



## What we learned...

### Tips for influencing policy from food security initiatives across Canada

- Celebrate the small successes — policy change can be a long, demanding and sometimes difficult process.
- Think big but stay focused — there are many issues to be dealt with.
- Know the political process — learn how government works.
- Meet with policy makers — don't be afraid of politicians.
- Use the media — it can be a prime driving force for shaping public opinion and political agendas, but before going this route seek assistance from others who have experience with media and be sure to communicate clear and accurate information.
- Build broad public support — there needs to be pressure for policy change from outside the political system.
- Identify a champion — someone either within the political system, or someone outside of it who knows the system.
- Develop clear messages and avoid an adversarial approach that blames or attacks certain people.
- Let policy makers know what they can do to address the issues. Develop action steps and follow through on your efforts.

*“You can't be all things to all people... keep the same message... be aware of what your focus is.”*

*“In the end, that's what clinched the deal for us ... one councilor became very excited about what we were doing and really moved for us.”*

*“I don't think bra burning gets anybody anywhere.”*

*“It is like the drip of water and it is going to eventually create a hole in the rock.”*

*“The process, the structure and how government works, that is really important.”*

*“The Minister, at the end of the day, needs to know that the work is supported on the outside.”*

*“If you're going to be an activist, you have to act.”*

*NSNC/AHPRC Food Security Projects, 2003*

### Step 1 - Worksheet 5.1 Know your issues, goals, supporters and opposition

Working through this worksheet will help your group to more fully understand your issue/problem and start to identify stakeholders.

Issue/Problem: ..... Setting: ..... Population: .....

<p>1. What is the extent of the issue/problem? (How many people and/or systems does it affect?)</p>	<p>4. How long has it been an issue/problem?</p>
<p>2. Why is it an issue/problem?</p>	<p>5. What has been done to try and resolve the issue/problem in the past? Are there policies that specifically target this issue?</p>
<p>3. What has contributed to the development of the issue/problem?</p>	<p>6. What could happen if this issue/problem is NOT dealt with?</p>

7. What needs to be done about it?	10. Who might support you or have similar perspectives on this issue/problem?
8. What is your goal(s)?	11. Who might oppose, object or have a different perspective on this issue/problem?
9. Who else thinks this is an issue/problem?	In one sentence, describe, in a bit more detail, your issue and how you would like to see things change. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Adapted from The Health Communication Unit at the Centre of Health Promotion, University of Toronto, 2004