

Long Term Sustainability

From the group: interest in what is sustainability? Especially around resiliency and organizational sustainability

Julea Boswell – Framing our Future: A long term sustainability plan for Canada's Capital Region

- first step was to approach sustainability as a region (Ottawa, NCC and Gatineau)
- 2 min video: Choosing Our Future
- The City's: Long Term Sustainability and Resiliency Plan; and two sub-plans which is now taken by the three partners to implement in their own ways
- Sustainability was focused on the environmental impact, but it is now understood that it must also include social and health sectors
- 5 step process with 12 goals, included a sustainability baseline
- Building the future scenarios out of the goals
- Included an extensive consultation, including an on-line campaign "Have Your Say" for general public and also very targeted engagement with stakeholders
- 10 strategies (see executive summary)
- Measurement and how to show impact is a real challenge, what do we want to learn or show (eg Lives Changes Stories)
- Base for the work of the Neighbourhood Sustainability

Questions:

- we need to start talking to each other in order to be sustainable (eg removal of bus tickets and impact on the poor);
- consultation was done well, but other aspects are missing ... including organizational backbone
- facilitators referred back to the executive summary, plans and strategies and the trickle down effect
- but things aren't perfect, and that's why we are here ... to discuss
- how can agencies and others help? By referencing the plan(s), which is not prescriptive, it is more of a visionary document
- not a lot of explicit mention of health, yet as a society we spend a lot more money on the health sector than on the social sector
- better health is referred to as an outcome and also in the baseline which are aligned with the social determinant of health
- wonderful plan ... but is it too airy-fairy, how does it trickled down to the individual and families; the piece that is missing is that it is put in the hands of the social services agencies with little resources; the agencies know what is needed, the people know what they need; yet because of the cuts in the social services sector programs are being closed and therefore burden is transferred to the health sector
- acknowledge the push back to social agencies; whereas the City gets in from the province

- challenge for all of us to do things differently ... funding is an issue for many, to serve the clients
- UW won't exist in 5 years if things don't change as designations go up and the community fund goes down
- Franca from CFS inviting other agencies to discuss and see what they can do differently, what they can share

Laura Leet – 3i Summit on Environmental Sustainability

- while environmental sustainability may not be everyone's issue, yet this is also about who we came together to work together
- Summit is a unique process to learn and from each other and collaborate (from different sectors)
- Process: co-creation, consultation, program build and promotion, 3i Summit, action roll-out (quite aligned with the collective impact described by Paul)
- Over 30 initiatives came out of the process and collaboration amongst groups
- In terms of collective impact, some things were done well and others need to be improved
 - o Common agenda: success in terms of mission but shortcoming in challenge to define sustainability
 - o Shared measurement: accomplished the goals of the Summit, yet didn't have a clear method for measuring engagement in Ottawa
 - o Mutually reinforcing activities: collaboration amongst groups, yet need to figure-out how we continue the conversation with the Summit and with each other (3i Summit won't exist long term)
 - o Continuous communication: many processes both in person and social media, yet wish they could have meet with more people and hard to reach out to other sectors (from environmental to others)
 - o Backbone organization: successful to get funding for two positions and find some core funding, yet involved mostly environmental orgs and was done on volunteer time
- Sent out a survey at the end – noticed limited involvement of the social services sector and health
- Follow-up: people want to continue communicating and collaborating, CCSR Conference can be an opportunity, share learning from the process
- It will take time to know if this process will be successful
- During process it was noted that no one came with an agenda
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Questions:

- Crowd sourcing = on-line forum for 'ideation' where people share ideas through social media
- How do you involve the private sector? Must come from strong will and conviction from people who put forward time and money

- According to the Collective Impact model, identifying a backbone organization to carry it forward to ensure that the conversation continues, including identifying existing networks and forums

Round table – what is relevant to you and your organization related to the presentations? Questions that have been triggered by presentations?

- Interesting, but for a small organization, they don't want to do a new project they want funding for what they do well; funding is always for a new project; question is more how to remain sustainable
- Citizen Advocacy has been around for 30 years and a smaller family based organization that was struggling, and then they merged with Citizen Advocacy who became their backbone
- Funders saying that merged organizations would be funded
- Environmental sustainability tends to be white, middle-class and therefore it doesn't resonate with clients from CHCs
- Could environmental sustainability be part of everything? Response – there is no time ...
- Broadening the sustainability question might be helpful ... maybe not define only as environmental sustainability (focus of 3i conference)
- The next conference could be about anything ... poverty
- The shift in thinking towards collective impact may not be there yet ... people are busy, new approach, people need to make the commitment to step out of the comfort zone to shift the thinking; from more with less to different
- Thought the discuss would be more about sustainability more generally, but ok with content of the session
- It is very possible, it can work – yet so many organizations that are doing the work so well; we need to fund new projects but also the organizations who are doing such important work, how to support them?
- Leadership as a big question
- Victoria - There are different models, 3i is one, would be interested to share/learn from others; if we are going to come together to work on these things we need the resources to make that shift
- UW - What we are doing is not sustainable (Paul) ... what is not sustainable in what we are doing and applying the principles that were brought forward; not necessarily bringing forward something new, but what is sustainable
- House of Lazarus - How do we connect rural and Ottawa? Realization that they are not alone in what we are doing (working on sustainability and resilience in rural area); feeling good about being on track! (House of Lazarus); have 10% commitment from people to work together; they are working on their second forum; we need each other
- CFS – starting to think about sustainability when they bought a building, both in terms of environmental and financial; disappointed to see that there were few EDs at the conference because you need leadership to make change happen; would have liked more of a link between types of sustainability

- In these huge consultations, who do we exclude? And for agencies, drawing from own membership for creativity? Working together to get funding is same model ... how to get funders to agree to a different model?
- Group seems to be more interested in a different type of sustainability, that of resiliency for the social service sector.
- Not clear that the session was about environmental sustainability – should have been in the title for the session

Afternoon session

Acknowledgement of difference in language: sustainability in terms of environmental sustainability whereas group was most concerned about organizational sustainability

Where do we go from here? Even divide amongst participants ... could the advances in the environmental sector be applied in the social sector?

Need to clarify the term sustainability?

Collective Impact

Shared Agenda

- sustainability plan for their organizations:
 - o toilet retrofits
 - o vapour use
 - o paper reduction, no airsole sprays
- decrease garbage in-line with the City
- in partnership with the township, to not have electronics in the dump and have clothing share
- doing recycling and composting at the org hoping that clients do it at home
- look at a waste master plan from the City
- it was only once the organization experienced cut-backs that their was buy-in for environmental/cost saving initiatives
- financial sustainability of the organization
- cause to case for stakeholders
- Business Model Generation – book, business model canvas about the value we create in the world
- when eggs are all in one basket and funding is cut, the program ends; now need to diversify funding for each program
- could Ottawa be the most inclusive City? Too broad?
- Spirit of collective impact, breaking the silos
- In the social services sector we have been talking about change for years and it doesn't happen
- Challenge of looking at the system, multi-stakeholder systems approach
- Change way of doing and framing things – talk about targets, the shared agenda is hitting the agenda

- Yes we want to change the world, but need focus (Hamilton example)
- What is the role of media – as a partner in change
- What are the best ways of getting everyone involved?
- ‘Rios’
- Where does the leadership in the community come from?
- Do we have agreement that we are in a crisis? (urgency for change?)
- We are all trying to work ourselves out of a job ... there shouldn't be children that go hungry, a need for homeless shelters, etc.
- Hold leaders accountable
- We agree that we are all doing good work, yet we are failing (accountability for the failures); not much talk about the failures and why
- Conference on failings in the system; collective failure
- Or is it not a failure but a different result than we expected
- The collective model is difficult to work with because you are working with many leaders
- The agenda could also be wrong, need to look critically at how we set the agenda

Shared measurement

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