

Collaboration in Regional Economic Development: Why Should We Bother?

*The Community Development Institute at UNBC
Spring Speaker Series 2011*

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Collaboration:

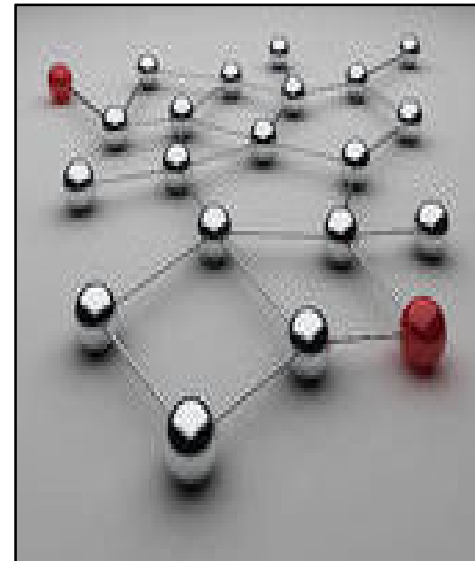
“Interagency collaboration, as the old saying goes, is an unnatural act committed by non-consenting adults”.

What makes collaboration difficult?

- Loss of organizational autonomy
- Loss of individual decision-making power
- Requires too much compromise
- Requires too much time
- Unequal contributions
- Unequal distribution of credit and glory
- Previous negative experience with collaboration

So, why bother?

- Most of the issues we face are complex and interconnected
 - They cannot be addressed by one organization or one sector acting independently
- Collaboration can work



The Research Focus: England's RDAs

- Established in 1998
- Mandate: to transform England's regional economies and create economic growth
- Structure: multi-agency / multi-sectoral from the Board to the front line
- Participating RDAs: Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Yorkshire & the Humber
- Research participants: Board members (private, public and non-profit), staff and partners.

So, why bother?

All RDAs: 2002/03 – 2006/07

Target Area	Aggregate Target	Aggregate Achievement	Number of Times Target Met
Jobs created / safeguarded	381,041	502,174	42 out of 45
Businesses created	39,852	56,785	42 out of 45
People assisted in skills development	757,584	1,270,406	44 out of 45
Funding leveraged (£m)	3,970	5,711	34 out of 36
Brownfield land use (ha)	4,781	5,657	43 out of 45

So, why bother?

- GNSS Research and Application Centre of Excellence (GRACE)
 - Supports the development of the next generation of applications for the Global Navigation Satellite Systems
 - Based at the University of Nottingham
 - Provide business incubation units that allow new businesses to access GRACE's facilities and research capabilities



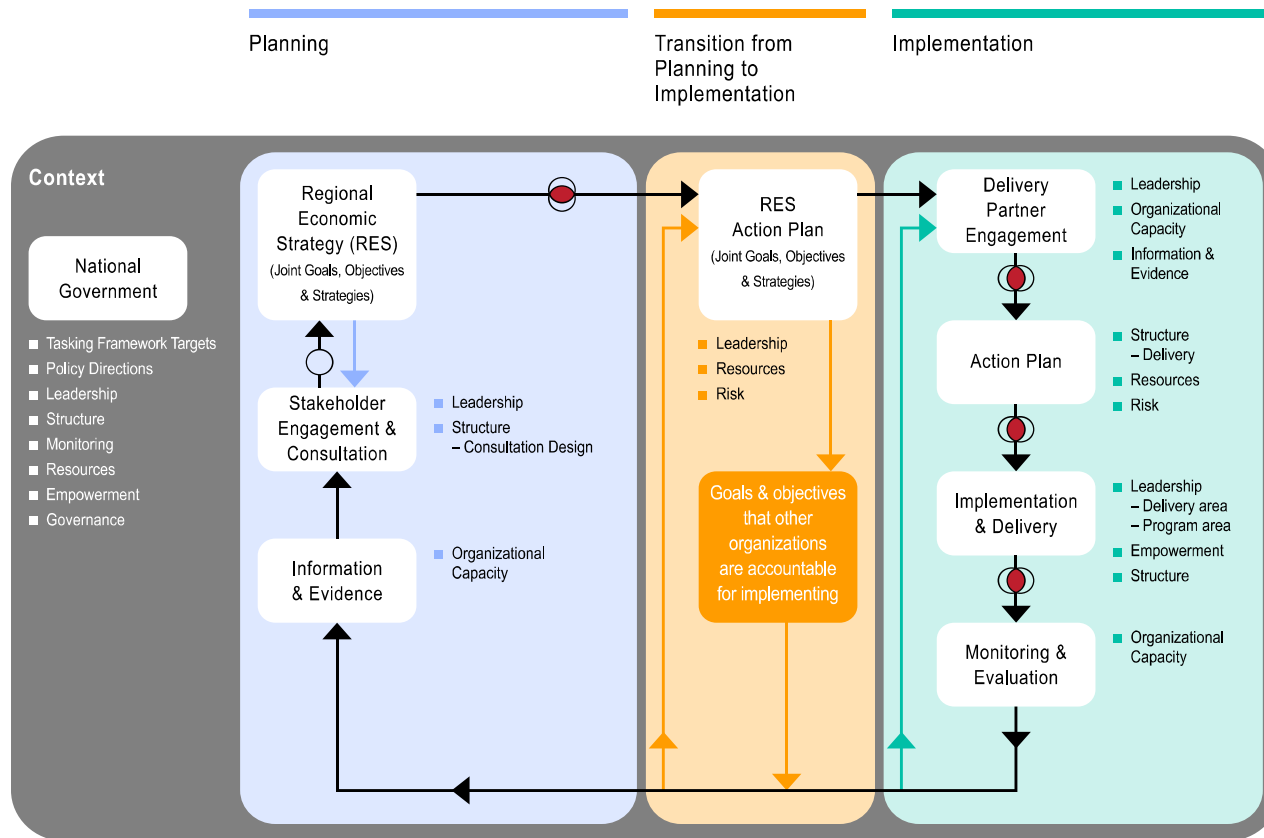
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So, why bother?

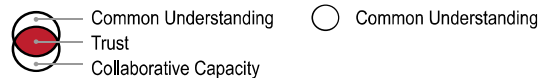
- CREA Food Technology Centre
 - Provides commercial kitchen space for small enterprises
 - Helps small business with the transition to 'factory' production without overextending themselves
 - Helps promote the use of local ingredients
 - Gave birth to Saunders Chocolates



Collaboration at Work in England's RDAs



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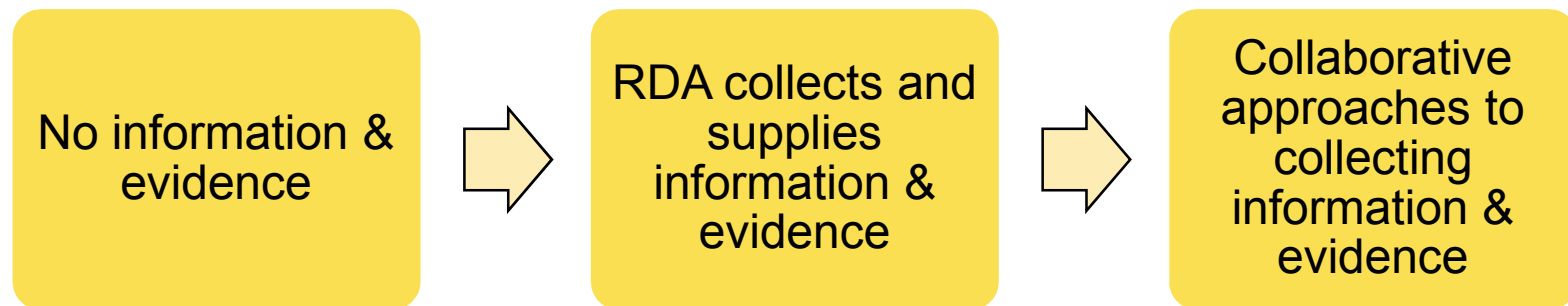
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Planning: Information and Evidence

- Quantitative and qualitative data gathered
 - Quantitative: value of the regional economy, key economic sectors, trends in key sectors, business investment, start-ups and longevity, education levels, education related to key sectors, employment / unemployment / worklessness, social service demand, social service capacity, immigration, land use
 - Qualitative: community identity and characteristics, community history, individual stories and lived experience

Planning: Information and Evidence

Evolution of the Data-Gathering Process: 1998, 2000, 2003



Planning: Information and Evidence

- Collaborative approach:
 - Minimizes disagreements about the data
 - Provides clarity and a common starting point for discussions
 - Keeps the focus on issues rather than on interests
 - Contributes to achieving buy-in and ownership



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Planning: Stakeholder Engagement

- Emphasis is on consultation with leaders from business, industry, the public sector, the community sector and higher education
- Philosophy: Be inclusive, involve people early on and bring the right people together
- Approach: Create the space, time and venues for stakeholders to have the necessary strategic conversations and think together

Planning: Stakeholder Engagement

- Also includes processes for public consultation
- Philosophy: Be inclusive, seek input from beyond the 'leadership' group, see the public as partners
- Approach: Create a variety of venues to invite input and feedback including open houses, website forums, surveys, blogs and email



Passionate people. Passionate places.

Planning: Regional Economic Strategy

- Central strategic document, required by UK Government
- Content: high-level regional goals, objectives and strategies for economic development
- Goals (from NWDA)
 - Increase Gross Value Added (GVA)
 - Create jobs
 - Increase firm formation rate
 - Increase number of people with basic educational qualifications
 - Increase number of people with graduate qualifications
 - Increase employment rate (number of people in the workforce)

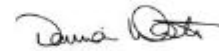
Planning: Regional Economic Strategy

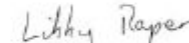
We would like to thank all those who contributed to this strategy. Your many views were invaluable. We are committed to delivering the strategy, but need the continued support of everyone in the region and in government to help us achieve the full economic potential of England's Northwest.


Association of Colleges
North West


Chambers of Commerce
North West


Cheshire & Warrington
Economic Alliance


Confederation of British
Industry


Culture Northwest



Cumbria Vision


English Nature


English Partnerships


Environment Agency


The Greater Manchester
Forum


Institute of Directors
North West

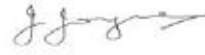

Jobcentre Plus North West


Lancashire Economic
Partnership


The Mersey Partnership


North West Business
Leadership Team

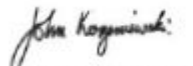

Northwest Regional
Development Agency


North West Regional
Assembly


North West Universities
Association


ONE North West


Private Sector Partners
NW Ltd


Regional Learning &
Skills Council

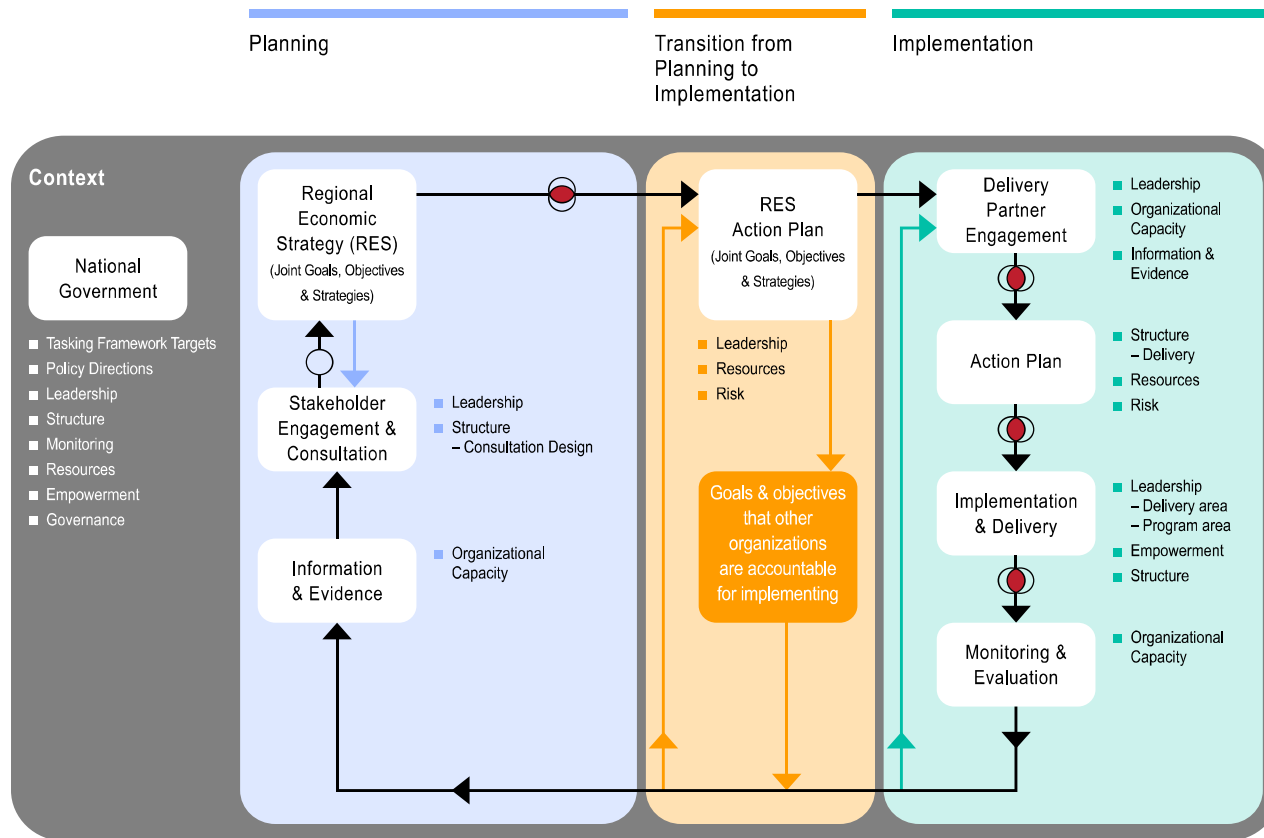

Regional Skills Partnership


Strategic Health Authorities
North West

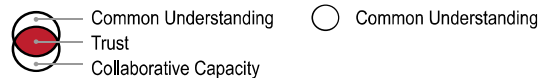

Trades Union Congress
North West


Voluntary Sector North West

Collaboration at Work in England's RDAs



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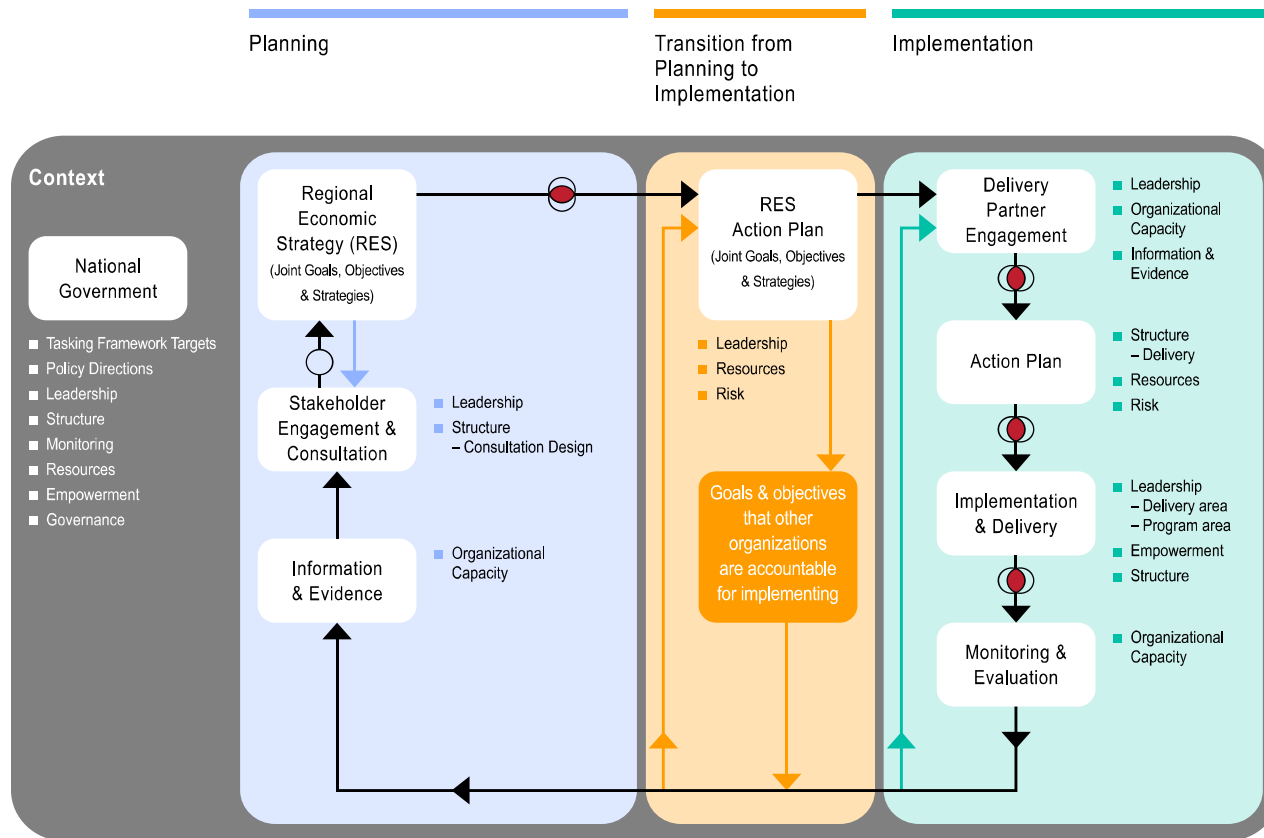


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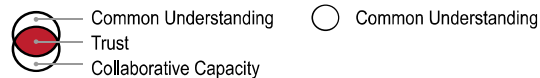
Planning to Implementation: Regional Economic Strategy Action Plan

- Central implementation document
- Content: specific programs and projects to be delivered in support of the Regional Economic Strategy
- Goal: to obtain commitments of resources and action from stakeholders
- Strategy: leverage RDA funding to obtain necessary commitments and broker collaboration

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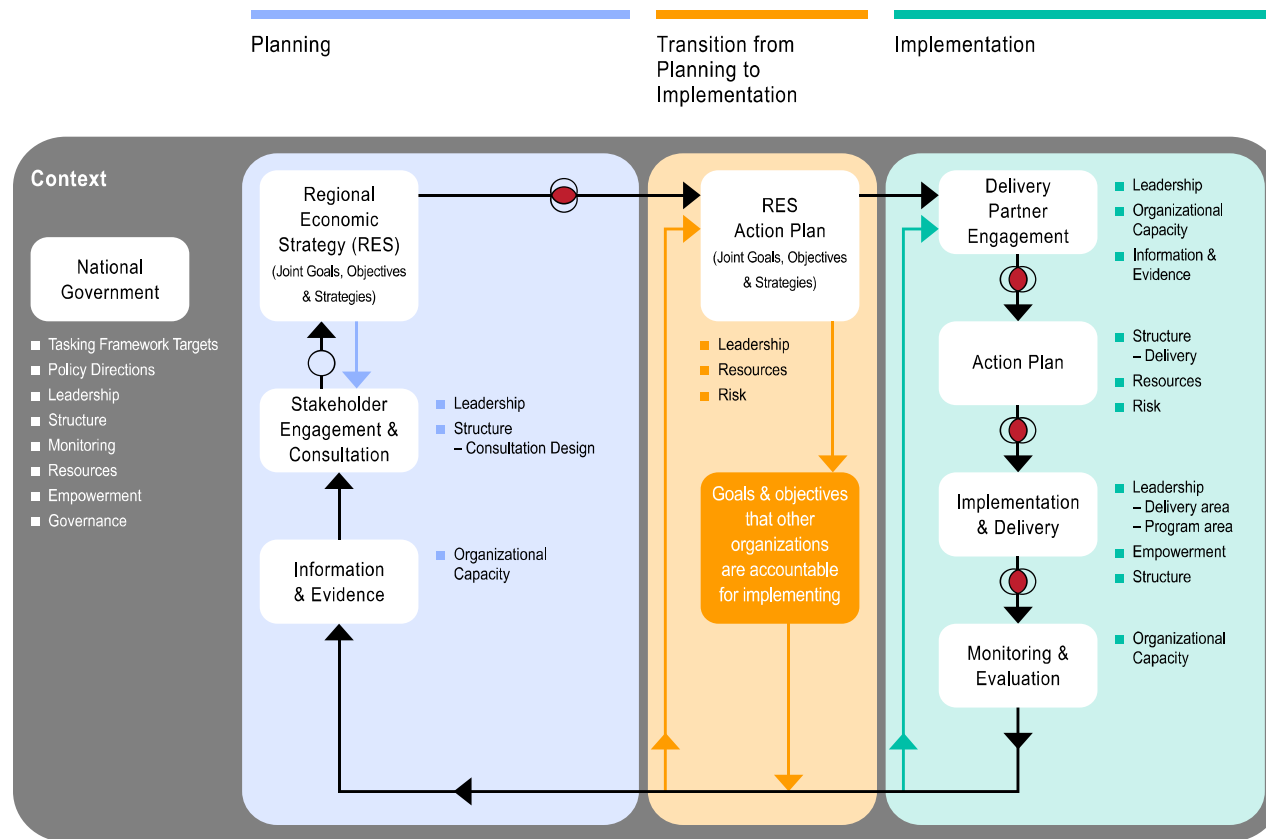
Implementation: Program and Project Planning and Delivery

- Strategies and actions (RES, RES Action Plan) are translated into front line program and project delivery
- Focus of collaborative activity shifts from Board and executive staff to senior managers and operational staff
- Process must allow for and nurture the development of common understanding, collaborative capacity and trust among these new participants

Implementation: Program and Project Planning and Delivery

- Program and project action plans: formalize inputs, roles, responsibilities, relationships, deliverables and timelines
 - Inputs: funding and resource commitments from partners
 - Roles, responsibilities, relationships: delivery structure
 - Deliverables and timelines: monitoring framework
- Implementation: must consider organizational capacity and empowerment
- Monitoring: monitoring reports are published and disseminated widely and used to inform the next round of planning

Factors at Work in Collaboration



Key Factors at Work in Collaboration

- Information and evidence
- Resources
- Leadership
- Structure
- Common understanding, collaborative capacity and trust
- Context

Implications for Economic Development in BC

- Context
- Geographic remit
- Governance
- Structure



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Thank you!



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