Increasing Citizen Engagement and Trust: The Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) Model

Presented to the 10th OECD Rural Development Conference
“National Prosperity through Modern Rural Policy”
May 20, 2015
Memphis, Tennessee

Charles W. Fluharty
President & CEO
Rural Policy Research Institute
Kentucky’s Appalachian Counties
Three SOAR Development Phases

I. Regional Dialogue

Consideration of Options → Design Discussion

Risk Assessment → Narrative Determination

Summit Development → Summit Execution

= New “SOAR” Regional Narrative
Unique Kentucky Challenges

- County lines
- Family names
- Friday night lights
- Listening to old tapes
- Stories we tell ourselves
Three SOAR Development Phases

II. Regional Engagement and Leadership Renewal

Awareness/Concern → Commitment to Action

Summit Translation → Political Leadership Response

Bipartisan Co-Chair Co-Creation → Shared Courage/Commitment

= Shared Regional Change Agency
Three SOAR Development Phases

III. SOAR Organizational Establishment

Political Establishment Control $\rightarrow$ Shared Regional Innovation (*Articles of Incorporation*)

Executive Committee $\rightarrow$ Working Groups

Development Committee $\rightarrow$ SOAR 2025 Future Forum

Founding Executive Director/2014 Summit

= SOAR Strategic Doing, After Five Months
Assignment: Prioritize Regional Innovation Ideas That:

• Complement, not Compete

• Build on and Add Value to Work of Others

• Seek and Advance New Approaches, at Regional Scale

• Spread Impact of Successful, Evidence-Based Policy and Practice

• Strengthen Regional Collaboration and Identity
Guidelines for Prioritization

• Will Not Happen, Unless SOAR:
  ▪ Assists, Nudges, or Advocates

• Will Add True Value to Others’ Work

• Will Be Achieved **through** SOAR not **by** SOAR
  ▪ True Servant Intermediary
Collective Impact

Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector coordination, yet the social sector remains focused on the isolated intervention of individual organizations.

By John Kania & Mark Kramer | Winter 2011
Five Conditions for Collective Impact Success

I. Common Agenda
   • Clear vision for change

II. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
   • Differentiated, but still coordinated

III. Backbone Organization
   • Serves entire initiative, coordinating participating organizations, firms and agencies
Five Conditions for Collective Impact Success (cont’d)

IV. Continuous Communication
   • Consistent, open, unmediated

V. Rigorous and Shared Measurement
   • Collecting predictive indicators, regional data: then measuring ongoing results, consistently
Dedication

We dedicate this report
to the people of Eastern Kentucky,
who gathered to create its content,
and for whom it is intended.

These are your voices. These are your visions.

In shaping them, may you unite,
commit together to their advancement,
and live them into that bright future
to which you gave voice in Pikeville.

SOAR!
Charles W. Fluharty

cfluharty@rupri.org

President & CEO
Rural Policy Research Institute
Clinical Professor
Department of Health Management and Policy
University of Iowa College of Public Health
145 N. Riverside Drive
Iowa City, IA 52242
(319) 384-3816
http://www.rupri.org/