



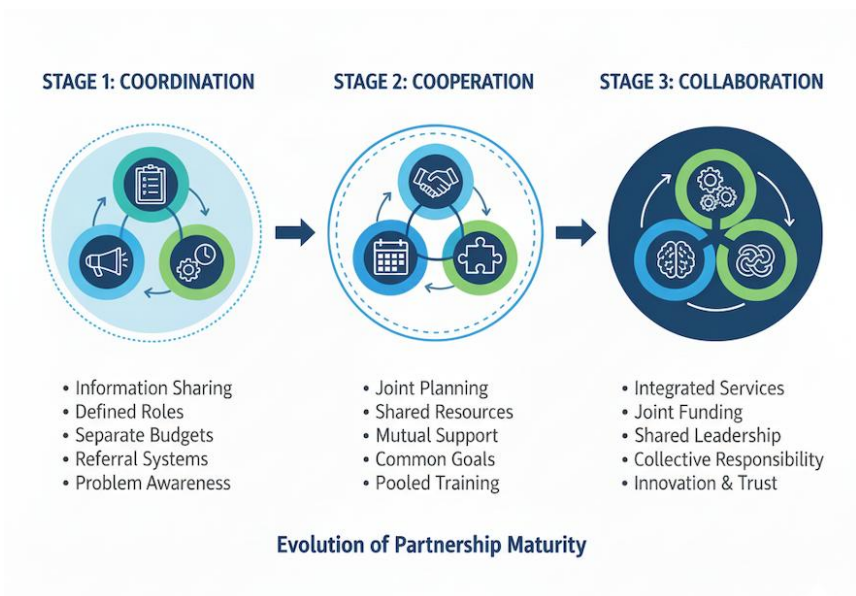
Research Brief

Multi-Agency Community Safety Partnerships in Canada

This research examines integrated, multi-disciplinary partnerships as a key strategy to enhance community safety and wellbeing in Canada. Policing alone cannot address increasingly complex social issues, making collaboration with public health, social services, and community agencies essential.

The study combines a literature review with survey data from two Canadian multi-agency collaboratives, both Situation Tables, one in a mid-sized Ontario city and the other in a major city in western Canada.

STATES OF MULTI - AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS



The full report can be accessed at: <https://cskacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/FINAL-Partnership-Report-October-20-2025.pdf>

Key Findings include:

Multi-agency community safety partnerships in Canada benefit from strong internal foundations characterized by high trust in leadership, robust collaborative processes, and a shared commitment to innovation and problem-solving. Survey data reinforced the importance of alignment around a shared vision, clear governance, and role clarity, which

collectively contribute to the operational maturity of these partnerships and high partner satisfaction.

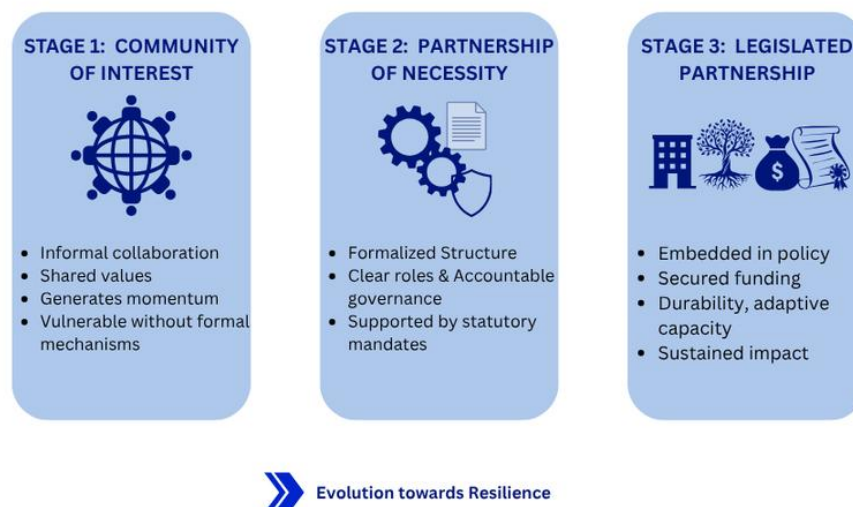
However, these partnerships also face significant external challenges that undermine long-term sustainability and effectiveness. Key vulnerabilities include:

- Reliance on unstable, short-term funding that restricts strategic planning
- External communication weaknesses and limited engagement with target communities
- Participant burden arising from juggling partnership duties with primary job responsibilities
- Transparency issues concerning financing further complicate sustained collaboration.

To ensure longevity and impact, 'essential' partnerships must evolve from informal "Communities of Interest" into formalized, legislated "Partnerships of Necessity" supported by stable resources and clear accountability frameworks.

Embedding formal structures, securing sustainable funding, leveraging technology, and enhancing external communications are critical steps for maturing these partnerships into resilient, transformative agents for community safety and wellbeing in Canada.

MULTI-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS: PATHWAY TO RESILIENCE



This transition is essential to securing their long-term sustainability and enhancing community safety outcomes.

Key Recommendations

1. **Formalize Partnership Structures:** Institutionalize essential partnerships through legislated mandates or statutory frameworks to establish clear roles, accountability, and continuity beyond individual champions or funding cycles.
2. **Secure Sustainable Funding:** Develop joint, stable funding mechanisms such as pooled funds or multi-year grants to support strategic long-term planning and operational stability.
3. **Leverage Technology:** Implement integrated digital platforms to improve secure data sharing, enhance inter-agency communication, and support data-driven decision-making while ensuring privacy compliance.
4. **Embed Critical Success Factors:** Implement shared performance metrics, clear and transparent governance, structured onboarding/orientation processes, and regular communication routines to advance collaboration from episodic to sustained.
5. **Develop/Implement External Communication Strategies:** With key stakeholders, target client groups, and the broader community. This will strengthen stakeholder engagement and trust.

What It Means For...

Senior Police and Public Health Leaders

- Recognize that multi-disciplinary and sectoral partnerships are essential to addressing complex community safety and well-being issues.
- Support organizational culture shifts toward collective leadership, shared accountability, and adaptive collaboration.
- Prioritize sustainable funding and formal policy frameworks to protect and build capacity.
- Champion further technology adoption to enable seamless, secure information exchange.

For Partnership-based Supervisors and Front-Line Employees

- Focus on developing essential skills for multi-disciplinary partnerships, such as effective communication, negotiation, and collaborative problem-solving, to succeed in these roles.
- Engage meaningfully with external partners and target populations to build trust and legitimacy.
- Build external communication strategies to help tell the stories of the partnership

For Policymakers

- Enact legislation and supporting policies that support the formalization and funding of multi-agency safety partnerships that are considered essential.
- Facilitate pathways for joint budgeting and multi-year funding to ensure continuity and impact.
- Encourage integration of technologies that promote secure data sharing and shared governance.
- Support initiatives that build inclusive community engagement and transparency.

In Summary

This research highlights both the promises and perils of multi-agency community safety and wellbeing partnerships. In the two multi-agency partnerships subject to this study, it was clear that internal team cohesion and a shared vision provide a strong foundation for success. However, external funding fragility, communication gaps, and resource strains threaten sustainability. This is consistent with the literature.

Going forward, formalizing effective and functioning partnerships with stable funding, embedded critical success factors, and technology integration will enable these partnerships to evolve into enduring, transformative instruments of community safety and well-being in Canada.