

# Northern Food Distribution Network

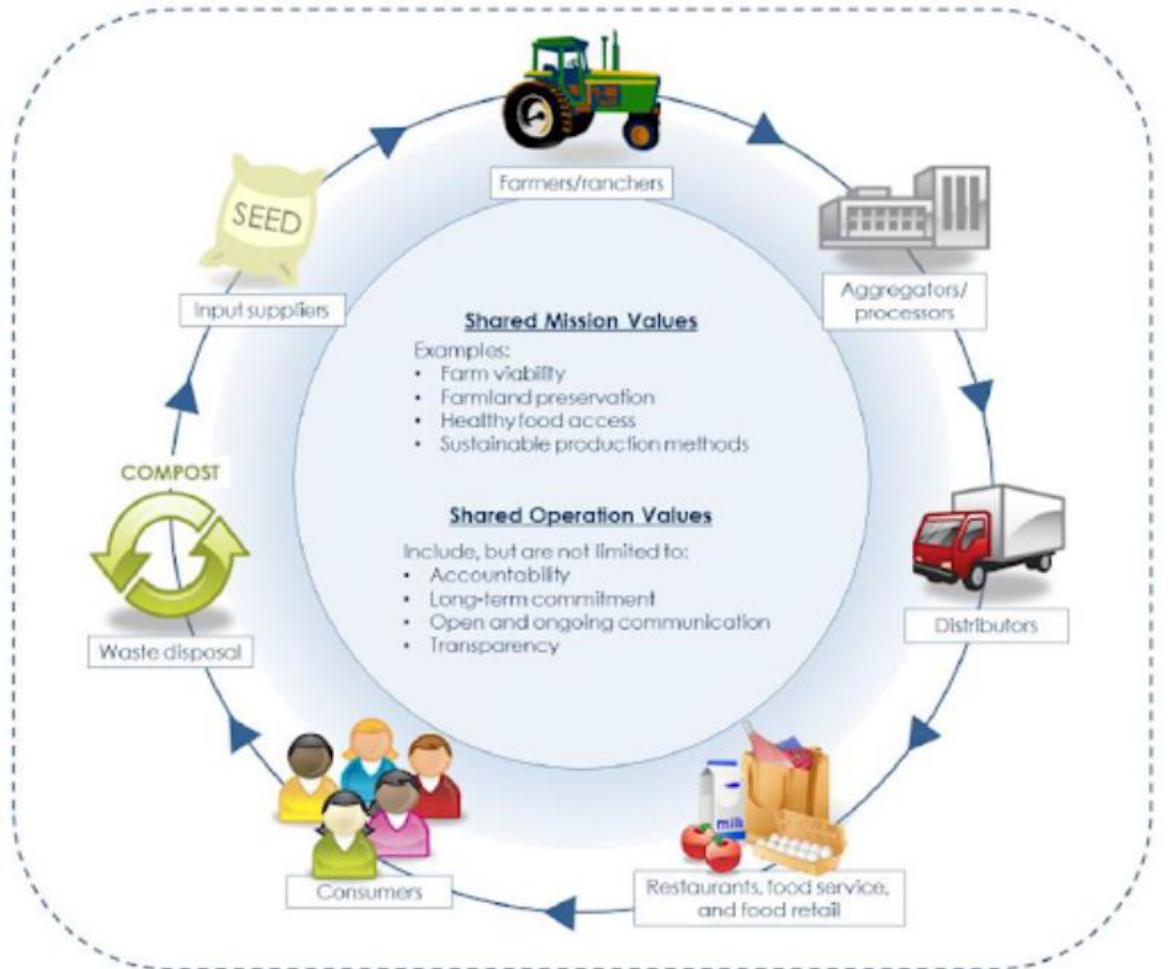
A brief Introduction



# The Northern Food Distribution Network (NFDN)

The NFDN is an un-incorporated network to bring together leaders and food system actors from across all of Northern Ontario, representing the cultural and geographic diversity that is present in our region.

This network will work together on actions and projects to improve the conditions of food distribution in Northern Ontario.



# The challenge with Food Distribution in Northern Ontario

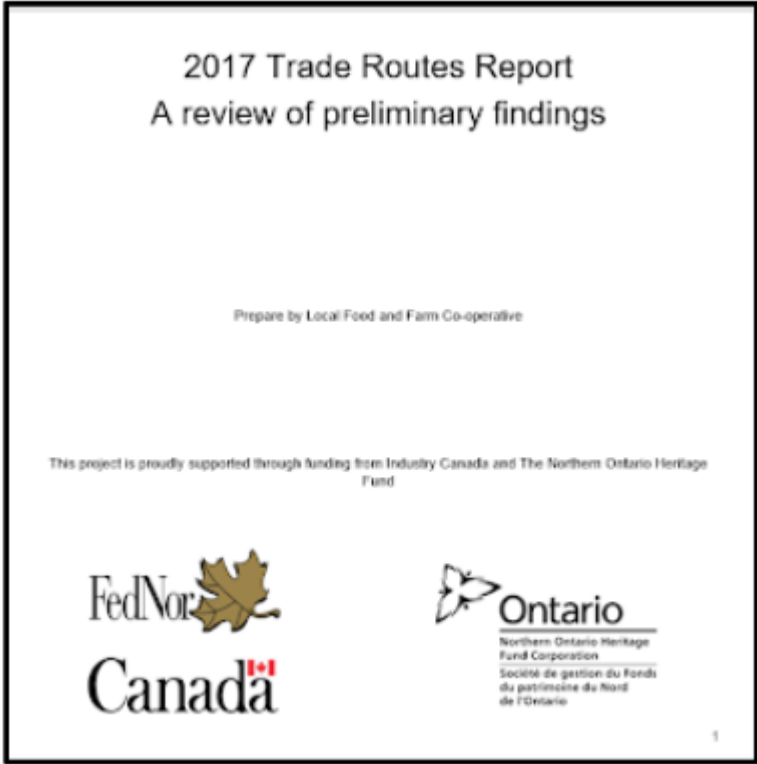
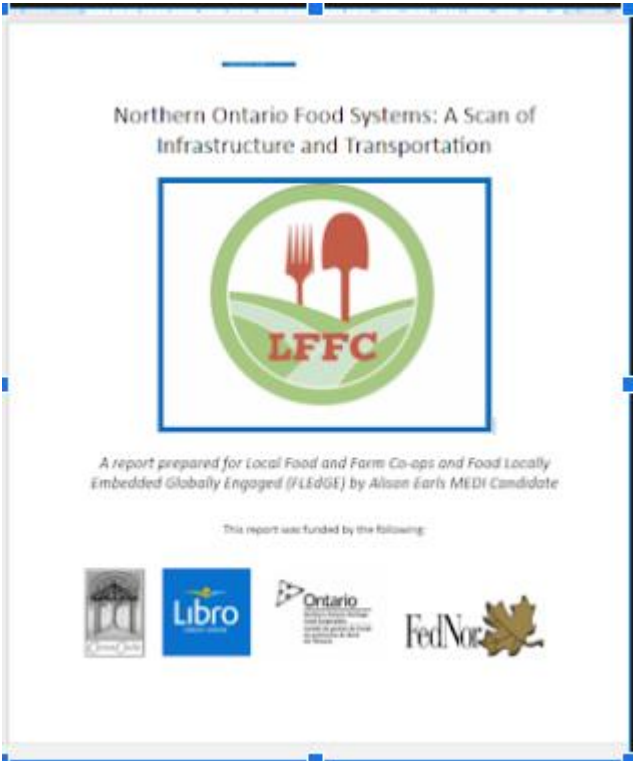
## Inefficient Food System

- vast geographic area
- dispersed population,
- climatic considerations, and
- agricultural capacity

## Contributors

- corporate global food economy
- lack of food system infrastructure
- oppression of Indigenous foodways
- minimal food production capacity

# Key Findings of the 2016-17 Trade Routes Project



# NFDN History

- Spearheaded in part by the Greenbelt Fund
- Starting in the fall of 2016, leaders from across the North started to gather to develop a strategy to collaborate on improving the efficiency, resilience and accessibility of Northern Ontario food value chains.
- After extensive consultation, the creation of the Northern Food Distribution Network (NFDN) was established.

# NFDN: Goal and Role

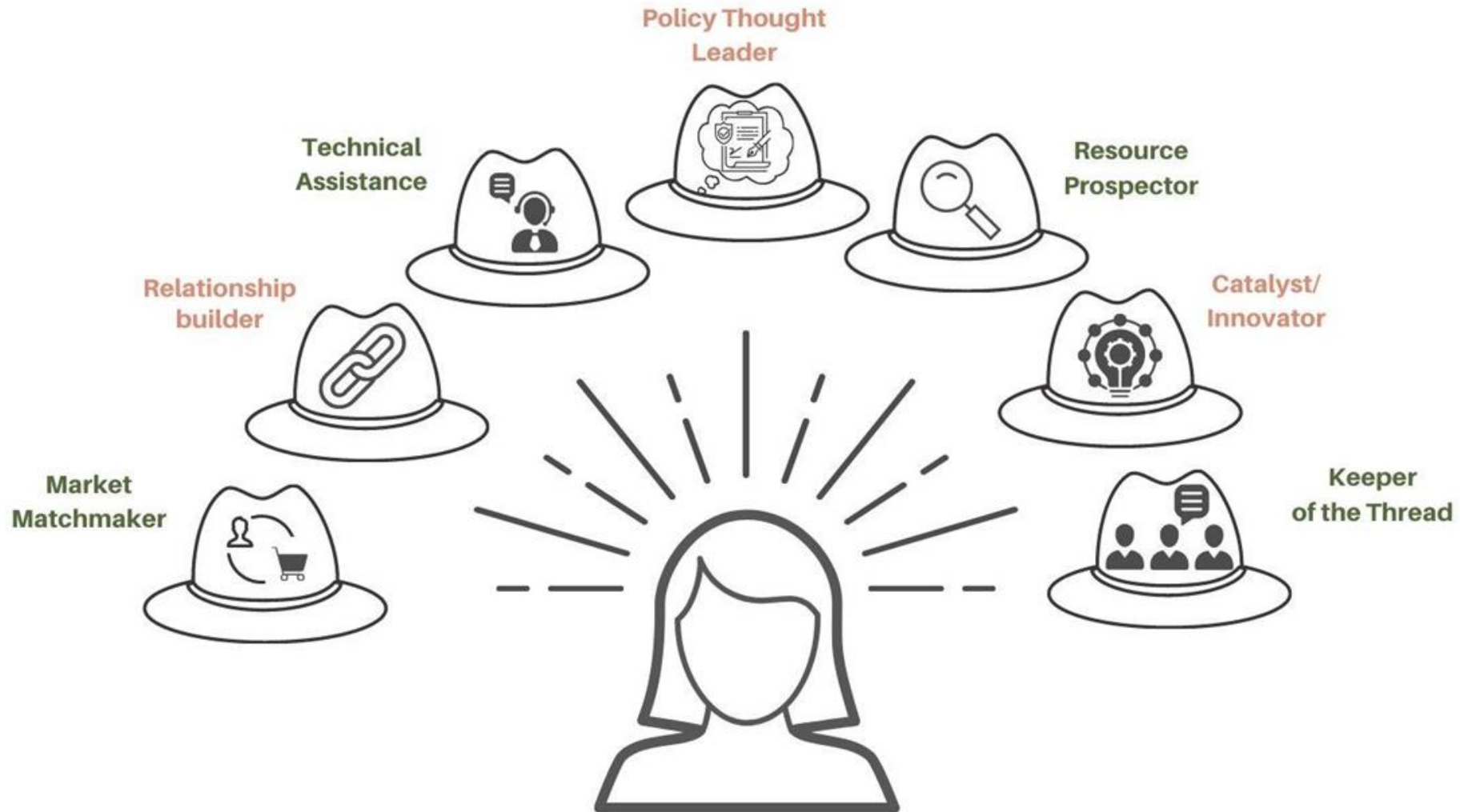
## Goal

- Improve efficiency, resilience and accessibility of Northern Ontario food value chains

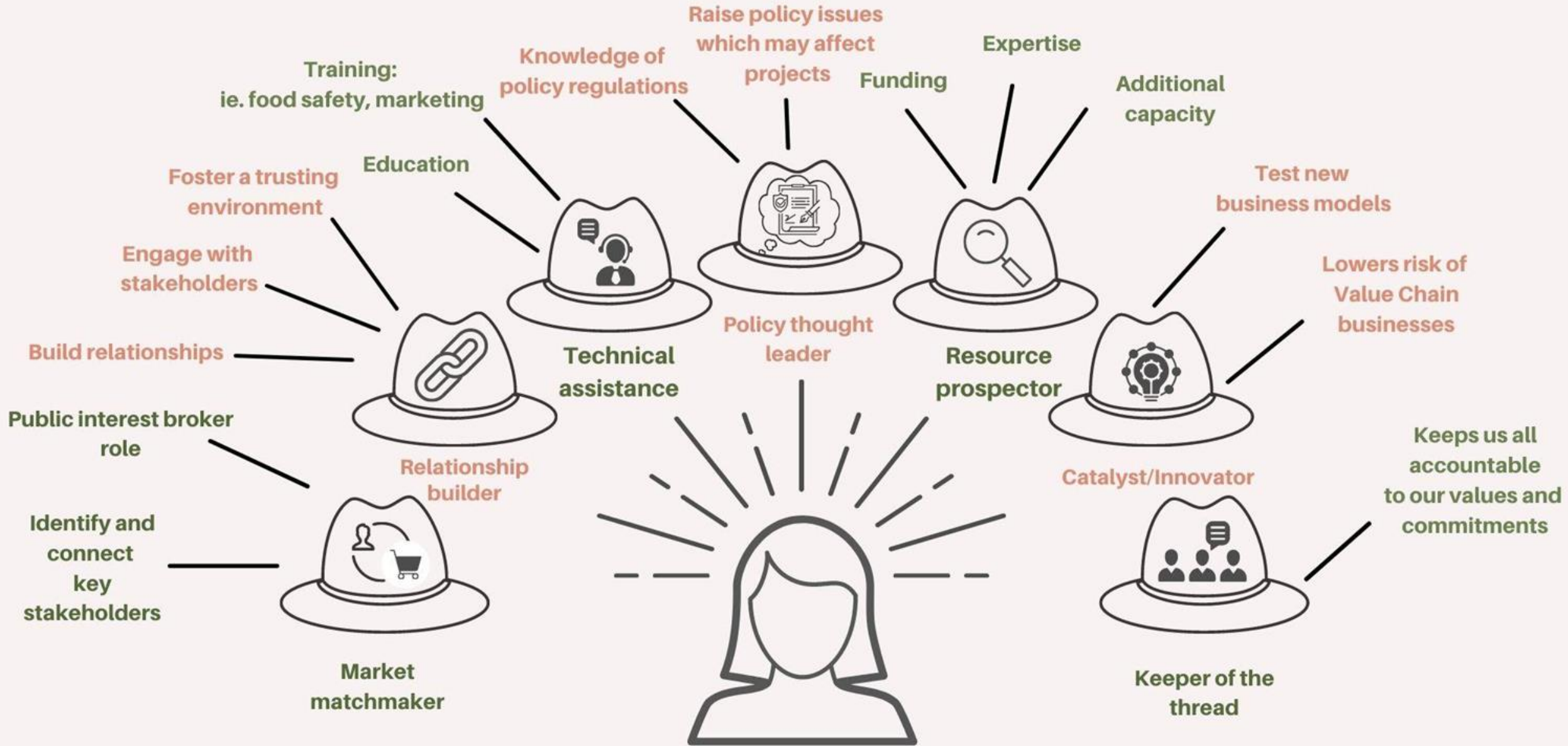
## Role of the NFDN

- create semi-formal partnerships with communities and organizations across the North (Community Food System Practitioners) to leverage participation, support mutual goals, and work together to advance the work.

# Some of the many hats of a **COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM PRACTITIONER**



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# NFDN: The journey so far

- Identified gaps in the hard and soft infrastructure in the food system
  - Hard = Processing, transportation
  - Soft = Training, expertise, time and capacity
- Identified actions required to support work in food systems
- Deepened the understanding of the challenges and opportunities available
- Learning what is important

# NFDN Today

- Partnership with Local Food and Farm Cooperative
- Working with representatives from:
  - NOFIA
  - RAIN
  - Red Cross
  - Thunder Bay Food Strategy
  - Northwestern Health Unit
- **Regrouping and restarting after a long pause due to Covid**

# Focus in 2022

- Building experience in how to work together
  - Collaborating inside and outside the group
  - Strengthening our procedures and roles and framework
  - Supporting place-based solution\* development
  - Acting as catalyst for the “work on the ground” underway
- Learning from these project to better understand effective strategies and barriers to place based solutions
  - Dryden Pilot Project
- Develop framework around how to recruit and engage others in the work
- Development of Governance
  - Vision, Mission and Terms of Reference

\*Recognising there is no “One Size Fits All” solution - each must fit the specific needs of the circumstances, place and participants

# NFDN ...

- Does not:
  - Fund work
  - Lead infrastructure work
- Does
  - Support “on the ground” work
    - Brokering Connection
  - Build Relationships
  - Provide Expertise
  - Foster Trust environments

LFFC is acting as coordinator on behalf of the network.

# To Learn More

- Contact  
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  - [NFDN@localfoodandfarm.coop](mailto:NFDN@localfoodandfarm.coop)

# Further Reading

- **Spring 2022 Executive Summary: NFDN Evaluating Success, Planning the Future**
- **2022 Executive Summary: Bridges & Barriers in Northern Ontario Exploring Food Value Chain Coordination**
- Full reports can be found here:
  - <https://www.localfoodandfarm.coop/northern-food-distribution-network/project-one-nrd92>