic and passed the word onto other organisations within their sector. The feedback regarding the initial installation was mostly good, especially if the installer had been able to remain while some information was inputted and then submitted.

Many interviewees said that they felt that the tool would work well for a certain type of organisation i.e. medium sized and involved in public service provision particularly if there are requirements to provide evidence of training and monitoring. The tool would also work well for organisations that are experiencing a sustained period of development either via expansion or change where it could provide useful infrastructure for the development of a HR system.

The software is thought to be fit for purpose by being an interface between, and process for linking, HR, line management, and training and development. By identifying quality and monitoring outcomes it collates essential information for funding applications.

In some boroughs where the installation went well, trained CVS staff were able to install the software and it has become integrated within the work of development workers.

Because the changes in the commissioning agenda have not yet been fully experienced across the third sector some interviewees were of the opinion that the software was ahead of its time and that the lessons learned from the pilot will be useful to subsequent roll outs. Most organisations will/may need to comply with some minimum data submission for future funding.

'The need for something like this continues to exist'

The Greenwich LEAD coordinator is using the software as part of his work with a number of organisations who are pursuing IIP.

The Children's worker at Havering is using the software to support a project with a range of children's organisations.

An ESF management and leadership project also in Havering relies upon the software to gather in data about participating organisations.

5.4 Lessons – What didn't work so well

5.4.1 Management and development

Different organisations were represented within the membership of the WFDC with differing interest and/or needs from software. This ranged from the development of local sectors at borough level to the compilation of a sub-

regional strategy. This did not translate into conflict but was experienced as a different understanding of reason behind WAN and different priorities.

'Other partners may have had different drivers but they were complimentary'

WFDC members were in general agreement that there had been, at best, insufficient planning if indeed there had been any project planning of the pilot. A specific needs assessment had not been completed and there was no project plan or contract to provide a shape. No risk analysis carried out and therefore no 'Plan Bs' when things did not meet assumed milestones. This meant there were unrealistic assumptions and decisions made about the capacity required both in relation to time and dedicated expertise. The project management was not effective because there were too many changes of personnel resulting in a lack of continuity and commitment. With no one person dedicated to driving the pilot and maintaining momentum, overseeing and addressing problems and being point of contact, much of the initial enthusiasm and potential scope for the pilot was diminished.

'If we had been able to have a (dedicated/permanent) project coordinator overseeing the whole project then I think these issues would not have arisen and/or would have been dealt with much sooner'

The lack of shared aims and objectives also resulted in the lack of any integrated evaluation within the project. The delay in carrying out the evaluation meant that the information fed back from both the stakeholders and the organisational interviewees was sometimes out of date and suffered because the key people had left the organisation. In addition, having identified initial drivers and the funding for the pilot, commitments made by some partners for making and maintaining links with other initiatives such as LEAD, were not carried through. This would have given it more credible sustainability.

'We should have linked it more to the LEAD initiative'

The lack of focus to the pilot meant it was too broad and too ambitious in its scope. The effect of this breadth made it appear ad hoc in relation to potential achievements. Being over ambitious meant that capacity was stretched and that there were insufficient resources to implement such a big pilot. There was too much time required from the members of the partnership.

Reflecting upon the points raised above, regarding the initial management and development of the pilot, it appears that this project was viewed by some as an end in itself, not as a pilot. Therefore not enough consideration was given to testing out a specific methodology in order to learn. The aim was to gain the information for the sub regional strategy.

5.4.2 Roll out and promotion

The general lack of planning meant that there was no systematic targeting of VCOs and the targets were too high. Consequently there were further problems in the roll out and promotion. The promotional literature was not accessible or appealing to all organisations especially the members of the BME network, and smaller organisations. It is unclear how the actual launch(s) was promoted and therefore how the volunteers were recruited. The engagement of third sector organisations, in having the software installed, also appears to have been ad hoc. Some CVSs promoted the pilot and the use of the pilot more than others and had more installations within the borough.

The successful engagement of VCOs was further undermined because there was suspicion from a number of VCOs about the whole project.

'Why would private company be offering something free?'

Local ownership was patchy as it was not a priority for all CVSs and second tier organisations that did not have the capacity to give sufficient time to promoting this initiative. This is in part due to the many ChangeUp initiatives happening at this time, which meant that there were many calls on people's time. Where time was invested by a local champion, organisations were able to realise the potential benefits of the software and were more open to investing time and effort in installation and inputting. Clearly there was some frustration at the apparent lack of commitment and or inefficiencies of missed appointments while attempting to access organisations to install the software or follow up inputting queries. CVS staff, when they had the capacity, were able to sell the idea more effectively.

There were also concerns expressed by some organisations, particularly small and/or BME organisations, about sharing what is seen as personal and confidential data. Understandably mistrust will be higher within some groups and greater reassurance could have been given. The recommendation made by the consultant working with the BME network to use more volunteer installers from BME organisations was never effectively taken up, despite the supply of names to each of the project officers as they took over the post.

For a variety of reasons this pilot was not enabled by an effective 'carrot or stick'. Many of the VCOs did not have requirement of minimum standards as they were not direct care providers. If they were, they were often not in a position to compete for contracts anyway. Again this was more often the case for smaller and BME organisations. This was often coupled with a situation where they did not have the capacity to use the software, either because of a lack of staff or technology – old computers, unlicensed software and insufficient electronic capability; a number of organisations had no email capacity and so were not able to submit data.

In addition many did not feel the need to use it as they were only employing one or two staff. The move to a computer based HR software system would

be a big cultural shift and many of these organisations had competent paper based systems. Conversely larger organisations had their own electronic systems or were part of a national group. While, in a few cases, transfer of software from other systems was facilitated, the compatibility of the WAN software with other HR software was not sufficiently examined.

5.4.3 Installation

The initial installation programme relied on volunteers and there appeared to be no fallback plan when this failed. Although no volunteers participated in this evaluation it was apparent that they had been volunteered by their organisation to take this pilot forward. However, they were either not necessarily committed to or fully understanding of the objectives of the pilot, or were expected to add this to already full workloads. The subsequent installation programme relied upon staff that understood the scope of the software but were less aware of the competing priorities faced by small VCOs. Overall, the use of volunteers required better coordination and ongoing management to deal with issues as and when they arose.

'I found out later that people had volunteered to be installers but that their offer had not been taken up'

The installation of the software was also much more resource intensive than had been originally thought.²³ There were also problems with installation of the disk and this process. Some key people were perceived to have failed to undertake essential tasks that were expected of them. This was frustrating for the organisations that, having given up their time, easily lost enthusiasm to remain involved.

'We have contacted more than 3,500 organisations up to now and we are approaching 150 installations, with another 20 or so in the pipeline. It is still too slow'

5.4.4 Data analysis, use and submission.

Having had the software installed, there were initially a range of concerns expressed regarding the use of the software, the purpose of submitting the data and maintaining up to date records on the WAN.

The relevant HR information was often not available for inputting at the right time and had to be gathered first, which was an additional task. The timing of the pilot did not always fit with the timing of HR milestones like appraisal systems within organisations so the benefits were not immediately obvious.

In some organisations the original personnel left and no one else took up responsibility or knowledge of WAN. There were also reports of staff not becoming familiar with the design and use of the WAN so they then returned to their original system.

²³ 2hrs to persuade organisation to use therefore 500 organisations = 143 days alone

There had been no analysis of the data that had been submitted and organisations did not receive any feedback. No-one had a sense of its value and this undermined any drive to submit. There was a general sense that the submission of data has no direct benefit to the VCO, so no carrot, and no penalty for non-submission, so no stick. Aspirations to provide a 'carrot' via a funding or support brokerage project were not realised when a funding bid to set this up failed.

There is no doubt that WAN could provide comprehensive data on the make up of the voluntary sector's workforce and that this would therefore provide a sound basis on which to develop a workforce strategy across the boroughs and London Thames Gateway. The pilot, however, has shown the difficulties of getting data of sufficient quality to be relied upon for this purpose.

In section 4.2 the quality of the information so far submitted has been analysed and discussed. Most of the staff records submitted were incomplete in some way and this would have to be considerably improved if the data were to be used both by the organisations and the sub region. Some of the issues can be resolved using the software i.e. constraining the choice of job titles by the use of lists rather than free text and by not allowing certain sections not to be filled in.

For WAN to provide useful data internally to organisations they have to want to collect staff information in an electronic format. This is a considerable commitment of time, initially to input the data and over time, to keep the database up to date. There is little incentive especially if good paper records are kept until this data has to be made available for the purposes of funding applications or if the WAN was linked to a payroll system where a lot of this data has to be collected anyway.

Summary of Evaluation Findings

- The pilot identified useful learning points.
- The problems with the planning, management and coordination significantly impeded the success of the pilot.
- The pilot was ambitious in its scope but lacked the resources to ensure adequate capacity to deliver effectively.
- The WAN program requires a level of IT capacity and understanding from participants which is often not present, particularly in smaller organisations.
- Commitment and support from all CVSs would have been extremely beneficial.
- The benefits of the WAN were not obvious, or immediate, to most VCOs and did not warrant the investment in time required of them.
- There was initially a considerable level of enthusiasm and interest displayed by many of the participants.
- The majority of VCOs are working on performance improvement and recognise the need for effective data production to support funding regimes.
- The third sector is committed to WFD but not in a strategic way.
- WAN is fit for purpose and is particularly suited to medium sized public service providers, and is ideal for use at the development stage.
- A knowledge and understanding of the VCS by the installers would be extremely valuable.

6. Conclusions and Opportunities

6.1 The rationale for a workforce development tool

The current government agenda, feedback received during this evaluation, and the discussions from the stakeholder evaluation workshop held in May (see Appendix 7), demonstrate that there is a continued and pressing need for: effective workforce development; evidence of quality standards and qualifications; and a strategy to assist the third sector in the London Thames Gateway to have both of these.

‘what we really need to do is get the third sector interested in workforce development – therein lies their future’.

As outlined in Section 2, the changes occurring within commissioning and procurement processes now require that the majority of VCOs will have to evidence a robust quality assessment framework within all service level agreements. These changes have been led by the statutory funders and the charitable trusts are requiring a similar level of reporting. In part this is driven by the government’s agenda for third sector reform and role of the third sector as mainstream service provider.

In addition, recognition of the importance of skills and workforce development generally has grown and continues to grow. The performance improvement and skills agenda is highlighted by the professionalisation of the health, social and education workforce. This has resulted in workers within these service sectors being required to have accredited recognised qualifications, for instance the National Occupational Standards.

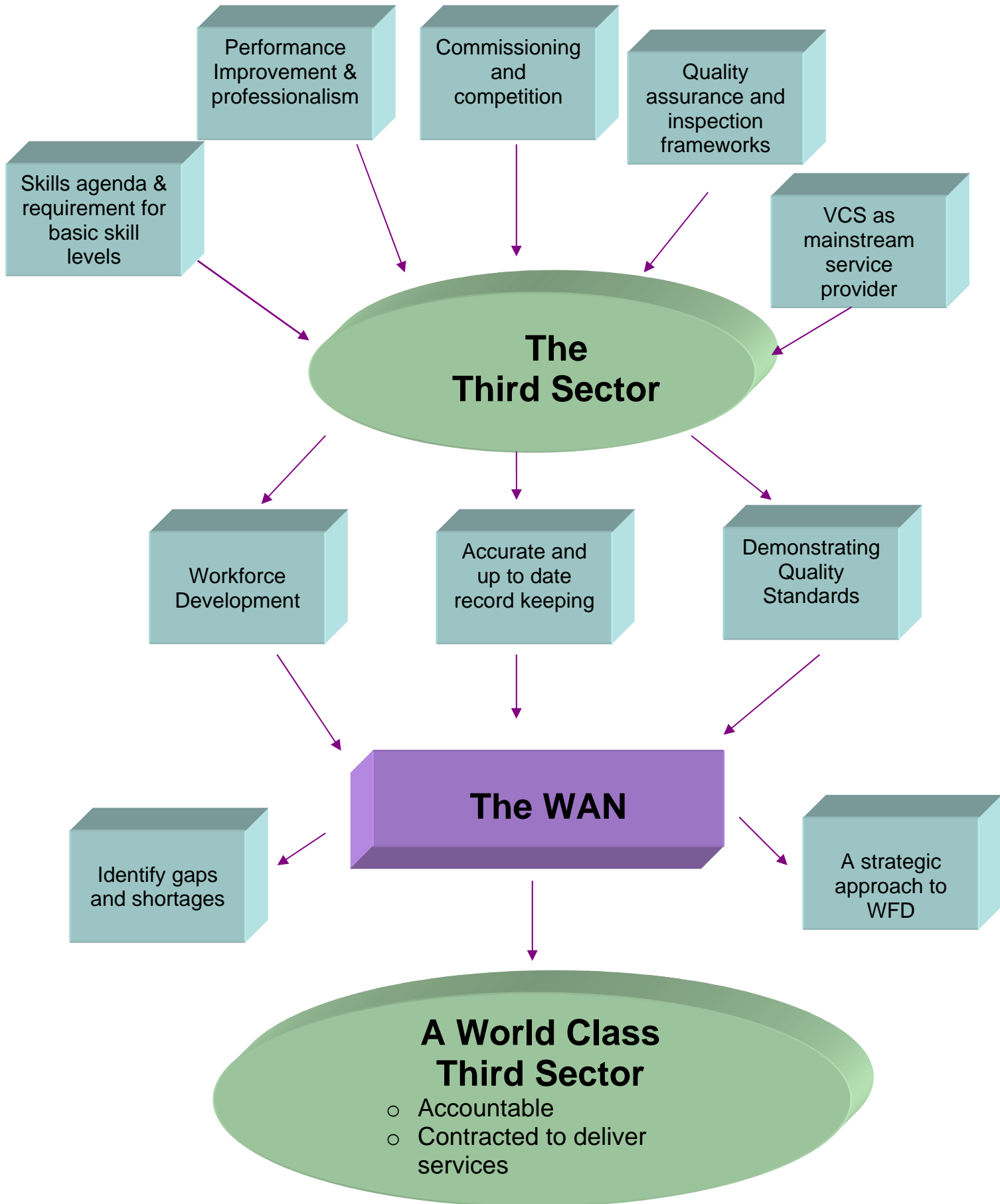
Organisations within these service sectors are inspected by Ofsted, CSCI and the Healthcare Commission. Other types of services, such as supported housing or advice services, are inspected by a variety of agencies including Supporting People and the Legal Services Commission. It is anticipated that such inspection frameworks will become commonplace for all types of services funded by public money.

The analyses here support a strategic response to these external drivers, to address both organisational and skills development on a sub regional level and as a result achieve greater sustainability within the sector.

A participant at the stakeholder workshop reflected:

‘this pilot may have been ahead of its time, perhaps the time is now right!’

Figure 5 - The rationale for a workforce development tool



6.2 Is the WAN the software solution?

The aim of the East London Third Sector Workforce Development Pilot was to test whether the workforce analysis software, known as WAN, could support participating VCOs to manage staff development and help prove commitment to Investors in People, PQASSO and other initiatives for those organisations developing quality standards. In addition it would collect information about the workforce development needs of VCOs in the sub-region. In other words it was to test whether the WAN could meet the need identified by the rationale above.

Many challenges were experienced in the course of the pilot, both by the participating organisations and those involved in developing and implementing it. As a result the outputs hoped for were not achieved. However, the problems detailed in Section 5 above provide useful lessons which can be learned if the WAN or something similar were to be re-launched and/or rolled out differently, and there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that WAN could support workforce development in the third sector. The cost benefit of using WAN and its familiarity within the sector give it a head start over other programmes. The re-licensing of WAN will cost organisations £25 if they already have it installed and researching new software would require considerable time as well as the start up costs.

6.3. Options for the future of the project

Various options arise from the evaluation of the pilot and the rationale for a strategic approach to workforce development.

A	The partnership could do nothing more with this tool and leave it to CHL to market on a commercial basis to the VCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would waste the resources and commitment already developed and still leaves gaps in a strategic response to workforce development. • Most VCOs would need resources and support to utilise the tool.
B	Re-launch the tool across the sub region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would be an ambitious project and, even with the lessons determined from this pilot, may not succeed in achieving good enough data to inform the strategy. • Additionally to launch another broad roll out would require significant capacity and resources. • If it was not successful, valuable time would be lost and good will and enthusiasm further diminished.
C	Develop a follow on pilot to be designed as phase two.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design of this follow on pilot would build on learning illustrated above.

The findings and balance of the feedback provided during this evaluation would support the third of these options. The overall view is that the pilot has achieved the aim of identifying a range of useful and feasible lessons to be learned – lessons that will ensure that a future project will have appropriate software and a management and delivery process that is fit for purpose.

Example

Wandsworth Play Association is a second tier 'umbrella', organisation supporting 30 - 40 small play organisations in the borough of Wandsworth. These organisations are required by at least one of their funders to provide monitoring information on staff qualifications and turnover. WPA also require this information for strategic planning, provision of training and support, financial planning and to identify qualification gaps to enable action to address these. WPA have decided to install the WAN in all the play organisations who will then regularly submit data to WPA. LB Wandsworth have provided the resources to support the installation in order that they can have the information they require more easily

6.4 Opportunities for a further pilot

In light of developments underway in the sector and the range of government and local initiatives currently in place (and discussed in Section 2), it would be expedient to consider whether any of these offer a possible vehicle for the future development of the WAN. Which of these initiatives presents the best fit will also depend on main driver of a future project; VCS capacity and professionalism; ensuring sufficient providers meet regulations; development of sub regional strategy etc.

- ChangeUp

Local and sub regional ChangeUp Plans are currently being reviewed and strategic and business plans being written by the end of this year. Workforce development should feature prominently in these Plans.

- UK Workforce Hub

The UK Workforce Hub funded the evaluation of this pilot because it has an interest in identifying mechanisms that support voluntary and community organisations make the best of their paid staff, volunteers and trustees through workforce development. The UK Workforce Hub is interested in supporting further learning that has national significance.

- ICT Hub

The ICT Hub is part of the Government's ChangeUp programme and seeks to create an environment where VCOs can use and benefit from ICT, supported at a local level. It commissions work to develop products and services to deliver the outcomes of its business plan. Its current business plan includes a new programme of work shared by NCVO and the Workforce Hub: 'promoting ICT as a workforce development issue'

- LSC, as part of Train to Gain,
This new service is designed to get businesses (including VCOs) the skills they need to succeed through the provision of Skills Brokers. The aims of this seem very close to that of the WAN.

- Mayors Skills Strategy
The London Skills and Employment Board, set up under the leadership of the Mayor of London, will develop an adult skills and employment strategy and annual plan for London which will direct the spending of the LSC and others. It is employer-led to ensure that its work is driven by the needs of employers and that skills provision meets the existing and future needs of the London workforce.

- Enabling Commissioning
A number of institutions and funders have a vested interest in ensuring that the VCS are able to compete and thrive in the future commissioning environment. In particular:
 - Grant funders with particular interest in VCS infrastructure development
 - NHS/PCT to support their expansion of commissioning
 - A local authority championing role of VCS in their borough
 - Government department pursuing diversity of supplier

- Brokerage Project
The brokerage project is an initiative in development by ELN that could act as an incentive to the WAN tool and underpin the strategic needs of WFD in East London.

7. Recommendations

Recommendation One

Options should be explored to run a follow on 'phase two' of WAN building on lessons learned in first pilot.

Recommendation Two

Phase Two should still be run as a pilot.

This is because a further development of the WAN and how to target participants needs testing and if successful will provide more learning of a national significance; this could enable the Workforce Hub to support it.

Recommendation Three

Phase Two should have a smaller, more focused target of participant third sector organisations.

This could be a specific sub sector such as childcare providers or learning providers; a smaller geographic area such as single borough or both – See Appendix 4 - Project Focus.

Recommendation Four

Ensure adequate resources are in place.

Resources are required for a dedicated project manager and capacity for promotion, installation and support and motivation to participating organisations – See Appendix 4 - Management and Coordination.

Recommendation Five

Give sufficient consideration in advance to the project design.

This should include effective planning and preparation of phase two prior to its roll out – See Appendix 4 - Project Design.

Recommendation Six

Amend the WAN software and provide supporting material

This will facilitate greater relevance, ease of use and self sufficiency by participating organisations – See Appendix 4 – Software.

Recommendation Seven

Run an event/workshop(s) with key people to develop Phase Two.

This should incorporate findings from this pilot and demonstrate key aspects of the rationale by inviting funders and commissioners to support the need for a holistic approach to WFD and therefore build ownership.

Recommendations 3 – 6 above would be discussed at the workshop. More than one workshop might be needed to launch different pilots with a different focus.

Recommendation Eight

Promote greater investment in, and more resources for, workforce development within the Third Sector.

Appendix 1 – Coalition partners

The East London Third Sector Workforce Development Coalition

- ChangeUp East London Partnership
- East London CVS Network (ELN)
- Havering Association of Voluntary and Community Organisations (HAVCO)
- London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium (LVSTC)
- NE London Strategic Health Authority (NELSHA)
- Pan London BME Network (MiNET)
- SE London Strategic Health Authority (SELSHA)
- Skills for Care, North East London
- Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP)

Appendix 2 - Useful websites

Thames Gateway London Partnership	www.thames-gateway.org.uk
East London CVS Network	www.elcvsnetwork.org.uk/
CHL Systems	www.chl-systems.co.uk/chl_uk/
Investors in People (IIP)	www.investorsinpeople.co.uk
PQASSO	www.ces-vol.org.uk
Future builders	www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk
ChangeUp	www.changeup.org.uk
Local Area Agreements	www.communities.gov.uk/laa
The Compact	www.thecompact.org.uk

Appendix 3 – Abbreviations

Thames Gateway London Partnership	TGLP
East London CVS Network	ELN
Computer Help Limited	CHL
Workforce Analysis software tool	WAN
The Workforce Development Coalition	WFDC
Workforce development	WFD
Learning and Skills Council	LSC
Havering Association for Voluntary and Community Organisations	HAVCO
Voluntary and community sector	VCS
Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations	PQASSO
Investors in People	IIP
Black and Minority Ethnic	BME
The Commission for Social Care Inspection	CSCI
Voluntary and Community Organisations	VCOs
Council for Voluntary Service	CVS

Appendix 4 - Shape of a Future WFD Project

The design of a future workforce development project that will also achieve organisational development, robust commissioning and a sustainable VCS requires a number of changes to the approach and delivery.

Project focus

- Workforce development should be the driver for implementing a second phase
- Focus the phase based upon the following:
 - Specific service sector – those covered by CSCI, Children's or Learning Providers
 - Smaller geographical area, a borough or even sub-borough level (mini-hub)
 - Both of the above
- Consider attaching to other initiatives or using specific staff in CVS
- A tight focus will support greater understanding of the needs of the VCOs irrespective of size and levels of organisational development.

Management and Coordination

- Ensure dedicated project coordinator, properly recruited with right skills for a minimum period
- Clear and agreed project plan, with risk analysis and fallback
- Clear roles in and for Steering or Advisory Group and ensure involvement of BME representatives
- Ensure adequate resources for proper promotion, installation and support – be realistic about the resources required
- Stakeholders and organisations who have already been successfully involved in using the WAN tool should be engaged in the development of a further pilot. Having understood the benefits of the software they will be champions
- Ensure effective promotion by being realistic about target and resources, while raising awareness of benefits, both immediate and longer term
- Build ownership at the onset of the phase and ensure that there remains a steer throughout. This will ensure that there is an effective feedback loop, and that the ongoing implementation remains sufficiently flexible
- Should sit within and be driven by VCS infrastructure organisation, either within geographical area, or service area, to inspire greater confidence and avoid suspicion.

Project Design

- Invest sufficient time in the planning and design to build ownership and a greater sense of the potential to increase levels of engagement
- Ensure that there are clear benefits, clear targets and/or clear penalties
- Design something that is manageable and therefore more likely to succeed
- Build on what worked in the pilot to broaden the next phase

- Taking a more focused approach would allow a broader sub-regional roll out to be staggered. Building on the success of the first part of Phase 2 and relying upon greater buy-in and commitment – possibly through funding contract with local agencies, possibly CVS or service specific associations
- Ensure project integrates the drivers with the outcomes and outputs so that practical outputs relevant to the participants result
- Build in effective monitoring of outcomes and milestones to link each stage

Software

- Simplify the inputting of data
- Provide easy to understand, short, guidelines for using the software and inputting data to display next to user's computer
- Link to recycled computer provider project so hardware can be supplied
- Have fund for licensed operating software and broadband access – could get this sponsored by broadband supplier.

Appendix 5- Partnership and stakeholder questions

1. Background and overview of their involvement in the tool, what was their involvement?
2. Their views on how it worked
 - What worked well?
 - What didn't work well?
 - What would they change?
3. Any specific comments about the
 - Initial marketing/promotion
 - Training
 - Installation
 - Inputting
 - Aftercare/ongoing support
4. Overview of the partnership
 - How did this work in setting up the tool?
 - And in implementing the pilot?
 - What were the drivers?
 - What were the barriers?
 - What would make it work better in the future?
5. Have any champions already emerged?
6. Resource implications
7. Lessons learned
 - from an individual organisations point of view
 - in order to progress a sub regional WFD strategy
 - what prerequisites are there for successful use in the future?
8. Is there any organisation/s they think we should talk to?
9. Can we contact them again in the future?

Appendix 6 – Interview questions to VCOs

Initial profile information

Name of organisation:

Voluntary sector organisation? (If not don't continue!)

Type of organisation? (i.e. service delivery, coordinating/infrastructure type org)

Size: Sm. /Md. / Large /National No. of staff:

No. of volunteers:

Annual turnover:

Main Funding sources:

Main client group:

Catchment area:

How long established (local branch):

1. Installation and support

Where did you first hear about WAN?

What was your initial reaction when contacted about WAN?

Who contacted you?

Were the benefits obvious?

What were your concerns?

What did you think of the information you were told?

Did it make sense?

How did the installation and training go?

How effective was the training: *Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 very*

How would you describe your level of IT competence when WAN was first installed?

Not very competent 1 2 3 4 5 Very Competent

How would you describe your level of IT competence now?

Not very competent 1 2 3 4 5 Very Competent

How easy was it to input data? *Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 very*

2. Use of the 'tool'

If you haven't used the WAN - why not?

If you used it:

Were there any problems with operating/running the system particularly since inputting the initial data?

Since the installation have you used WAN?

Did you require further support after the initial installation?

Did you know where to go for any further support/ information?

Did the support you get solve your problems?

How have you used it?

- Prompts here:
 - ▶ Internal workforce/training strategy
 - ▶ PDPs/appraisal/supervision
 - ▶ Increasing funding/resources support

How easy was it to use WAN? *Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 very*

How has having the software tool impacted upon your organisation?

- Prompts here:
 - ▶ Internal management practice and/or thinking
 - ▶ Processes, Policies
 - ▶ Used as evidence to gain funds, within funding applications
 - ▶ Used as evidence to gain access to training

Are the people who initially agreed to install the software still in the organisation?

Were other people in your organisation involved in using WAN and if so who (what were their roles?)

How did other people use WAN?
Did you know the effectiveness of WAN would be evaluated?

3. About your organisation

What system do you use for maintaining your overall HR records?
Is this sufficient for your needs?
Can you tell us something about your quality framework/ standards/ monitoring?
Have you got PQASSO, IIP, or similar?
Are you CSCI registered?
Who inspects you, how are you regulated?
Do any of these systems support you to successfully access sources of funding and/
or meet funders' requirements for information?
Can you tell us something about your organisation's approach to recruiting and
training staff?
What forums/structures are you able to influence to ensure your workforce needs are
met?
Are you aware that some funders in the future will be requiring organisations to meet
minimum standards of qualifications for certain staff and that not meeting these
standards might mean not getting funding from those sources?
What is your organisation doing to prepare for this?

4. Regarding the possible future use of WAN?

What do you think is missing from WAN, what would improve the usefulness of
WAN?
What, if any, are the opportunities for joint working / strengthening the voice of the vol
sector, by utilising this tool, locally?
Can we contact you again?
Would you be interested in attending a focus group on May 1st?
The Report will be made available via Thames Gateway London Partnership website

Appendix 7 - Attendance List: Evaluation Workshop 1st May 2007

Lai Har Cheung	UK Workforce Hub
Teresa Edmans	Thames Gateway London Partnership
Diane Hamilton	CHL
Misbah Javed	LVSTC
Michelle Mack	HAVCO
Jim Moores	CHL
Renate Reuther-Greaves	NVSC
Phil Thiselton	LBTH
Alice Wallace	ELN
Jane Winter	NHS London