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### Food fairness Illawarra: Factors enabling an effective coalition to ensure a fair food future

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## Food fairness Illawarra: Factors enabling an effective coalition to ensure a fair food future

### Abstract

Food security, access to appropriate, nutritious food on a regular, reliable basis, is a human right and core to Australia's future. However, it is increasingly recognised that groups in the Australian community are food insecure, including >6% of Illawarra residents. In recognition of this, Food Fairness Illawarra formed as a community alliance to promote a fair food future for residents. Collaborative community partnerships and coalitions are a core Ottawa Charter strategy for enhancing health. It is important therefore to evaluate the effectiveness of such coalitions in promoting community food security. The effectiveness of Food Fairness Illawarra as a community coalition to enhance food security can be measured in terms of outcomes and processes. The coalition has been successful in a wide range of outcomes at a number of strategic levels to promote and enhance local food security. In addition, the coalition has surveyed members regularly concerning satisfaction, communication and capacity building to ensure that the coalition has appropriate processes for continuing effectiveness. This discussion will present the outcome and process measures used by Food Fairness Illawarra to demonstrate its effectiveness and highlight the factors contributing to the success of this community coalition in promoting community food security.

### Keywords

illawarra, future, enabling, factors, fairness, food, effective, coalition, ensure, fair

### Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Life Sciences | Medicine and Health Sciences | Social and Behavioral Sciences

### Publication Details

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## Paper Session 4

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2010 at 16:00 - 17:00

Food security and sustainability Chair: Graham Sharp

Auditorium

*Davis, L., Middleton, J.*

*Ideal for All*

### **The perilous road from community activism to public policy: Fifteen years of community agriculture in Sandwell**

In 2008, Sandwell's Director of Public Health commissioned a community agriculture strategy for the borough, to be developed through a user-led process, which set out the strategic case for an expanded programme to contribute to the development of a sustainable food system, and to the goals of the Sandwell Food Policy. Growing Healthy Communities: A community agriculture strategy for Sandwell 2008-12 is grounded in learning through practice from fifteen years of community activism in the regeneration of derelict land for mixed-use food and therapeutic horticulture initiatives.

The Strategy represents a pivotal moment in both community activism and public health policy in Sandwell. It recognises the strengths of innovation through community development approaches; the possibilities of developing policy through 'non-rational' pathways; and values people's abilities, and indeed their rights, as well as those of professionals, to make decisions about 'what works' for them. Nevertheless, this unconventional road is as perilous as that from evidence to policy, in terms of the complexities in both framing, designing and delivering effective, accessible, and relevant, public health 'prevention' and 'inequalities' interventions.

The presentation will tell the story of Sandwell's perilous journey along this road. It will offer reflections and insights into the successes and challenges encountered along the way, including the challenges of evaluating and evidencing the complex and wide-ranging outcomes of such an approach: a challenge that is shared by both community activists and public sector professionals engaged in promoting health and well being, and preventing illness, through interventions in community settings.

*Condon-Paoloni, D., Tindall R, Tavener-Smith K, Norman J, John V. University of Wollongong*

### **Food Fairness Illawarra: Factors enabling an effective coalition for a fair food future.**

Food security, access to appropriate, nutritious food on a regular, reliable basis, is a human right and core to Australia's future. However, it is increasingly recognised that groups in Australia are food insecure, including >6% of residents in the Illawarra region of NSW. In recognition of this, Food Fairness Illawarra formed as a community alliance to promote residents' food security.

Collaborative community partnerships are a core Ottawa Charter strategy for enhancing health, and increasingly are being explored by governments and other institutions as one approach to address complex health issues. It is important therefore to evaluate the effectiveness of such coalitions in promoting community food security.

The effectiveness of Food Fairness Illawarra as a community coalition to enhance food security can be measured in terms of outcomes and processes. The coalition has been successful at a number of strategic levels to enhance local food security, from promoting innovative food aid to contributing to a food policy initiative at state level. In addition, the coalition surveys members regularly concerning satisfaction, communication and capacity building to ensure appropriate processes for continuing effectiveness.

This paper will present data on outcome and process measures used by Food Fairness Illawarra to demonstrate its effectiveness. It will highlight factors contributing to the success of this community coalition in promoting food security, using an Advocacy Coalition Framework. Key factors include a high level of member satisfaction, trust, and shared vision, in addition to process factors such as partnership, planning, broad based leadership and capacity building.