

Policy In Place: Revisiting Canada's Tri-Level Agreements

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This paper revisits Canada's history of successful tri-level agreements between federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments on issues from homelessness to economic development and infrastructure. It argues that these agreements offer a model for place-based federalism – a bottom-up form of policymaking that includes all orders of government, including municipalities. Implementing this model could help Canada effectively address climate change, the COVID-19 recovery, and more.

The paper offers six principles to inform the design and implementation of future agreements.

Read the full paper: bit.ly/PolicyInPlace

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Clarify the mission to ensure broad buy-in and connect collaborative work to shared policy challenges.

Conduct a readiness test to determine if partners have sufficient (good) will and capacity to work together.

Take intelligent risks to make new connections, explore different approaches, and test unproven solutions.

Scale policy innovations and facilitate lesson-drawing from the front lines into the upper echelons of policy development.

Plan for transitions by identifying spinoff partnerships, additional revenue streams, or policy scale-ups.

Forge learning networks that connect actors across levels, sectors, and sites for comparative learning.