

Knowledge Sharing on Best and Promising Practices in Collaborative Governance Based on Successful Cross-Sector Initiatives: Exploring a Potential Collaborative Governance Structure for the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy

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Background¹

- Beginning:** In 2009, the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (OCGHEPA) initiated work on a cross-government, multi-stakeholder coordinated approach to food policy development.
- Mission:** To establish and implement a cross-sectoral Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy to promote and support healthy Ontarians and a diverse, healthy and resilient food system.
- Three Strategic Directions:** Geared towards (1) healthy eating; (2) access to local and culturally-acceptable healthy foods; and (3) system-supported environmental protection and economic development.
- Top Requirement:** The establishment of a coordinated provincial mechanism to address the complex food system and advise on food and nutrition policies and programs.

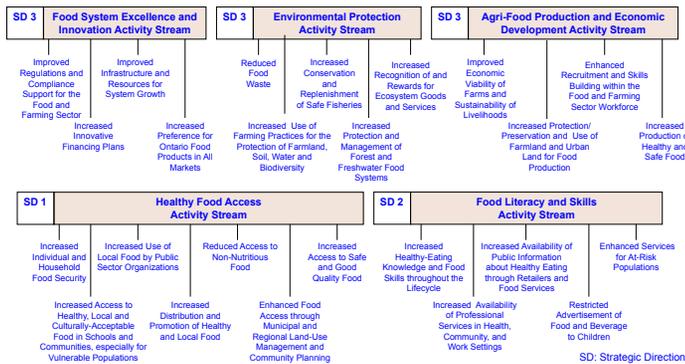
Extensive Consultation Process

- 2011 – 2 reports produced to capture research supporting the Strategy
- 2011 – Consultations with relevant Ontario Ministries (meeting #1) and some provincial food, health and farming groups (meeting #2)
- 2011 – Creation of the "Design Team" to write a first draft of the Strategy and design a broad consultation process
- 2012 – 1st round of open consultation across Ontario on the draft Strategy: 233 participants delivering 126 submissions via Sustain Ontario
- 2012 – Meeting #3 with stakeholders
- 2013 – Inter-ministerial meeting
- 2013 – 2nd round of open consultation, leading to revised draft of strategic action plan—a living document (shown below is the high-level plan)
- 2013 – Next steps: Further consultations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit and the food industry

Consultation Results²

Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy (OFNS): Long-Term Outcomes (LTO) Categorized by Activity Stream (Sub-strategy)

Ontario's Food System Roadmap for Environmental, Economic and Health Sustainability



Example of Current Priorities Relative to the OFNS: Healthy Kids Panel Recommendations

Healthy Kids Panel Strategic Areas and Recommendations

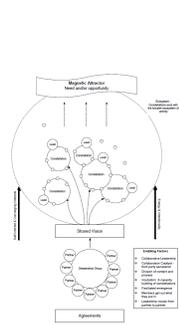
- Start all kids on the path to health:**
 - 1.4 Support and encourage breastfeeding...
- Change the food environment:**
 - 2.1 Ban the marketing of high-calorie, low-nutrient foods...to children...
 - 2.3 Require all restaurants...to list calories in each item...on menu boards...
 - 2.4 Encourage food retailers to adopt...standard nutrition rating systems...
 - 2.5 Support the use of Canada's Food Guide and nutrition facts panel
- Create healthy communities:**
 - 2.6 Provide incentives for...community-based food distribution programs
 - 2.8 Establish a universal school nutrition program...
 - 2.9 Establish a universal school nutrition program for First Nations...
- Create healthy schools:**
 - 3.5 Develop the knowledge and skills of key professions...
 - 3.8 Ensure families have timely access to specialized obesity programs...
- 3.4 Create healthy environments for preschool children**
- 3.6 Speed implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy**

Linked to Desired OFNS Long-term Outcomes

- Food Literacy and Skills:**
 - Increased Healthy-Eating Knowledge and Food Skills...
- Food Literacy and Skills:**
 - Restricted Advertisement of Food and Beverage to Children
 - Increased Availability of Public Information about Healthy Eating through Retailers and Food Services
 - Increased Healthy-Eating Knowledge and Food Skills...
- Healthy Food Access:**
 - Increased Distribution and Promotion of Healthy/Local Food
 - Increased Access to Healthy, Local and Culturally-Acceptable Food in Schools... especially for Vulnerable Populations
- Food Literacy and Skills:**
 - Increased Availability of Professional Services...
 - Enhanced Services for At-Risk Populations
- Healthy Food Access:**
 - Increased Access to Healthy, Local and Culturally-Acceptable Food in Schools and Communities...
 - Increased Individual and Household Food Security

Best/Promising Practices in Collaborative Governance

Constellation Model of Governance:³ (as adopted by Sustain Ontario)



- Case Example from the Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and the Environment:⁴**
- \$2.5 million raised in 7 years through joint fundraising efforts
 - Many policy/regulation changes achieved
 - Network of over 1,000 thought leaders and service providers created
 - Awareness of the issues increased in the media and general public
 - Publications developed and more research conducted on the issues

- Main Strengths:⁴**
- Light-weight Governance (not incorporated)**
 - Stewardship Group (oversight committee):
 - ensuring alignment with vision and shared long-term goals (*common agenda*)
 - Constellations (effortlessly created groups in terms of project teams, working groups, etc.):
 - refining action plans and building on the groups' natural energy flows to engage in one issue or another according to interests
 - Coordination by Third Party (backbone organization)**
 - Provides guidance for the planning process, and
 - Manages the needs of the constellations
 - Action-focused Teams**
 - Play a major advocacy role in policy decision-making
 - Excel in reacting to an emerging issue ("magnetic attractor")

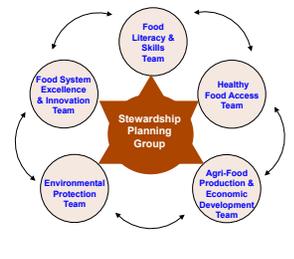
Some Limitations:
More emphasis required on performance measurements and the coordination of activities to create a collective impact for system change

Complementing the Constellation Model: **5 Conditions of the Collective-Impact Approach for Collaboration Success Across Sectors:^{5,6}** (As championed by the McConnell Family Foundation and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and endorsed by the White House Council for Community Solutions⁷)

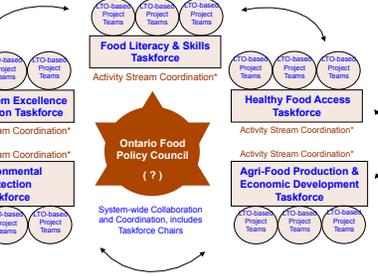
- Backbone Organization:** Team of dedicated and skilled staff who guides and manages the initiative, and provides support with facilitation, technology, communication and reporting
 - Common Agenda:** Shared vision for change, including agreement on a proposed set of strategies to create this change
 - Continuous Communication:** Regular communication across all participating stakeholders to generate trust and common motivation
 - Shared Measurement:** Core set of measurement indicators used consistently across stakeholders to ensure alignment of efforts and to learn about what works and what doesn't
 - Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** A variety of stakeholders undertaking their own specific set of activities according to their respective expertise and competencies, while coordinating with each other so that their combined efforts meet with success
- Case Example from the Calgary Homelessness Initiative:⁸** Thousands of different measurements being tracked by different agencies have been reduced to ten key metrics in their shared measurement system.
- Case Example from the Strive Partnership's "Cradle to Career" Initiative in Cincinnati, Ohio:⁹**
- Aligning partners' activities led to 10% increase in graduate rates, and 16% increase in college enrollment
 - Robust governance structure of a *cross-sector Executive Committee*, helping to steer the activities of:
 - 5 *Strategy Teams* (or subcommittees), and
 - 10 *'Collaboratives'*, which are networks of providers and school officials implementing specific interventions along Strive's *roadmap for success*

Proposed Governance Structure to Support the Strategy

Initial Outlook: Planning and Laying the Groundwork for a Coordinated Provincial Mechanism as a Key Requirement



Long-term Outlook:¹⁰
Establishing a Governance Structure to Accommodate a Coordinated Provincial Mechanism



* Would involve coordination of activities as planned by local, regional, and provincial "Collaborative" networks/groups as well as coordination of research activities

What could be a suitable collaborative governance structure to build the groundwork for a coordinated provincial mechanism based on best/promising practices?

- Stewardship planning group of influential stakeholders:
 - sharing the same vision and long-term goals, and
 - supporting the work being done by existing collaboratives
- Strategy teams organized by Priority Areas (or Activity Streams, which together make up the whole system) to focus on specific LTOs
- Backbone organization to help guide and manage the stewardship planning group and its strategy teams

What would be the purpose of a proposed collaborative governance structure for the planning phase?

- To further refine the *common agenda* (e.g. strategic framework and action plan), as an evolving document and develop tailored engagement plans
- To prepare a *continuous communication* plan for sharing updates, exploring solutions and opportunities, and learning together about how to move forward, while building trust and motivation
- To secure buy-in for core sets of *shared measurements*
- To avoid duplicating efforts and plan *mutually reinforcing activities* within and across Activity Streams for system change
- To assess the requirements for more structured collaborative governance to have a coordinated provincial mechanism for Ontario's food system

A more structured collaborative governance arrangement for a coordinated provincial mechanism could:

- Support a *common agenda* to steer the coordination work of *taskforces and project coordination teams*, within each of the 5 Activity Streams (sub-strategies)
- Promote *wide* collaboration and coordination across Activity Streams, through a high-level *council*, supported by a *backbone organization*
- Engage in *continuous communication*, set up a *shared measurement system*, and align *mutually reinforcing activities* for collective impact, based on work begun during the planning phase; and
- Create processes for sharing set backs and success stories, learning together, and making course corrections towards the long-term outcomes

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