



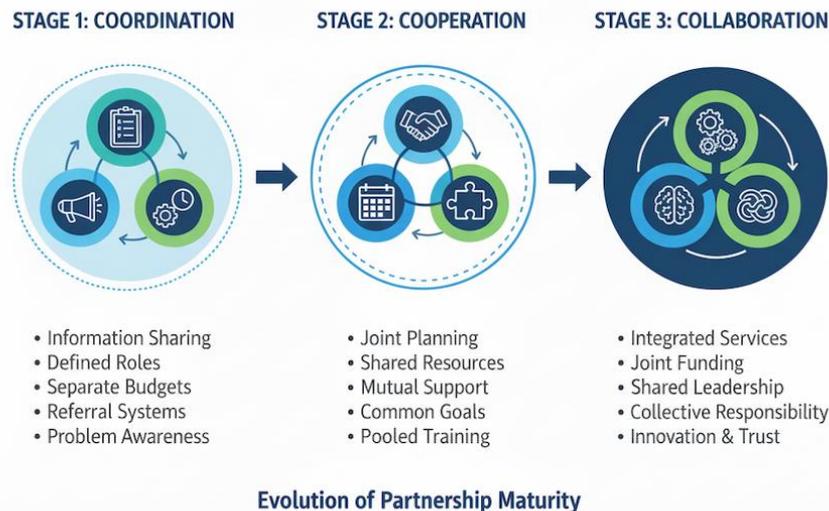
Research Brief

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.

STATES OF MULTI - DISCIPLINARY PARTNERSHIPS



The full report can be accessed at: <https://cskacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/FINAL-Partnership-Report-October-20-2025.pdf>

Key Findings

Multi-disciplinary 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.

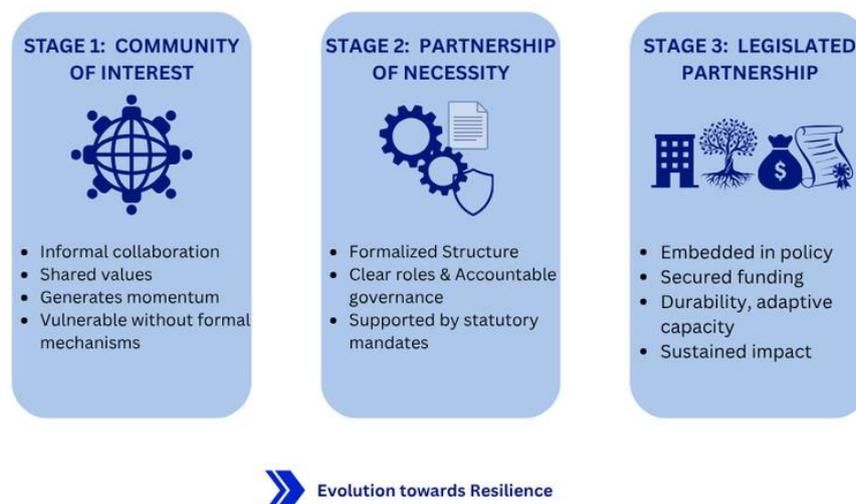
However, these partnerships also face significant external challenges that undermine long-term sustainability and effectiveness. Key vulnerabilities include:

- 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 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 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 to advance sustained collaboration.
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.** This includes explicitly positioning these partnerships as part of your organization's strategic plan, performance expectations, and risk-management approach.
- **Support organizational culture shifts toward collective leadership, shared accountability, and adaptive collaboration.** In practice, this means rewarding joint problem-solving, making space for experimentation, and legitimizing partnership work as core, not peripheral, to professional roles.[]
- **Prioritize sustainable funding and formal policy frameworks to protect and build capacity.** Use existing authority to negotiate pooled or multi-year funding, embed partnership expectations in MOUs, and advocate for statutory recognition of "partnerships of necessity."
- **Champion further technology adoption to enable seamless, secure information exchange.** This includes investing in interoperable platforms, clarifying information-sharing protocols, and ensuring privacy-compliant data use that supports shared assessment and decision-making.

Partnership-based Supervisors and Employees

- **Focus on developing essential skills for multi-disciplinary partnerships** (e.g., effective communication, negotiation, and joint problem-solving, to succeed in these roles.
- **Engage meaningfully with external partners and target populations to build trust and legitimacy.** This involves consistent follow-through on commitments, clear explanations of processes to clients, and proactive outreach to communities.
- **Identify and signal workload and role-strain issues early** so that partnership governance tables can adjust participation expectations, clarify responsibilities, or advocate for additional resources.

Policymakers

- **Enact legislation and supporting policies that support the formalization and funding of multi-agency partnerships that are considered essential.** This may include recognizing specific partnership models in statute, clarifying liability and information-sharing authorities, and embedding partnership obligations in existing sectoral legislation.
- **Facilitate pathways for joint budgeting and multi-year funding to ensure continuity and impact.** Policy instruments can be designed to support pooled funds across ministries, multi-year contribution agreements, and dedicated partnership infrastructure (e.g., coordination staff, technology, evaluation).
- **Encourage integration of technologies that promote secure data sharing and shared governance.** Set standards for interoperability and privacy while funding the development of common platforms that reduce administrative burden on local partnerships.
- **Support initiatives that build inclusive community engagement and transparency** (e.g., community advisory structures, public reporting on partnership outcomes, and mechanisms for client feedback). This helps ensure that partnerships are responsive, rights-respecting, and aligned with broader social policy goals.

In Summary

This research highlights both the promises and perils of multi-disciplinary community safety partnerships. In those 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.

For further information on this or other CSKA projects, please contact Cal Corley, CEO at ccorley@cskacanada.ca or at 613-297-6728.