



Building Sustainable Programs: The Resource Guide

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SECTION I: UNDERSTANDING THE SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

An important step towards improving the health and well-being of adolescents and enabling them to become healthy, productive adults is to sustain programs that

reduce their health risks and promote their positive development.¹ Meaningfully and consistently supporting young people, however, requires planning, leadership, and collaboration to facilitate sustainable impacts in adolescent health promotion and disease prevention.



Building Sustainable Programs: The Resource Guide is part of a collection of resources developed for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) grantees, which provides guidance to help programs and services achieve sustainable impacts. This guide includes practical tips and activities that will help grantees develop a long-term sustainability plan. However, as

discussed below and in OAH's accompanying [*Building Sustainable Programs: The Framework*](#), before planning for sustainability grantees must first formulate their own concept of sustainability and determine their own sustainability planning goals.

WHAT DOES “SUSTAINABILITY” MEAN?

Sustainability can mean different things in different contexts. To some, it is simply a continuity of services – the ability to carry on program services through funding and resource shifts or losses.² To OAH grantees, sustainability can mean institutionalizing services; adapting to constant changes in technology, policies, and funding streams; creating a legacy; and/or sharing

A PERSPECTIVE ON SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is effectively leveraging partnerships and resources to continue programs, services, and/or strategic activities that result in improvements in the health and well-being of adolescents.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. (2013).

¹Guinosso, S. & Elnicki, J. (2013). Beyond the Finish Line: Planning for Sustainability. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, You and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Division: Washington, DC.

²Johnson, K., Hays, C., Center, H., & Daley, C. (2004). Building capacity and sustainable prevention innovations: A sustainability planning model. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 27(2), 135-149.

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY

"Sustainability is...about creating and building momentum to maintain community-wide change by organizing and maximizing community assets and resources. It means institutionalizing policies and practices within communities and organizations. From the outset, sustainability requires an approach that emphasizes the development of a network of community practitioners who understand and can lead a [public health movement]. It also means involving a multiplicity of stakeholders who can develop long-term buy-in and support throughout the community for a coalition's efforts. These factors are crucial to ensuring lasting change and making a difference in people's lives."

Batan, M., Butterfoss, F.D., Jaffe, A., & LaPier, T. *Healthy communities program: Sustainability planning guide*. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Washington, DC.

positive outcomes to get local buy-in and provide high-quality services.^{3,4}

With all these concepts of sustainability, there are also a number of ways grantees can operationalize the concept of sustainability, including continuing organizational ideals, principles, and beliefs; upholding existing relationships; and/or maintaining consistent organizational outcomes.⁵

For OAH, the concept of sustainability is linked to its vision and mission to advance best practices that improve the health and well-being of America's adolescents, enabling them to become healthy, productive adults. Acknowledging that there are many definitions of sustainability and that adolescent health programs vary greatly, each program must develop its own concept of sustainability. OAH offers the perspective below to assist grantees in determining how to achieve sustainable impact and develop their sustainability plan.

Adolescent health programs will be positioned to achieve sustainable impact when they can *effectively leverage partnerships and resources to continue programs, services, and/or strategic activities that result in improvements in the health and well-being of adolescents.*

Grantees may use the OAH concept or their own mission or vision statement to develop their own concept of sustainability and further determine what their goals will be for their sustainability planning process.

WHAT CHALLENGES ARE FACED?

The sustainability of adolescent health programs is a critical component of affecting long-term change in health-related behaviors, but many programs and services face numerous challenges. Informal conversations with OAH grantees highlight several barriers to achieving sustainability, including securing funding; providing services to special populations; strategic planning and prioritizing sustainability planning; achieving local buy-in; creating and maintaining partnerships; and securing local political support.^{6,7}



³ Chapple, S. & Rackliff, J. (August 2013). Facilitated dialogues with Office of Adolescent Health Pregnancy Assistance Fund grantees.

⁴ Hall, T. & Berger, A. (June 2013). Facilitated dialogues with Office of Adolescent Health Teen Pregnancy Prevention grantees.

⁵ Weiss, H., Coffman, J., & Bohan-Baker, M. (2002, December). Evaluation's role in supporting initiative sustainability. In fifth biannual meeting of the Urban Seminar Series on Children's Health and Safety, Cambridge, MA. Available at: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/pubs/onlinepubs/sustainability/index.html>.

⁶ Chapple, S. & Rackliff, J. (August 2013). Facilitated dialogues with Office of Adolescent Health Pregnancy Assistance Fund grantees.

⁷ Hall, T. & Berger, A. (June 2013). Facilitated dialogues with Office of Adolescent Health Teen Pregnancy Prevention grantees.



Many grantees also report successes in these areas – having been able to diversify funding streams, adapt services to special populations, use assessments to prioritize services, secure community supports, and enhance collaboration with local networks.⁸

Grantees will be able to better plan for sustainability by knowing and understanding their present

and future challenges. Reaching out to fellow OAH grantees or local external partners can help grantees anticipate future challenges and overcome them.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO DEVELOP A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN?

Grantees face complex challenges, and it will be critical for their sustainability process to develop a plan and build sustainability efforts into day-to-day. Making sustainability a priority and planning for it can help grantees define critical short- and long-term strategies; develop a message to attract and make the best use of human, financial, and in-kind resources; and obtain input and buy-in from their community, partners, and key stakeholders.

Tactically planning for sustainability will also help grantees define their work and their level of commitment to it.⁹ Aligning their services with community needs and creating a strategy for adapting to changing needs will help grantees achieve longevity. No matter when the sustainability planning process is initiated, these efforts will take time and resources.¹⁰ But, it will always be more cost effective to sustain the important components of programs and services now, rather than letting them end and recreating them later.¹¹

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

There are a number of resources available on achieving sustainability, but none that focus explicitly on how adolescent health education and promotion programs can

⁸ Chapple, S. & Rackliff, J. (August 2013). Facilitated dialogues with Office of Adolescent Health Pregnancy Assistance Fund grantees.

T. & Berger, A. (June 2013). Facilitated dialogues with Office of Adolescent Health Teen Pregnancy Prevention grantees.

⁹ Batan, M., Butterfoss, F.D., Jaffe, A., & LaPier, T. Healthy communities program: Sustainability planning guide. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Washington, DC. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

METHODOLOGY FOR IDENTIFYING SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

A search was conducted that targeted resources focused on how community health programs achieved sustainability and included a review of articles, reports, toolkits, resource guides, guidelines, and academic research, from peer-reviewed journals to public access articles. Additional resources identified by OAH were also reviewed and OAH grantees and leadership also provided guidance and information in identifying the sustainability factors outlined in this guide.

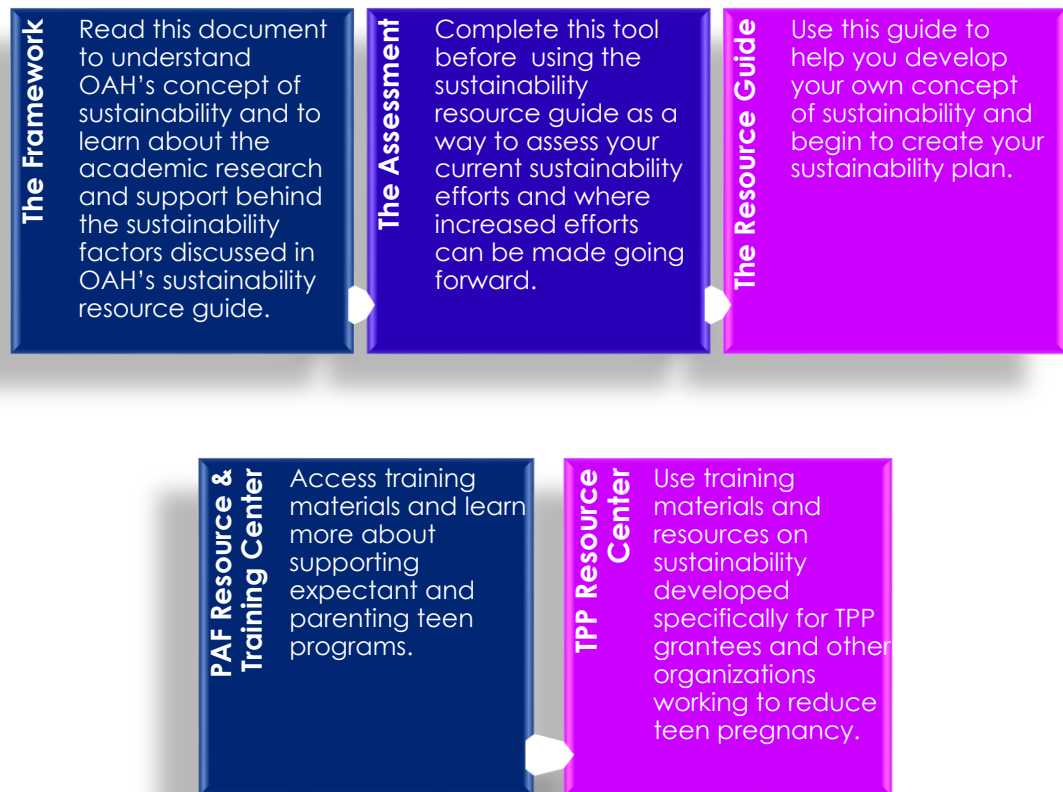
For more information on the methodology used to identify the sustainability factors discussed herein and the research behind them, see [Building Sustainable Programs: The Framework](#).

Grantees can interpret and modify this guide to meet their unique program needs, their own stage of implementation, and their position within the community.

achieve sustainability. This guide provides direction for creating a sustainability plan specifically for programs and services aimed at improving adolescent health. It contains guidance but also activities and additional resources for grantees to keep on hand as they begin their sustainability planning.

This guide is a process-oriented resource to help grantees identify their sustainability planning goals and to strategize and begin to develop their sustainability plan. It is one of several resources (see Figure I-1) on sustainability developed by OAH and should be used after grantees have read through the [Framework](#) and reviewed and/or completed the [Assessment](#).

FIGURE I-1: OAH SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES



Each grantee will create and implement its own unique sustainability plan. This guide and accompanying resources offer a deeper understanding of the key factors that will help grantees achieve sustainable impact. Grantees can interpret and modify this guide to meet their unique program needs, their stage of implementation, and their position within the community.

Planning for sustainability is not a single event or a linear process. It is a continuous exercise where many planning activities could occur simultaneously. Many of the factors discussed in this guide are also complementary. In some instances, sustainability themes or principles may repeat across factors because they are interconnected. Each grantee is at a different stage of implementation and, accordingly, each has different needs. Grantees may use the information in the *Resource Guide* in any order that meets the needs of their program or services. The sustainability planning process should be fluid and specifically tailored to the grantees' programs, services, and environment. This guide allows grantees to infuse elements of their local experiences into the planning process and, ultimately, to interpret and adapt this resource to create a strategy that works for them.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This resource offers easy-to-use materials and exercises to help grantees strategize and begin to create their sustainability plan. Grantees in the early stages of sustainability planning may use this guide from start to finish, proceeding through each sustainability factor in the order in which they appear in the *Resource Guide*. Grantees that have already begun to plan for sustainability may find it useful to review all the factors and to locate the sections and activities where they need the most support. For some this may entail briefly reviewing [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 1: Create an Action Strategy](#), working through the guide and then coming back to this factor to fully operationalize the approach and plan chosen. Before delving into this resource guide, grantees may want to read and complete OAH's [Assessment](#) (Appendix A), to evaluate their current sustainability efforts, where their challenges may lie, and what efforts they can make going forward. Completing the [Assessment](#) first will also help grantees identify those areas where they may need to focus attention and resources.

This guide is organized into eight sustainability factors identified through extensive research and with input from OAH grantees (for additional information, see the [Framework](#)). Figure II-2 highlights these eight factors.

"Make sustainability planning as tangible as implementation planning."

Craft, L. & Prince, M. (2013). *Taming the monster: Developing tangible sustainability plans. A presentation for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health: Washington, DC.*

FIGURE I-2: OAH'S EIGHT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS



Within each factor, this guide offers critical action steps for grantees to consider when planning for sustainability as well as sustainability worksheets that will help them actualize their plans. Grantees can interpret, tailor, and incorporate one, some, or all of these factors, worksheets, and exercises into developing their own unique sustainability plan. The worksheets associated with each factor are meant to spark grantees' thinking about sustainability. How grantees complete them, whether as part of a group effort, individually, or with guidance from outside strategic partners, will depend on who they believe needs to participate in brainstorming about and developing their sustainability plan. Information gathered from completing these worksheets can then be used to fill in the sustainability plan template found in [Section](#)

[III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan,](#)
[Factor 1: Create an Action Strategy.](#)

WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE



OAH grantees
 Adolescent health service providers
 Programs serving adolescents
 Community health leaders
 Health coalition members
 Health organizations
 Health departments
 Businesses
 Nonprofits

WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE?

This guide is primarily for OAH grantees and other similar programs dedicated to improving the health and well-being of adolescents through health promotion and disease prevention efforts. The sustainability factors are built upon research, relevant literature and evidence-informed practices, and will likely resonate across a number of public health organizations and efforts.

Additional audiences that will benefit from this guide include: community health leaders; school-based programs; health coalition members; national, regional, and local health organizations; state and local health and education departments; businesses; and nonprofits. This guide can be used by new or more seasoned organizations at any stage of the sustainability planning process. Whether grantees are directly delivering their programs or services to the community, or engaging a partner agency in this effort, this guide can help them build their sustainability plan.

SECTION II: MEASURING SUCCESS

As grantees begin to explore the sustainability factors and worksheets in this guide, an important issue to consider will be how successes are measured. This section provides a list of measures for grantees to consider when thinking about how they will determine whether their program or service has been successfully sustained.

How each grantee defines success for its program or service will vary significantly. Some may measure their success by the diversity of their funding streams, while others will measure it by the number of participants they have or community coalitions they lead. Many will focus on whether they are able to maintain their current services or programs after the federal funding cycle. Many will also have some combination of success indicators that relate to each of the sustainability factors outlined in this guide. Figure II-1 provides a sampling of success measures grantees may consider.

Grantees may want to think about which, if any, of the sample success measures in Figure II-1 apply to their program or service. As each of the sustainability factors are being explored, it is important to determine how success will be defined. Grantees may want to refer to their program logic model and use the worksheets in Activity 1 and Activity 2 to help them identify their organization's measures of success and concept of sustainability.



FIGURE II-1: POSSIBLE MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Partners provide in-kind services and resources.
- Key staff positions are integrated into partner agencies' core services.
- Programs or services are an essential part of your larger organization or partnering agencies.
- Numerous outside strategic partners have been secured.
- The community seeks out and supports programs or services.
- Numbers of program or service participants increase each year.
- Programs and services are actively participating in community events, coalitions, and work groups.
- Sound policies and procedures which support programs or services have been created.
- Partners integrate policies and procedures into their respective organizations.
- Programs or services have led to increased capacity and/or training opportunities.
- Programs or services have changed public awareness and perceptions about adolescent health.
- Aspects of the programs' or services' approach have been adopted by other organizations.
- Programs or services continue as is beyond the federal funding cycle.
- Revenue generating strategies are in place.
- Additional funding to assist in sustaining programs or services has been secured.
- There is a broad base of funding.

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions about defining sustainability and measuring success. The activities are meant to help grantees think strategically about their own sustainability goals.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Defining Sustainability](#)

[Activity 2: Measuring Success](#)

SECTION II: MEASURING SUCCESS | ACTIVITY 1: DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

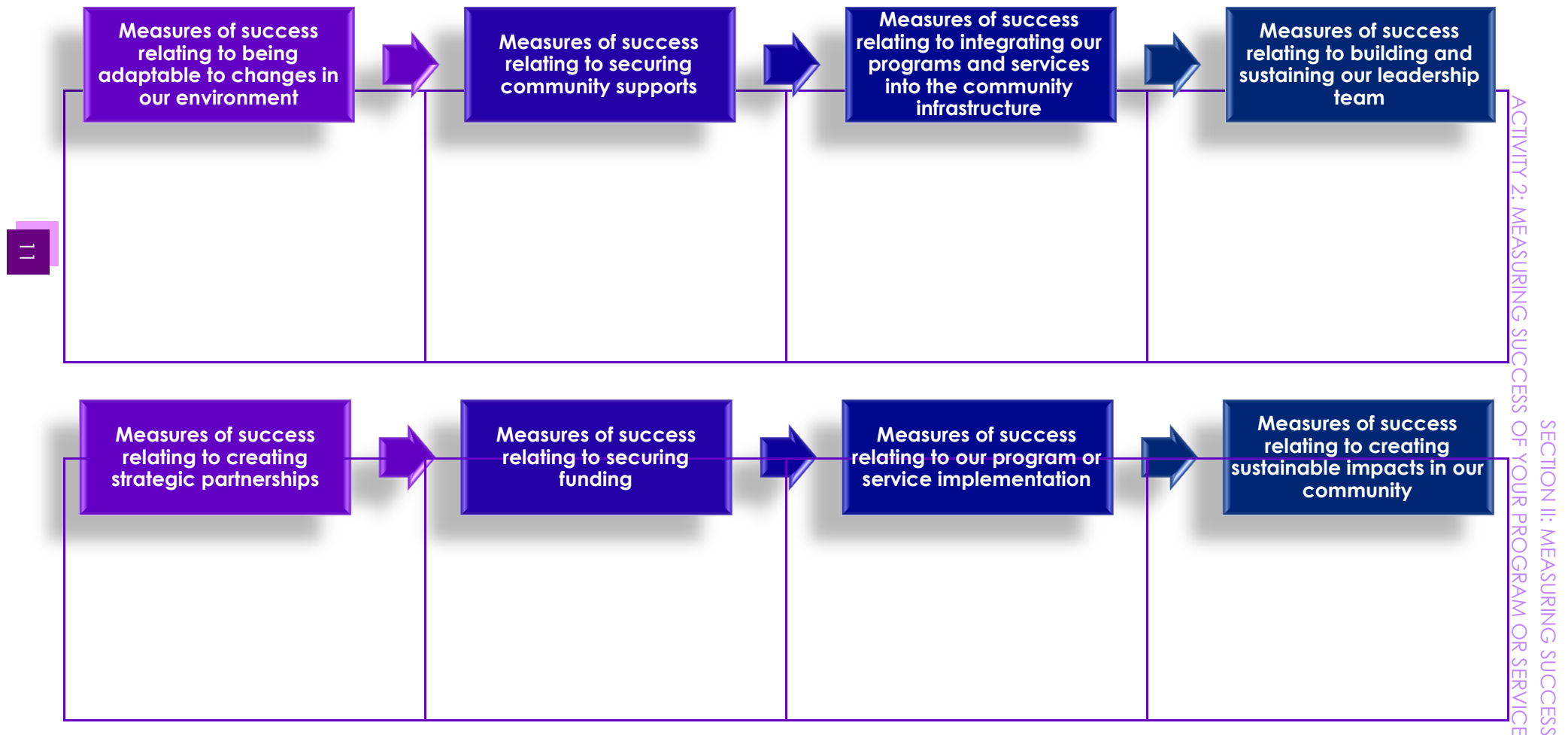
Instructions: Using the space below, work with your staff and outside partners, where appropriate, to create your own concept or definition of sustainability. Think about OAH's concept of sustainability and how it relates to your definition. At OAH, the concept of sustainability was developed in the context of its vision and mission and occurs when:

Adolescent health programs are positioned to achieve sustainable impact by effectively leverage partnerships and resources to continue programs, services, and/or strategic activities that result in improvements in the health and well-being of adolescents.

What is our program's or service's mission or vision statement?	How do we define sustainability (and what do we want to sustain)?	Does our definition capture how our programs or services will make sustainable impacts in our community?

SECTION II: MEASURING SUCCESS | ACTIVITY 2: MEASURING SUCCESS OF YOUR PROGRAM OR SERVICE

Instructions: Complete this activity to help you identify the indicators or measures you will use to determine whether your program or service has been successfully sustained. The areas listed below refer to many of the factors of sustainability discussed in this guide, but also allow you to consider your measures of success more expansively. You may want to refer to the examples in Figure II-1: Measures of Success to help guide your thinking or approach. Activities throughout the guide will help you build your sustainability plan and ensure it meshes with the success measures you have identified in this activity. Some may find it useful to complete this exercise before going through each section of this guide to help identify goals and objectives in planning for sustainability. Others may prefer to complete this exercise later in the process. It will be up to each grantee to determine when it makes sense for them to complete this activity.

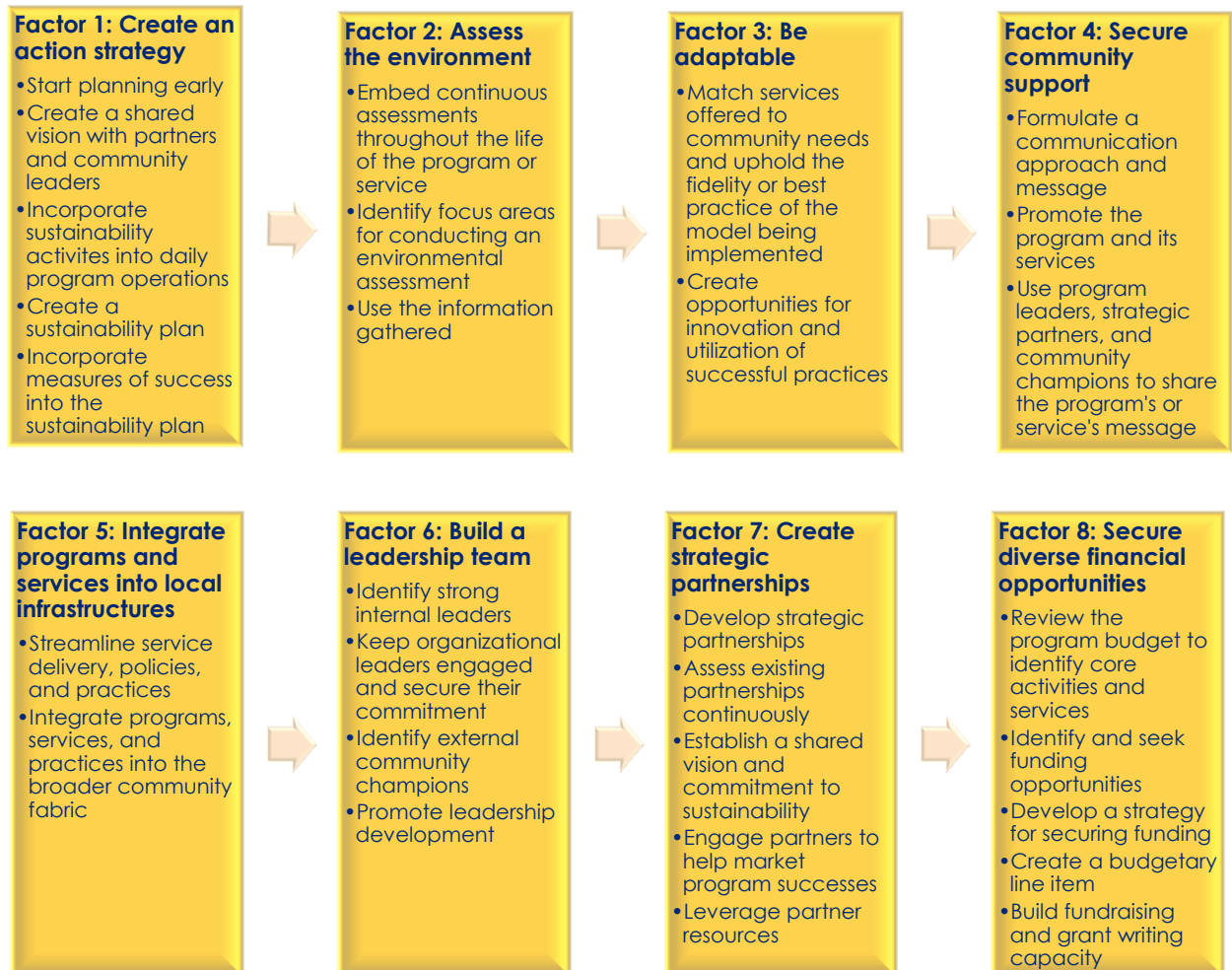


SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

This section will help grantees work through the sustainability planning process. Each section details a series of questions that are important for grantees to consider when planning for sustainability, as well as a series of tools to help grantees address the various action steps suggested.

In this section, grantees will have an opportunity to learn more about each factor and the keys to achieving success within each of these factors. Additionally, grantees will complete worksheets that support these factors and keys to success. Figure III-1 provides an overview of the following sections.

FIGURE III-1: EIGHT FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY AND THEIR KEYS TO SUCCESS



FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY

Ideally, sustainability planning efforts would be incorporated early into everyday programmatic activities and a program or service implementation plan, but it's never too late to start! These efforts may include the creation of a formal long-term strategic plan that is regularly revisited and helps programs and services anticipate and mitigate potential challenges. During this process, consider regularly monitoring policies, programs, and services to better address community needs. Define sustainability for the program



or service, and identify shared visions and approaches with key partners, community leaders, and other stakeholders. A shared vision can serve as the foundation upon which a strong and community-supported sustainability plan can be built. In turn, a sustainability plan can serve as a road map for establishing benchmarks for determining whether the program or service is successfully reaching its goals.¹⁰

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon reviewing this factor and completing the associated activities, grantees will learn the importance of developing a carefully thought out strategy for addressing sustainability. Specifically, grantees will learn to:

- Begin planning and conceptualizing sustainability early;
- Develop a plan that articulates goals, creates a shared vision between partners, and defines partner relationships and responsibilities;
 - Integrate sustainability activities into program or service operations;
 - Create a sustainability plan; and
 - Develop indicators for measuring progress toward achieving the key goals outlined in the sustainability plan.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By systematically approaching sustainability planning, grantees can be more effective in addressing and forecasting many

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Start planning early

Create a shared vision with partners and community leaders

Incorporate sustainability activities into daily program operations

Create a sustainability plan

Incorporate measures of success into the sustainability plan

¹⁰ The Finance Project. (2003). Sustainability planning workbook: Building a sustainable initiative. Washington, DC. <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/workbookbrochure.pdf>.

future program and service needs. Incorporating sustainability planning into the infrastructure of the organization and its implementation work plans can help:

- Secure buy-in and support from the community;
- Define long- and short-term implementation strategies;
- Document and organize data and evaluation findings; and
- Attract and utilize financial and in-kind resources.¹¹

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

No two sustainability planning processes are alike. Each grantee can tailor their plan to best meet their needs. These action steps will help grantees begin sustainability planning and they can use and/or adapt the questions and worksheets, thereby creating a process and plan that is appropriate for their program or services.

START PLANNING EARLY

Sustainability planning can be considered from the start and woven into the larger program work plan. Begin by determining who should help define sustainability and create the sustainability plan. This may include the leadership team of the program's or service's organization, its financial officer, communications staff and program implementation staff. As discussed below, it may also include outside strategic partners and community leaders with whom creating a shared vision and mission for programs and services will increase the likelihood of sustainability. This team can then help define sustainability and determine what the program's or service's goals are and what activities to sustain. Grantees can consider the questions in Figure III-2 to better understand what sustainability means for their programs and services.¹²

Discussions of sustainability can occur in tandem with overall program planning at regular staff, board or leadership meetings. Failure to incorporate sustainability discussions into regular program operations can lead to activities that do not reflect long-term priorities.¹³

CREATE A SHARED VISION WITH PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Creating a shared understanding with

FIGURE III 2: DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY AND SETTING GOALS

- What does sustainability mean for grantees' programs or services?
- What services or programs are priorities to sustain?
- How can these programs and services be sustained and evolve over time?
- What actions need to be taken to sustain these programs or services?

¹¹ Batan M, Butterfoss FD, Jaffe A, & LaPier T. Healthy communities program: Sustainability planning guide. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Washington, DC. http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Pluye, P., Potvin, L., Denis, J.L., Pelletier, J., Mannoni, C. (2005) Program sustainability begins with the first events. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 28, 123-137.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY

partners of what sustainability means will make planning for it easier.¹⁴ In the absence of a clearly articulated vision, achieving outcomes or sustaining partnerships will be difficult in the long term.¹⁵ Defining a shared vision can be a part of a grantee's core efforts. In planning, consider answering the following questions:¹⁶

- With the help of partners and community leaders, what does the grantee want to achieve from its program or services?
- Do partners share the grantee's vision for the program or service?
- What are the shared visions and goals?
- What are the shared immediate and intermediate outcomes that the grantee expects from the program?
- What resources or support can partners offer to create and implement the shared vision?



Engaging partners and key stakeholders in answering these questions can be an effective strategy for facilitating sustainability. The collective perspective is useful in maintaining long-term focus; and, in engaging partners early, grantees may be able to secure a greater level of commitment to their efforts.¹⁷

INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES INTO DAILY PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Embedding sustainability activities into daily program operations and program or service work plans will play a significant role in helping grantees include sustainability conversations and efforts in their regular practices.

¹⁴ Friedman, A. & Wicklund, K. (2006). Allies Against Asthma: A midstream comment on sustainability. *Health Promotion Practice*, 7(2), 140s-148s.

¹⁵ Georgia Health Policy Center & Georgia State University. The dynamics of sustainability: A primer for rural health organizations. Health Resources & Services Administration Office of Rural Health Policy. Available at <http://www.ruralhealthlink.org/Portals/0/Resources/Sustainability%20Primer%20for%20Rural%20Health%20Organizations.pdf>.

¹⁶ Wolff T. (2010). Tools for Sustainability. *Global Journal for Community Psychology Practice*, 1(1), 40-57. <http://www.gjcpc.org/pdfs/2009-0017-Final%20Version-011410.pdf>.

¹⁷ Georgia Health Policy Center & Georgia State University. The dynamics of sustainability: A primer for rural health organizations. Health Resources & Services Administration Office of Rural Health Policy. Available at <http://www.ruralhealthlink.org/Portals/0/Resources/Sustainability%20Primer%20for%20Rural%20Health%20Organizations.pdf>.

If grantees are in the development stage, they are well positioned to embed sustainability planning into their core program activities. As grantees develop their services, staffing, and financial plans, they can incorporate sustainability activities into their program design and budgetary outlays. They can designate team members to lead their sustainability efforts and institutionalize an emphasis on funding diversification. At this stage, grantees can also build into their infrastructure regular efforts to identify and apply for alternative funding sources, as well as address staff development needs necessary to perform those functions.

Sustainability planning can also be introduced into the core program activities of more seasoned grantees. This can be achieved in a number of ways, such as incorporating sustainability discussions into their regular organizational meetings or designating a team of staff members to focus specifically on sustaining core intervention services or programs.

Regardless of their stage of implementation, grantees can consider exploring:

- Which staff members should be included in the sustainability planning efforts?
- How can sustainability discussions be incorporated into regularly scheduled staff meetings?
- How can sustainability be included as a core part of staff's roles and responsibilities?
- From where can they allocate resources to support sustainability planning and outreach?

As they revisit and revise their budget, grantees can assess whether sustainability planning activities can or should be a budgeted activity.

CREATE A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

A sustainability plan should be actionable and achievable, and include a strategy for monitoring successes and identifying challenges. A sustainability plan can serve as a roadmap that outlines how a program or services will operate, how it will meet its needs, and what direction it will take.¹⁸ Figure III-3 highlights some of key components required to build an effective sustainability plan.

Think about how the program's or service's sustainability plan will incorporate the sustainability factors discussed in this guide:



¹⁸ Whitfield, J. (2012). Preparing for Sustainability; Presentation at "Expanding Our Experience and Expertise: Implementing Effective Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programs" Conference. Baltimore, MD. http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/ta/experience_expertise_whitfield.pdf.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY

- What is important to assess about the environment in which the grantee is working?
- How can programs and services adapt to changing needs?
- What is needed to secure community and partner support?
- How can grantees integrate their programs and services into other community organizations?
- Who would be an essential member of a leadership team?
- Who are key partners and stakeholders to include in sustainability planning efforts?
- How will they identify and secure diverse financial opportunities?

Grantees may want to begin their sustainability plan by, first, identifying their goals and defining sustainability and then working through the various factors in this guide to help flesh out what action steps to take and record in the sustainability plan.

FIGURE III 3: COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

- Goals and objectives;
- Description of services that will best address the needs of the community and the activities needed to achieve sustainability;
- Timelines for implementing activities and achieving the goals;
- Names of person(s) responsible and resources needed to accomplish goals; and
- Measures of success and outcomes expected.

As grantees develop sustainability plans, alignment between their definition of sustainability and their specific action steps in the plan is essential.

Grantees can refer to the measures of success they developed as part of *Section II: Measuring Success* and ensure that the action steps they have chosen help reach those goals. In assessing whether their

sustainability plan adequately contemplates and addresses their success measures, grantees may consider:

- Do the goals and objectives in their sustainability plans match their concept of what it means to successfully sustain their work?
- Are the programs or services discussed in their sustainability plans those that will help their organizations achieve success, as they have defined it?

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions about developing a sustainability plan. The activities are meant to help grantees think strategically about their own sustainability.

The activities include:

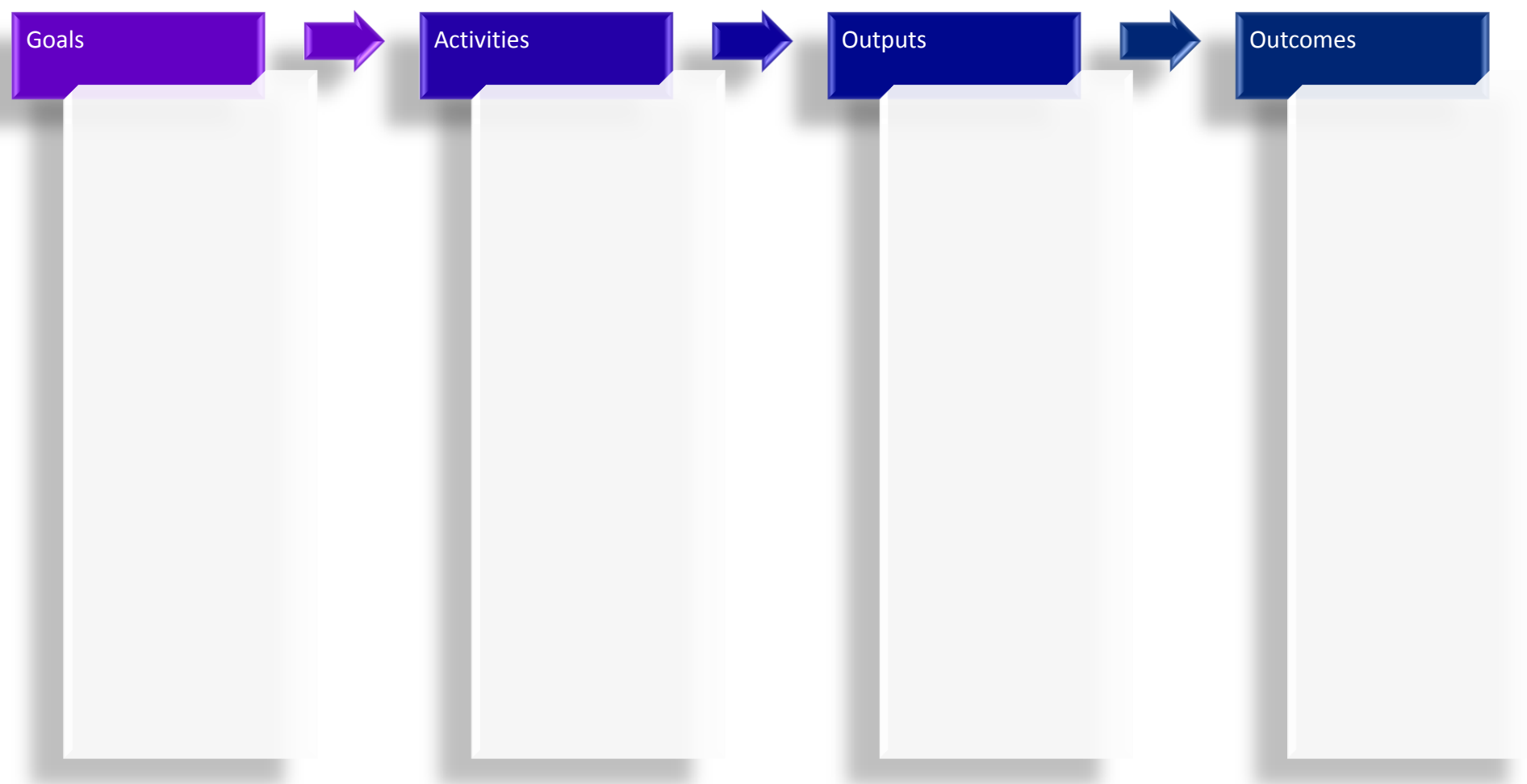
[Activity 1: Creating a Shared Vision](#)

[Activity 2: Incorporating Sustainability Activities into your Daily Program Operations](#)

[Activity 3: Developing a Sustainability Plan](#)

FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY | ACTIVITY 1: CREATING A SHARED VISION

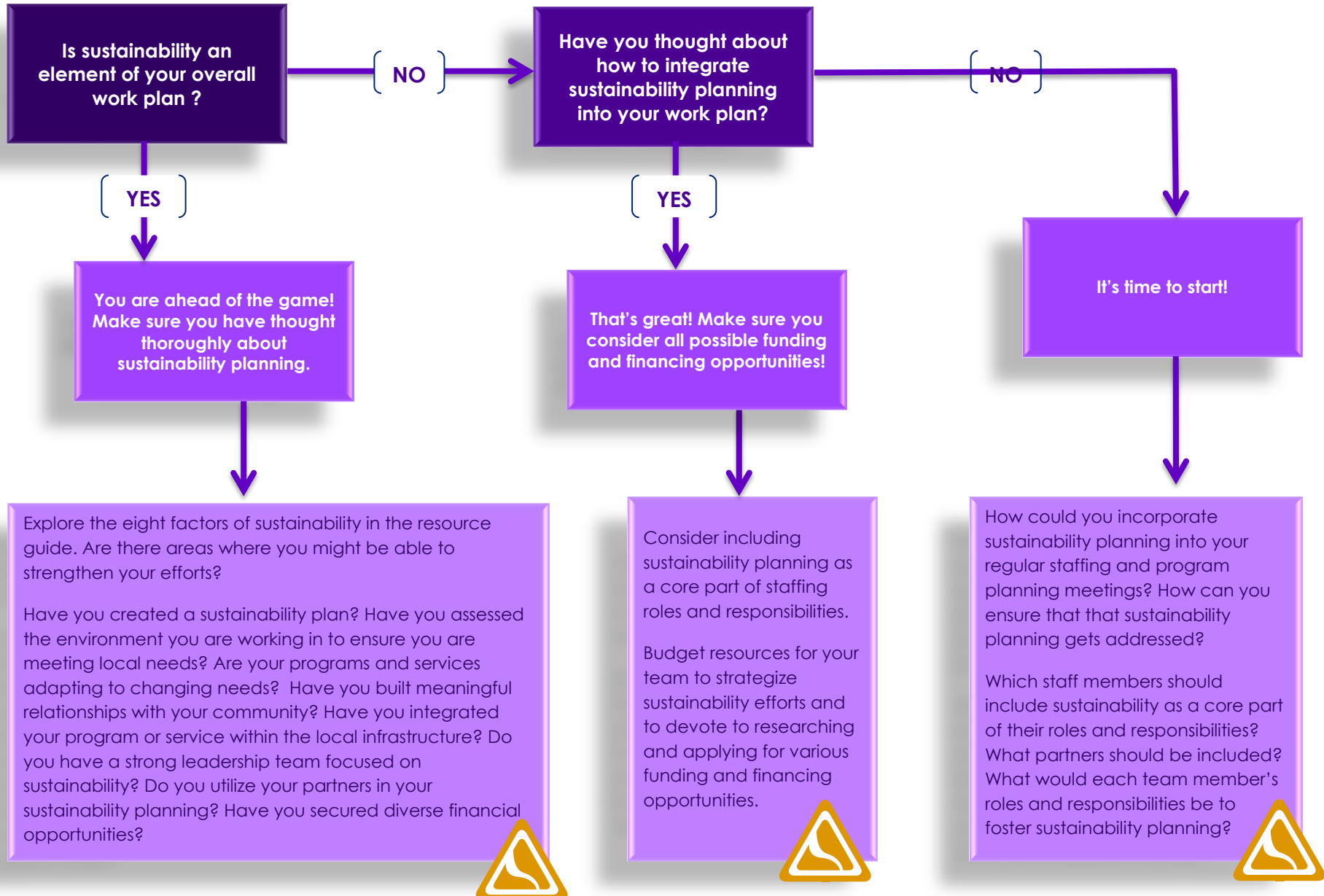
Instructions: Using the logic model below, work with your partners to develop a vision for your program or service, identifying the key components to your sustainability plan.¹⁹



¹⁹ **Outputs** are the direct and measurable products of a program or service. These can be expressed in terms of units (hours, number of people or completed actions). Outputs refer to the activities you will conduct and the people you hope to reach. More than one output may be necessary to produce a single final outcome. **Outcomes** are results or impacts of these activities or services, often expressed in terms of an increase in understanding, and improvements in desired behaviors or attitudes of participants. Outcomes refer to short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals of your program. A single outcome is often the result of multiple outputs. Adapted from the "Outcomes vs. Outputs" sections of Innovation Network's *Logic Model Workbook*. Retrieved from <http://www.innonet.org/>.

FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY | ACTIVITY 2: INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES INTO YOUR DAILY PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Instructions: Follow the path to help you figure out how you can incorporate sustainability planning into your daily program operations.



FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY | ACTIVITY 3: DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Instructions: Use the template on the following pages to build your sustainability plan. You may wish to complete other activities throughout the Resource Guide and use information from these activities to address some of the components. [Figure III-3](#) provides an example of components to include in your sustainability plan. A short list of additional resources and templates to consider in your sustainability planning is available on [page 25](#).

Goal															
Objective	Activities	Timeline												Measures of success	Person(s) responsible / Resources needed
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	1														
	2														
	3														
	4														
	5														

Goal															
Objective	Activities	Timeline												Measures of success	Person(s) responsible / Resources needed
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	1														
	2														
	3														
	4														
	5														

FACTOR 1: CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY | ACTIVITY 3: DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (CONTINUED)

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

A number of additional templates are available. You may want to explore some of the resources below and determine if these additional resources may help supplement the information in this guide. This is just a small sample of additional resources available. You may have your own tools or know of others; please feel free to use them to supplement this guide as you see fit.

For additional guidance on developing a sustainability plan and sustainability plan samples, consider reviewing the following resources:

- **The Compassion Capital Fund and Strengthening Communities Fund Tools: Creating Your Sustainability Plan**, a resource by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services. Available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/creating-your-sustainability-plan#Resource Development>.
- **Toolkit for Program Sustainability, Capacity Building, and Volunteer Recruitment/Management**, a resource by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Available at: https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/filemanager/download/online/sustainability_toolkit.pdf.
- **Sustaining Grassroots Community-Based Programs: A Toolkit for Community- and Faith-Based Service Providers**, a resource by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration. Available at: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Sustaining-Grassroots-Community-Based-Programs/SMA09-4340>.
- **A Sustainability Planning Guide for Health yCommunities**, a resource by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adult and Community Health. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf.
- **The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook**, a resource from the After School Alliance. Available at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>.
- **The Sustainability Planning Workbook**, a resource by the Finance Project. Available at: <http://www.financeproject.org/special/engage/workbook.cfm>.

For additional sustainability plan templates, you may want to consider the following resources:

- **Toolkit for Program Sustainability, Capacity Building, and Volunteer Recruitment/Management**, a resource by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Available at: https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/filemanager/download/online/sustainability_toolkit.pdf.
- **Sustaining Grassroots Community-Based Programs: A Toolkit for Community- and Faith-Based Service Providers**, a resource by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration. Available at: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Sustaining-Grassroots-Community-Based-Programs/SMA09-4340>.
- **A Sustainability Planning Guide for Health yCommunities**, a resource by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adult and Community Health. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf.
- **The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook**, a resource from the After School Alliance. Available at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>.

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT

In this section, grantees will assess the organizational, community, financial, and political environment in which their programs or services operate. Doing this, not only as a part of their sustainability planning, but also in their regular course of business, can help grantees understand:

- What community needs their programs or services address;
- Where their services or programs fit into the local network of service delivery systems; and
- How their work adds value to external partner efforts.



Performing these environmental assessments can occur at any time--whether a grantee is at the final stages of federal funding or at the beginning. Assessing where grantees stand in the community can also include ongoing reviews of internal, partnership, and financial capacities, as well as a review of the political environment and how it affects services or programs.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this section, grantees will assess the organizational, community, financial, and political environment in which they operate. Specifically, grantees will learn to:

- Embed environmental assessments into their daily operations;
- Identify areas of focus for assessing their environment; and
- Determine how to use the information gathered to move towards achieving sustainability.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Conducting environmental assessments at various program stages and embedding those exercises into regular operations creates a foundation upon which grantees can develop a strong, effective and realistic sustainability plan. Whether this becomes a regular part of grantees' internal meeting agendas or a separate working group or retreat focused exclusively on assessing the environment, this exercise will help grantees better understand how their services and programs fall within the community's environment of needs.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Embed continuous assessments throughout the life of the program or service

Identify focus areas for conducting an environmental assessment

Use the information gathered

ASSESSING THE ENVIRONMENT RESULTS IN SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Analyzing a school-based prevention program, a 2006 study noted that the program had difficulty in its first year moving from implementation to stabilization in five target schools. The researchers recommended that the project assess community readiness for the program by considering key stakeholder perspectives, which included parents, teachers, and principals. A comprehensive community readiness assessment, the study concluded, would have helped lay the foundation for a viable sustainability plan.

Fagen, M.C. & Flay, B.R. (2006). *Sustaining a school-based prevention program: Results from the Aban Aya sustainability project. Health Education & Behavior*, 36(1), 9-23.

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

Each grantee will assess how it fits into its community environment differently. The approach the grantee chooses to take may relate to its existing resources, staff availability, and understanding of what their program's or service's current and future sustainability needs will be. When assessing the environment, consider the action steps discussed below. These action steps are meant to spark thinking and grantees can use and/or adapt the questions and worksheets included to create a process that is appropriate for their capacity and needs.

EMBED CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENTS THROUGHOUT THE LIFE OF THE PROGRAM OR SERVICE

How grantees choose to incorporate environmental assessments into their regular practice depends on their interests, resources, and sustainability plans. For some, this may mean including these discussions at regularly scheduled staff, leadership, or board meetings. For others, this may be a part of an annual retreat or an early step of a systematic sustainability planning process. In other cases, grantees may choose to identify appropriate staff members to participate in *ad hoc* workgroups, which focus their time-limited efforts on conducting an environmental assessment. Regardless of the approach each grantee chooses, they shouldn't look at this effort as a one-time occurrence. As the financial and political environments of communities change, so do their demographics and service delivery needs. Grantees can regularly consider how they continue to fit into the larger picture and whether their programs and services remain relevant, useful, and supported.

IDENTIFY FOCUS AREAS FOR CONDUCTING AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Conducting environmental assessments of program's and service's greatest areas of concern helps grantees understand the necessary ingredients for creating a sustainability plan that fully acknowledges and addresses the current community, financial, and political environments in which they operate. When thinking about which areas an environmental scan should focus on, recommended questions to answer include:

- What are the program's or service's current strengths and how do these relate to the environments in which they function?
- What are the current barriers or challenges and how do these relate to the environments in which the programs or services function?
- What may be the program's or service's future strengths?
- What may be the program's or service's future challenges?

Grantees may conduct a formal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis. There are a number of resources available to assist SWOT efforts,

including resources from the [University of Kansas Community Toolbox](#)²⁰ and the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start](#)²¹, among many others.

By assessing strengths and weaknesses within the context of the community in which the program or service functions, grantees will begin to be able to pinpoint those areas where a scan of the current environment may be beneficial. At a minimum, grantees should consider conducting a scan of the following environments:

- Organizational;
- Their community;
- Financial; and
- Political.

In considering whether these or other topical areas should be the focus of ongoing assessment, always be cognizant of the purpose, namely, to identify existing relationships and structures that can support the program's or service's short- and long-term sustainability capacities and needs. When assessing these environments, consider:

Organizational environment. When grantees assess the organization within which their services or programs are provided, they may think about:

- Does their larger organization share their program's or service's vision or goals?
- Does the leadership of their larger organization understand and support their programs or services?
- Are their programs or services a 'core' function of their larger organization?
- Are their programs or services a part of their larger organization's strategic plan?
- How does their program or service coordinate with other divisions or units within their organization?

Community environment. When grantees look at their community's needs, they may consider the services or programs they offer in relationship to their clients' and



²⁰ University of Kansas. (2013). SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. In the Community toolbox (Section 14). Retrieved from <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main>.

²¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. (2013). SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Retrieved from <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/planning/planning/2SWOTAnalysisS.htm>.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT

outside organization's needs and services. They may consider:

- The community's needs with respect to adolescent health, teen/adolescent pregnancy, expectant and parenting teen resources, programs and services;
- The urgency of those needs;
- The evidence or data used to assess the community's needs;
- The services, supports, or resources they offer to support these needs;
- The evidence or data they have to support their approach to meeting community needs;
- Whether other community organizations offer similar services; and
- What makes their programs or services unique.

When grantees assess their role in the community, they may also want to look at their external partnerships. See [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 7: Create Strategic Partnerships](#) for more information about identifying and using partners to support sustainability efforts.

Financial environment. When grantees examine their current financial environment, they may:

- Identify current funding streams and determine the breadth of their funding sources;
- Identify areas where current funding may change, including funding that may be lost, cut, or increased soon or in the future; and
- Identify and assess the strength of current relationships with:
 - National, state and local government funders;
 - National, state and local foundations that have funding priority areas in adolescent health and/or expectant and parenting teens;
 - External partner organizations that may be appropriate with which to seek out joint funding opportunities;
 - Internal and external program champions who can help identify and capture future funding opportunities; and
 - Corporate or other stakeholders who may be able to offer funding, staffing or other in-kind supports.

Political environment. When grantees look at the political environment in which they operate, they may consider:

- How the current political environment affects their program's or service's financial health;
- How the current political environment affects their capacity to deliver services or programs;

- Whether there are political changes on the horizon that may impact their financial stability or service/program delivery system; and
- Whether they have or need individual or organizational allies in national, state, or local political spheres and the extent to which they need these relationships to support program or service goals.

USE THE INFORMATION GATHERED

Once grantees have completed their environmental assessment, they should decide how they want to use the information gathered in their larger sustainability planning efforts. In some instances, grantees may write up short informal reports that can be reviewed and commented on by their leadership or board members. In others, information gathered may become embedded into program or service implementation designs, marketing, outreach, and funding capture efforts. Whether grantees conduct formal or informal environmental assessments, they may use the information gathered to help:

- Analyze the interrelationships between their programs and services, their partners, and the financial and political environments;
- Explore how these relationships may positively or negatively affect one another; and
- Identify recommended areas of focus for sustainability planning.

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions about the organizational, community, financial, and political environments in which programs or services operate. The activities are meant to allow grantees to think broadly and creatively.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Assessing your Organization](#)

[Activity 2: Assessing Community Needs and Relationships](#)

[Activity 3: Assessing your Program's or Service's Current Funding, Financing, and In-kind Resources](#)

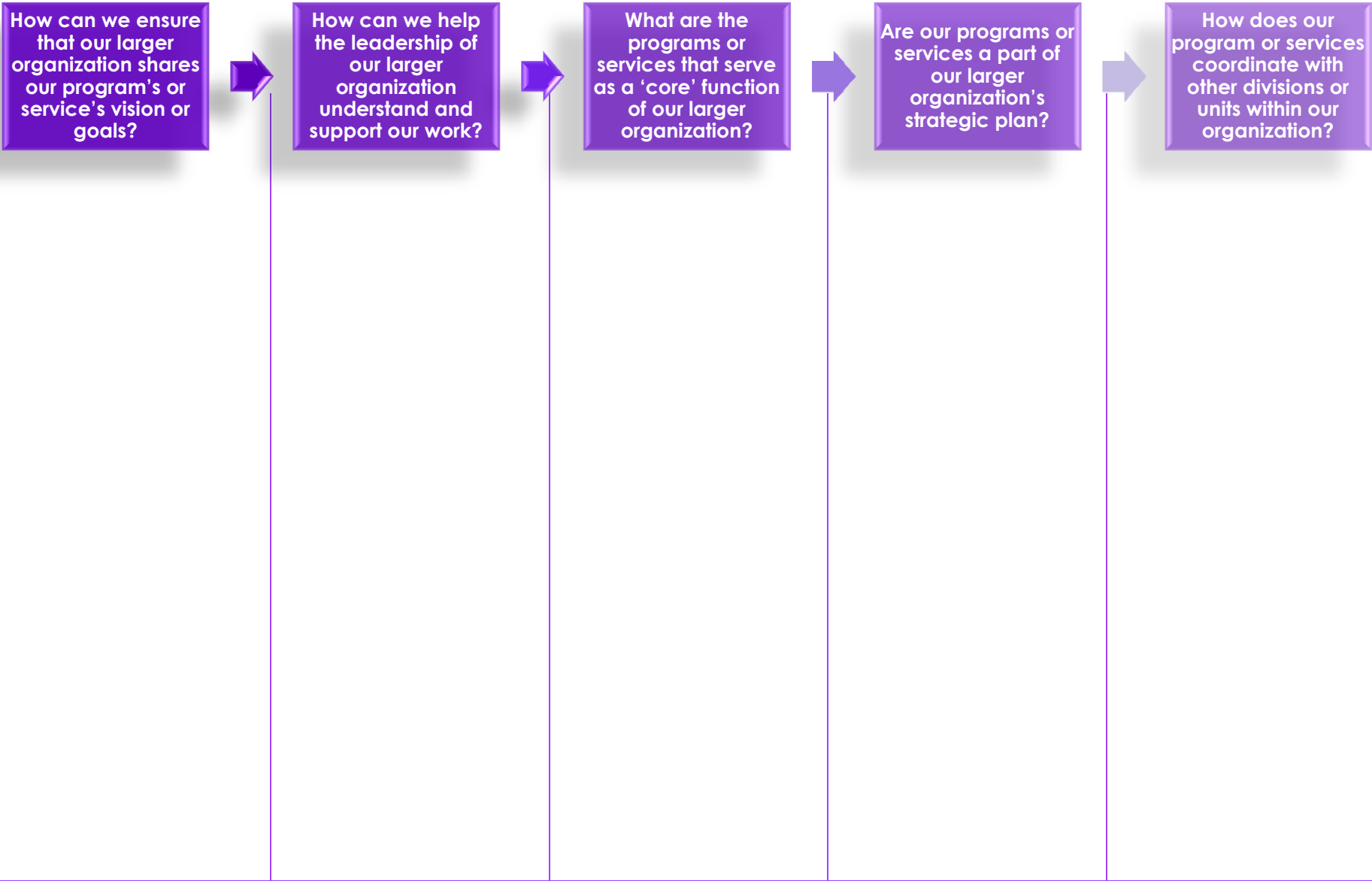
[Activity 4: Understanding the Political Environment](#)

Answer the following question before you start the activities on the following pages.

What are your goals and objectives in assessing your environment?

FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT | ACTIVITY 1: ASSESSING YOUR ORGANIZATION

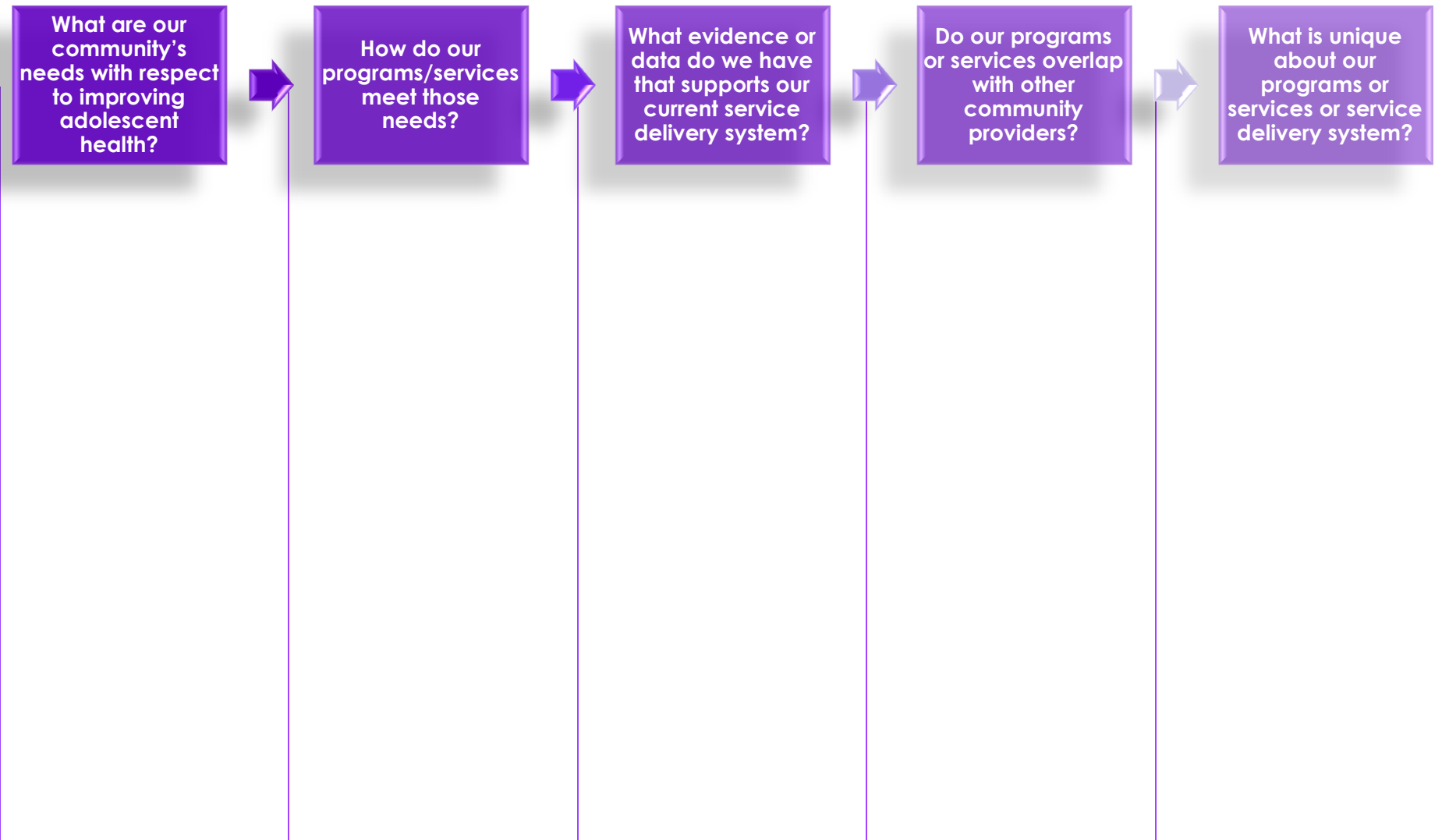
Instructions: Use the spaces provided to begin exploring your organizational environment.



FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT | ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Instructions: Use the space provided to begin exploring your community's needs and the role your program or services play in meeting those needs.

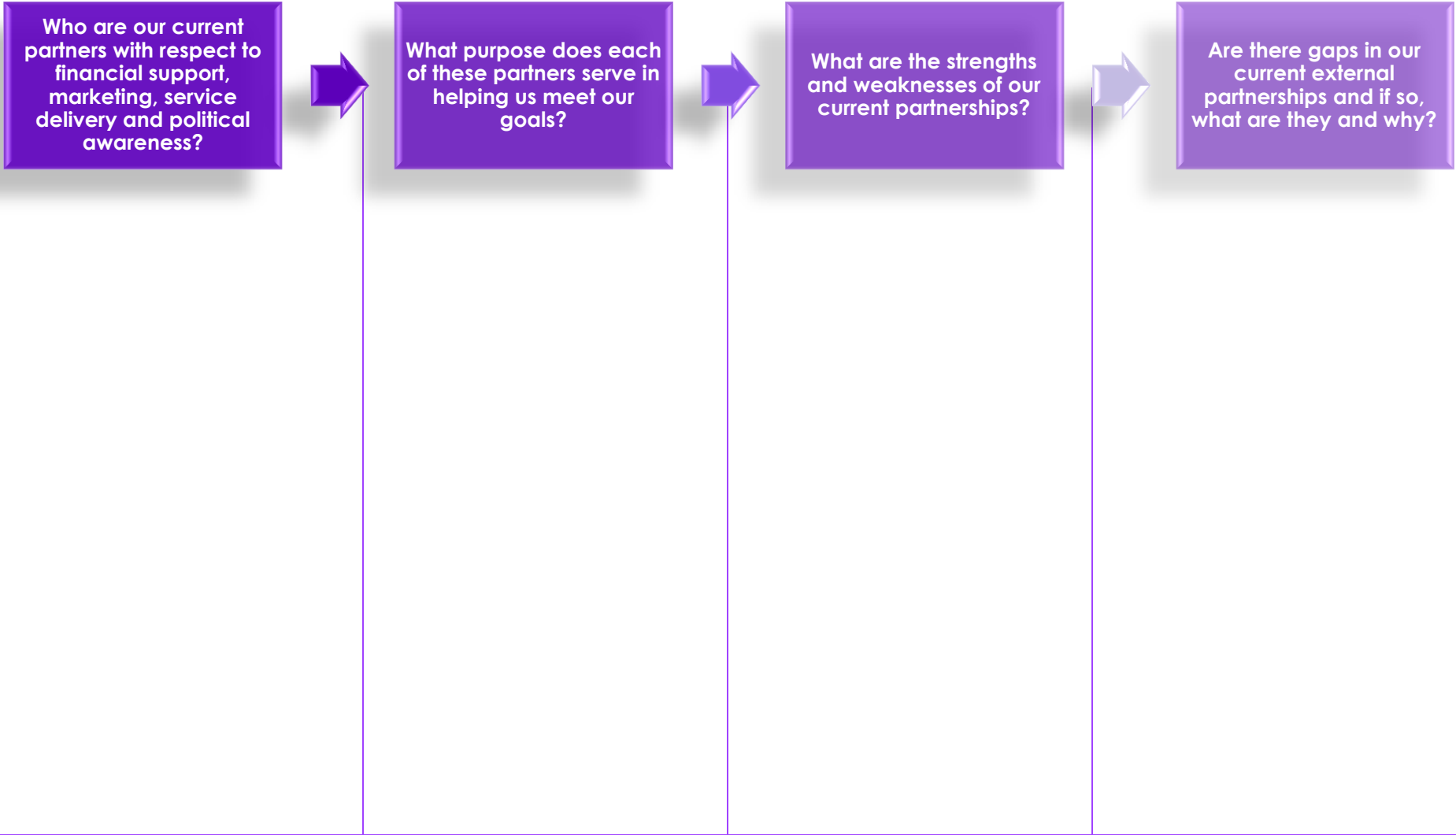
COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS



FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT | ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RELATIONSHIPS (CONTINUED)

Instructions: Use the space provided to assess the level and quality of your program’s current relationships.

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS



FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT | ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RELATIONSHIPS (CONTINUED)

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The purpose of this discussion is for you to identify the community's needs and assess how or whether your services or programs fulfill those needs. In coordinating that discussion, consider:

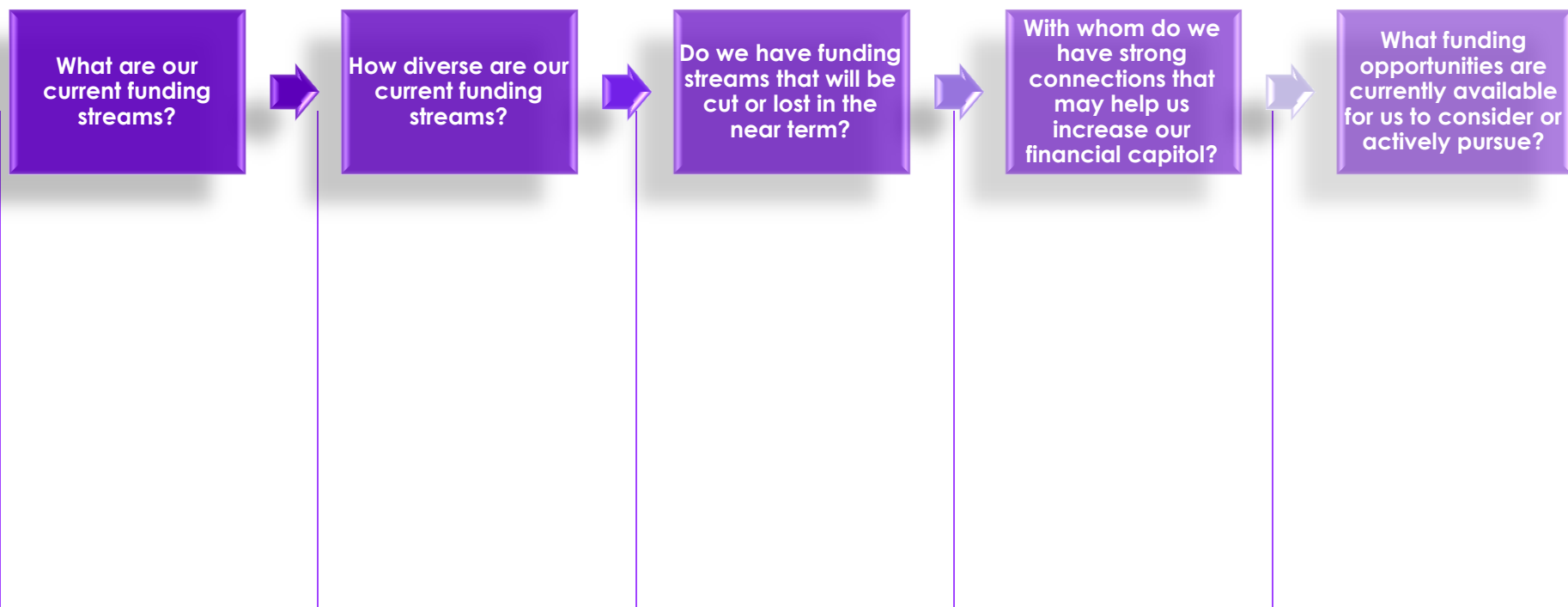
- What do other similar programs or services offer that you do not;
- Your program and service strengths and weaknesses;
- Gaps in service delivery to the target populations in your community; and
- Changes in community demographics or needs that may affect what services or programs you offer and to whom.

You may also want to identify external partners to support and promote your goals. You may want to think critically about current partnerships, what programs or individuals are missing and why. In making this assessment, consider how different relevant stakeholders interact with each other and respond to your services and how these sometimes delicate relationships add to or deter from your overall mission. In conducting this assessment, you may want to identify key stakeholders in the community who are touched by or relate to the services you offer and assess whether you have external partners within each of those categories. You may ask:

- What programs or individuals do we work with on a regular basis?
- What is our relationship like with each of those stakeholders?
- How can that relationship be improved or altered to support program goals?

FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT | ACTIVITY 3: ASSESSING YOUR PROGRAM'S OR SERVICE'S CURRENT FUNDING, FINANCING, AND IN-KIND RESOURCES

Instructions: Use the space provided to begin thinking about your program or service's current financial state and the financial environment in which you are working. You may want to review the box below for additional considerations. Remember that in-kind supports and resources are financial assets!



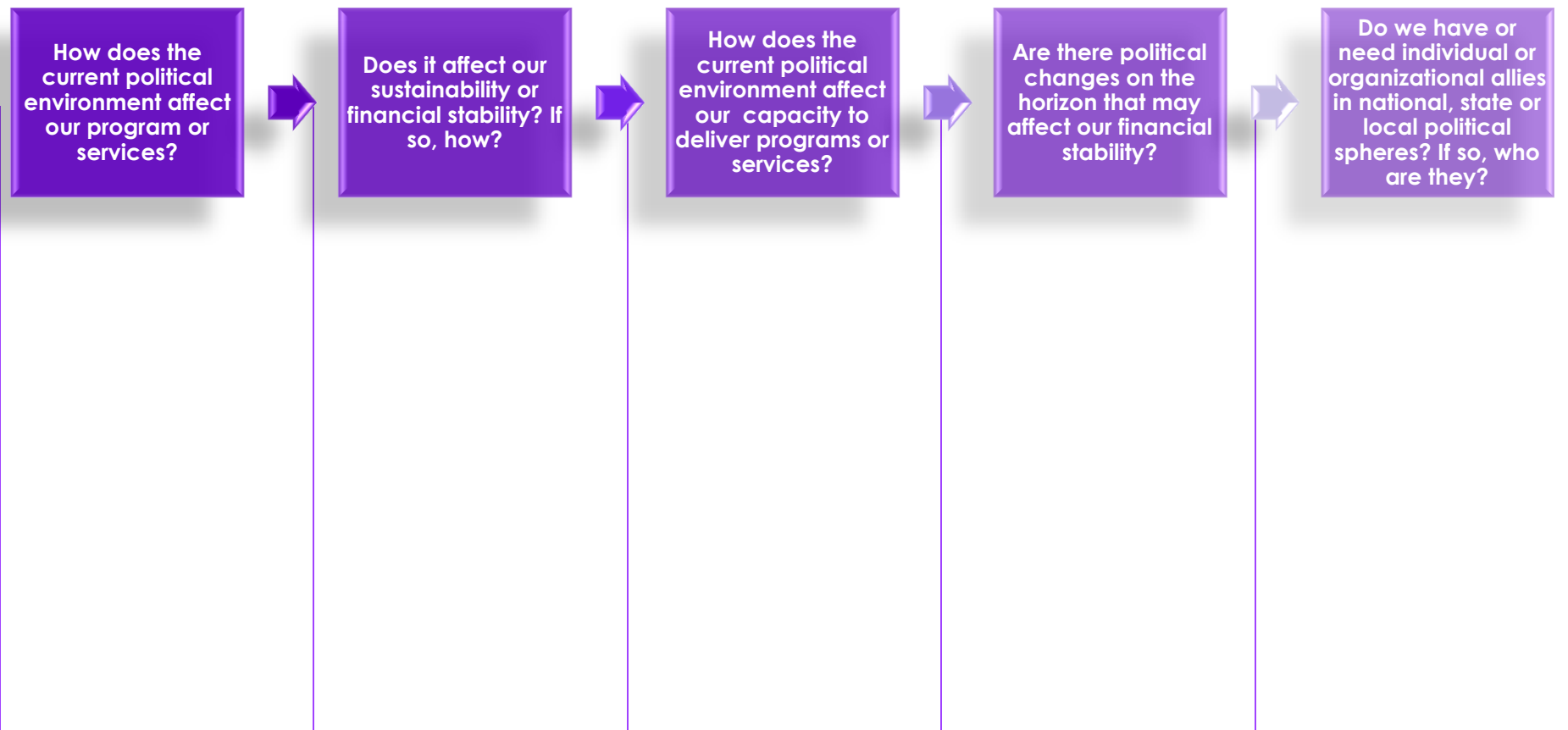
FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The purpose of this discussion is for you to identify your current funding levels, how those may change in the near future, and what relationships you hold to that may help you financially sustain. When thinking about current financial relationships, consider your supports from:

- National, state and local government funders;
- National, state and local private foundations that have funding priority areas in adolescent health, expectant and parenting teens;
- External partner organizations that you may work with on joint funding opportunities;
- Internal and external program champions who have helped you identify and capture funding opportunities;
- Corporate or other stakeholders who have provided funding, staffing, or other in-kind supports; and
- Social impact investment and entrepreneurial efforts undertaken.

FACTOR 2: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT | ACTIVITY 4: UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Instructions: Use the space provided to begin thinking about the political environment in which you are working and the impact it may have your programs or services.



FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The purpose of this discussion is for you to assess the current political environment and how it affects your overall viability and stature in the community. Consider:

- How current political ties support program or service goals.
- How national, state or local political ties could help sustain the program or services both in the short and long-term.
- What, if any, negatives would be associated with having political ties that support our work and our mission?

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you might have had in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 3: BE ADAPTABLE

Achieving and maintaining sustainability is an ongoing process. It requires regular assessment of changes and monitoring of programs and services to ensure they



remain relevant and appropriately respond to changing needs.²²

Grantees can readily embrace change and create environments in which new interventions, programs, and services can thrive.²³

Regularly explore opportunities to implement innovative

and/or evidence-based or -informed practices. Innovation can include incorporating new aspects of a program or service, such as a school-based prevention program or policy change that targets substance abuse or violence, or a new infrastructure element that provides support for current programs or strategies, such as an evaluation system, training curriculum, or administrative policy.²⁴

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This section focuses on the importance of adapting to changing environments and incorporating practices that have proven to be effective. Specifically, grantees will learn to:

- Match programs and services to community needs, and uphold the fidelity or best practice of the model being implemented; and
- Identify and incorporate new, innovative and successful practices into current programs and services.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A grantee's ability to adapt their services and incorporate new or successful practices will play a major role in determining the longevity of their work. The environment in which a grantee is providing services is constantly changing, and it is important to be able to adjust programs and services to meet changing needs.

"Sustainability is a change process... [and] requires ongoing analysis of the changing conditions in which you work in order to keep your work relevant.

Adaptability must be part of prevention... [and] be receptive to change to ensure the sustainability process.

Innovations must be the focus of sustainability... [including] a variety of new aspects such as an innovative program or strategy or a new infrastructure element that... supports... the program or strategy."

Johnson, K., Fisher, D., Wandersman, A., & David Collins (2009). A Sustainability Toolkit for Prevention: Using Getting to Outcomes.

²² Johnson, K., Fisher, D., Wandersman, A., & David Collins (2009). A Sustainability Toolkit for Prevention: Using Getting to Outcomes. Available online at www.ncspfsig.org/Project_Docs/Toolkit%201-15-cjb.pdf.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

How each grantee adapts its services to the changing environment will differ, depending largely on changing community needs. Grantees can regularly examine community needs and adapt their services where appropriate. The action steps are meant to spark grantees' thinking and they can use and/or adapt the questions and worksheets below to create a process that is appropriate for their capacity and needs.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Match services offered to community needs and uphold the fidelity or best practice of the model being used

Create opportunities for innovation and utilization of successful practices

**MATCH SERVICES OFFERED TO COMMUNITY NEEDS
AND UPHOLD THE FIDELITY OR BEST PRACTICE OF THE
MODEL BEING USED**

Adolescent health programs and services are not implemented in static, constant environments. Programs and services must be dynamic and flexible enough to adapt to new conditions and changes in needs and priorities, funding, and leadership.²⁵

Specifically, grantees can consider the following questions:

- Are there high-need areas in the community they serve, and how are they changing, economically, socially, demographically?
- How do these changes affect the programs and services grantees offer with respect to the manner, location, and type of service/program offered?
- What are grantees doing to respond to these changes? What do they need to do?
- Is there new research and/or evaluation data or information that identifies new approaches they can or should use?

In assessing the effectiveness of programs and services and determining changes that should be made, grantees must strike a delicate balance between adaptation in light of changing needs and fidelity to a proven approach. Being aware of and responsive to environmental changes can create opportunities for appropriately modifying programs and services while still remaining true to the core principles of their approach.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION AND UTILIZATION OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Addressing adolescent health needs requires innovative and comprehensive solutions. Grantees can regularly seek out innovative policies, interventions, and services that successfully address similar community needs, and explore opportunities for incorporating new elements into their service/program delivery system. Grantees can

²⁵ Gruen, R.L., Elliott, J.H., Nolan, M.L., Lawton, P.D., Parkhill, A., McLaren, C.J., & Lavis, J.N. (2008). Sustainability science: An integrated approach for health-programme planning. *The Lancet*, 372:1579-1589.

identify these new and/or promising practices by utilizing their network of partners, engaging with similar organizations in other locales, and using the [PAF Resource and Training Center](#) and the [TPP Resource Center](#). In learning about other programs and services, grantees may explore:

- Whether their design, approach, or intervention is evidence-based or evidence-informed and appropriately targeted at improving adolescent health and addressing community needs; and
- Whether their program or services have processes in place to identify and incorporate new research findings and knowledge into their work.

To improve programs and services more broadly, grantees may wish to consider adopting a process for identifying their own best practices. Doing so may also create opportunities to exchange information with similar programs, which can help to better address adolescent health needs more widely. Grantees may want to collect the following to track their own best practices:

- Participant success stories;
- Positive outcomes achieved from their programs or services;
- Administrative, programmatic, or service delivery practices that increase the likelihood of sustainability; and
- How these practices were applied in different settings, and how they were adapted accordingly.

After identifying best practices, consider sharing lessons learned, tips, and/or suggestions with other similar programs and/or the community at large.

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions about becoming more adaptable and flexible to changing needs and available resources. These activities are meant to allow you to think broadly and creatively about adapting services and better utilizing resources.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Evaluating Outcomes to Determine Need for Service Adaptation](#)

[Activity 2: Creating Opportunities to Incorporate Innovation and Promising Practices](#)

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 3: BE ADAPTABLE

Before we begin, let's explore what your goals are for this exercise. Answer the following question before you start the exercises on the following pages.

What are your goals and objectives in becoming more adaptable?

FACTOR 3: BE ADAPTABLE | ACTIVITY 1: EVALUATING OUTCOMES TO DETERMINE NEED FOR SERVICE ADAPTATION²⁶

Instructions: Using the activities from [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assessing the Environment](#), fill in the table below to see where modifications may need to be made to your program or service.

Objective	Activity	Actual outcome	Relevance to community	Modifications needed

ACTIVITY 1: EVALUATING OUTCOMES TO DETERMINE NEED FOR SERVICE ADAPTATION

FACTOR 3: BE ADAPTABLE

²⁶ Adapted from Batan, M., Butterfoss, F.D., Jaffe, A., & LaPier, T. Healthy communities program: Sustainability planning guide. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Washington, DC. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf.

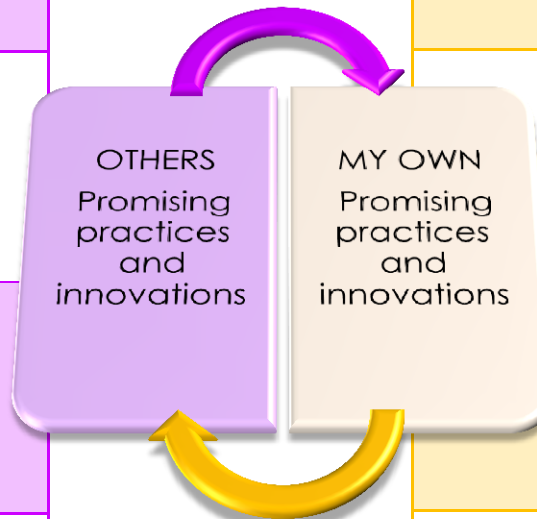
For additional guidance on using data to make decisions, see: Andrews, K. (2014). Performance management: How to use data to drive programmatic efforts. Office of Adolescent Health: Washington DC. Retrieved from http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/teen_pregnancy/training/Assessts/performancegmtslides.pdf.

FACTOR 3: BE ADAPTABLE | ACTIVITY 2: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO INCORPORATE INNOVATION AND PROMISING PRACTICES

Instructions: Using your own knowledge or doing some outside research, use the activity below to capture promising practices and innovations from the field as well as contributions your own program or service make in the field. Write down **who** is contributing **what** promising practice or innovation and **how** it might be implemented in your work. Additionally, write down **what** you might be doing and any tips you might have for **how** it could be implemented elsewhere.

Who What How

What How



ACTIVITY 1: EVALUATING OUTCOMES TO DETERMINE NEED FOR SERVICE ADAPTATION

FACTOR 3: BE ADAPTABLE

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 4: SECURE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

To obtain community support and buy-in, a grantee should first understand the community's needs in relation to the services and programs it offers. Tailoring outreach so that it is unique to the community's demographics and utilizes



community resources will increase the likelihood that each program or service will secure community support.

Securing community support and buy-in can take many forms-- from creating a coalition of similarly situated service providers, to building relationships with individual

relevant stakeholders. This may also include identifying and promoting program and client success stories that will cement the grantee's work into the local infrastructure, (discussed in [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 5: Integrate Programs and Services into Local Infrastructures](#)), and increase client outreach and recruitment.

Establishing a broad base of supporters through creative and compelling messages and outreach strategies also helps facilitate community understanding and support of the grantee's approach and increases overall awareness about the program's or service's successes. Having a clear message and outreach strategy will allow grantees to use their internal leadership team, external champions, and strategic partners to voice their successes in the community and share how they are critical to addressing the community's needs.

To support adolescent health programs, the Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) developed the [Collaboration Toolkit](#), an in-depth resource on collaboration, outreach, and strategic messaging. This toolkit serves as the foundation for this section and can be accessed online.²⁷

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this section, grantees will learn the

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Formulate a communication approach and message

Promote the program and its services

Use program leaders, strategic partners, and community champions to share your message

²⁷ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. The Collaboration Toolkit. Available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/learning/coll-tk/index.html>.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

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importance of gaining community support for their missions and services. Specifically, they will be able to:

- Develop an outreach strategy and message;
- Market their program and services to successfully motivate community engagement; and
- Identify ways in which they can use their staff and community partners to promote program/service successes.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A key aspect of sustainability planning is to secure support from the community. Community support may come from a range of diverse entities and individuals, from both within and outside a grantee's organization. A diverse pool of champions, from local businesses to former program participants, to other community-based organizations, can help spread the word about the grantee's program or service to a range of audiences, including potential new supporters and funders. Crafting a clear, strong, and easy-to-replicate message can help supporters articulate it and share the program's or service's stories of success.

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

Each grantee's message to the community and who they use to communicate that message will vary. The resources and time grantees devote to strategic communications, marketing, and outreach will also vary. When developing a communications strategy and identifying its messengers, grantees may consider the action steps discussed below and alter them as needed to fit their capacity and needs. These action steps are meant to help grantees think creatively about how they communicate their successes to garner community support and encourage them to incorporate outreach discussions into their sustainability planning.

FORMULATE A COMMUNICATION APPROACH AND MESSAGE

Program outreach occurs any time a staff member or supporter speaks about the program or services a grantee offers. Grantees can help ensure the information shared about their work is accurate, consistent, and supports their sustainability efforts, if they take time to identify and train their messengers on an integrated and ongoing communications strategy. As discussed in more detail in the [Collaboration Toolkit](#), community outreach is not always about having a fancy brochure or annual report.²⁸ Instead, it's about being able to clearly articulate the program's or service's mission, goals, and successes to distinct target audiences in ways that connect the audience to the program's or service's values and approach, while also using a variety of marketing activities to share a story (see [Program Marketing is Social Marketing](#) on page 64 for a list of key elements needed for effective marketing, and Figure III-4 for

²⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. The Collaboration Toolkit. Available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/learning/coll-tk/index.html>.

sample of marketing activities).²⁹ Done well, these communications can create new external collaborators, increase awareness and support for the program's or service's mission.

FIGURE III-4: THE DELIVERY: POSSIBLE PROGRAM MARKETING ACTIVITIES³⁰

Information and referral Information and referral hotline Counseling hotline Clearinghouse	Community mobilization Endorsements, testimonials, involvement by opinion leaders Coalition building
Small group interventions Peer or non peer led Community, school, and work settings Single sessions or multiple sessions over a number of weeks Lectures Panel discussions Testimonials from peers/survivors Video presentations Live theater Events (such as health fairs)	Mass media and "email" media Paid advertising in various media outlets PSAs in various media outlets Media relations Point materials such as pamphlets, instruction sheets, posters
One on one interventions Peer or non peer led Street outreach Crowd or clique based research Event based outreach Counseling and referral Other one on one interventions offered in community centers or other settings	Electronic media Web 2.0 Blogs Social media Web sites Cell phones PSAs Social networks

When reaching out to the community, grantees may consider:³¹

The purpose. What do they hope to accomplish through their communications strategy? If there are multiple goals, distinct approaches may be required.

The audience. Who is their audience, what are they interested in, and what are the best ways to reach them?

The message. What will be the content of the message? What emotion or experience from the audience do they hope to evoke (i.e., educational, persuasive, inspirational)?

²⁹ For an example of how a program identifies your key message, targets your key audiences, and then tailors the message to this audience, see Rodriguez, M. & Conklin, K. (2012) Program marketing from A to generation Z: Making the sale to all your stakeholders. Available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/assets/atozslides.pdf>.

³⁰ Rodriguez, M. & Conklin, K. (2012) Program marketing from A to generation Z: Making the sale to all your stakeholders. Available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/assets/atozslides.pdf>

³¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. The Collaboration Toolkit. Available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/learning/coll-tk/index.html>.

FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE

"...Data – by itself – is not a compelling reason for action...give your audience a reason to care by focusing first on overall community benefit...The process of "framing" is structuring what you say and how you said it best to work with what is already in someone's head...Always start your message by talking about shared beliefs, benefits, or values."

Shea, G. (2012). *Telling your story: How to frame your message about adolescent health disparities and teen pregnancy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

PROGRAM MARKETING IS SOCIAL MARKETING

Elements of social marketing strategies can be used to effectively market grantees' programs or services:

Product—identify the products or services offered

Place—determine the locations where stakeholders can benefit from what is offered

Price—determine what stakeholders should give up to benefit from what is offered

Promotion—know the "sales pitches" the organization should make to various stakeholders

Partnerships—build relationships with other agencies that can increase marketing power.

Smith, W.A. & Strand, J. (2008). *Social marketing behavior: A practical resource for social change professionals*. Academy for Educational Development: Washington DC. Cited in Rodriguez, M. & Conklin, K. (2012) *Program marketing from A to generation Z: Making the sale to all your stakeholders*.

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The delivery. What medium do they use to deliver the message (e.g., written, in-person, video, phone, social media, etc.) and is that the appropriate medium for the audience?

The relevance. Is the message relevant to the community's needs and interests? Does the message and delivery change when new issues or needs arise?

PROMOTE THE PROGRAM AND ITS SERVICES

By promoting their programs and services, grantees can also increase community awareness of the issues relevant to their work and demonstrate their value to the public and to program participants. Program or service promotion can also become a regular part of their day-to-day business, whether attending a community meeting, meeting with a potential partner or revamping their website. Promotions may take many forms; ranging from a quick conversation about program or service successes with an outside organization to a large-scale, well-planned media campaign. When grantees promote their programs and services, in addition to having a clear and appropriate message or pitch, as discussed above, they may also consider:

- Using data or evaluation results to demonstrate and support their successes, where possible;
- Contacting stakeholders and other critical decision-makers who may affect their work, by phone, email, letter and in person meetings;
- Using their supporters and external champions (discussed below) to share their story;
- Maintaining a continuum of regular activities that promote their work, such as those discussed in [Figure III-4](#);
- Participating in public awareness events that offer easy opportunities for them to promote their work; and
- Joining relevant coalitions, working groups, and/or local committees that address issues relevant to their program and services and may offer opportunities for them to showcase their work, while also creating new partnerships and learning about other community programs.

USE PROGRAM LEADERS, STRATEGIC PARTNERS, AND COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS TO SHARE THE MESSAGE

Program staff, leaders, external partners and champions at all levels can bring unique skills and perspectives that can enhance a community outreach effort. [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 7: Create Strategic Partnerships](#) focuses on helping grantees identify external champions who can support their sustainability efforts. These champions can also be used to carry the program's or service's message to different sectors of the community. When considering how and when to use external champions in outreach efforts, think about:

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- Identifying the sectors that each champion represents and the messages that will best resonate with their networks;
- Determining each champion's communication strengths and tailoring the delivery of the message to their capacities; and
- Ensuring communication efforts are ongoing and change when community needs or interests change.

Community champions can participate in a range of outreach efforts to raise awareness and garner more support for grantees' programs and services, including:

- Making a phone call to a key decision makers or community leaders;
- Speaking at a conference or symposium;
- Writing a letter of support to a potential funder;
- Signing a petition;
- Participating in a rally;
- Assisting with media outreach;
- Emailing networks about program successes;
- Contributing to program newsletters or press releases;
- Supporting the program through social media, such as tweets, Facebook mentions; and
- Sharing information about the program over relevant list serves.



SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions about how you can develop a communications strategy.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Creating a Communication Strategy and Message](#)

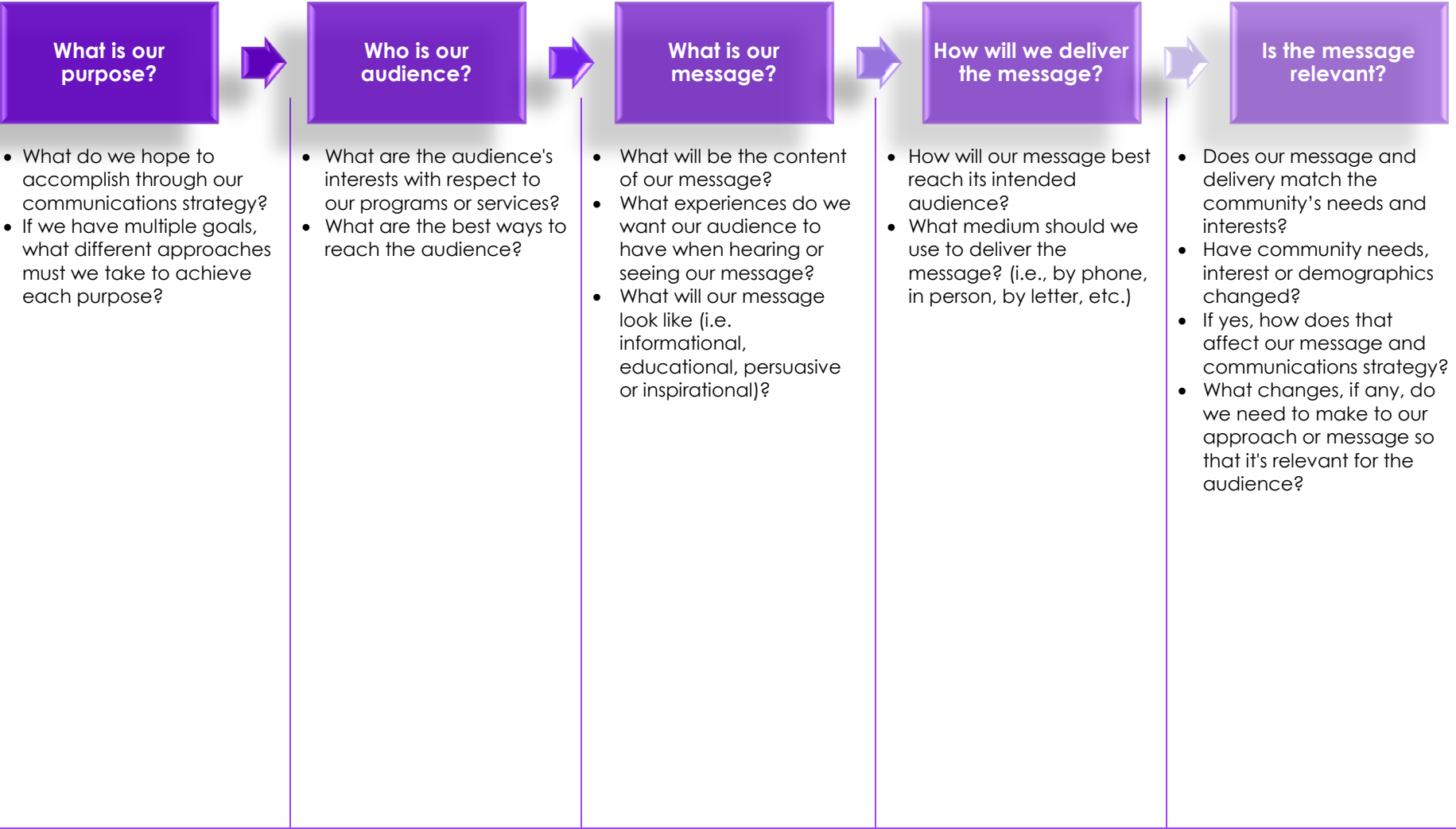
[Activity 2: Using Community Champions](#)

Before we begin, let's explore what your goals are for this exercise. Answer the following question before you start the exercises on the following pages.

What are your goals and objectives in securing community support?

FACTOR 4: SECURE COMMUNITY SUPPORT | ACTIVITY 1: CREATING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND MESSAGE

Instructions: Use the following chart to develop a communication strategy and message that will speak to the community, garner its support and ultimately help sustain your work.



FACTOR 4: SECURE COMMUNITY SUPPORT | ACTIVITY 2: USING COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Instructions: Use the following table to help you determine how and when you will use your community champions to help fulfill your outreach goals.

Organization or individual's name	What sector of the community does this community champion represent?	What are the champion's communication strengths?	What message do we want this community champion to deliver and why?	What method should we tell our champion to use when delivering the message?	To whom and when do we want the message delivered?

FACTOR 4: SECURE COMMUNITY SUPPORT | ACTIVITY 2: USING COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS (CONTINUED)

Instructions: Use the following table to help you determine how and when you will use your community champions to help fulfill your outreach goals.

Organization or individual's name	What sector of the community does this community champion represent	What are the champion's communication strengths	What message do we want this community champion to delivery and why?	What method should we tell our champion to use when delivering the message?	To whom and when do we want the message delivered?

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 5: INTEGRATE PROGRAM SERVICES INTO LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURES

Grantees can assess the internal policies and structures through which their services or programs are delivered to look for ways to streamline efforts. By streamlining policies, procedures, and services, grantees can increase their efficiency, freeing up resources



for program or service needs.

More efficient organizations are also more likely to serve as a model to be adopted and replicated by other organizations and to endure in the long-term.³²

Grantees can try to integrate their successful practices and services within the larger community's service delivery system when possible, by encouraging

community members to use their services and providing opportunities for other community organizations, such as schools or clinics, to incorporate their curriculum or services into their own efforts. Once programs and services are fully integrated into larger service delivery efforts, they become routine and, as such, are more likely to endure.³³

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Streamlining programs or services and integrating them into the local community infrastructure will help grantees sustain their work. In this section, grantees will:

- Learn to build more efficient programs and services to decrease costs and promote replicability within the community; and
- Explore opportunities to integrate services into the community infrastructure.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Looking critically at their service delivery may help grantees identify areas where their programs and practices can be restructured and simplified. Doing so may position them to provide programs and services more effectively and efficiently. Exploring

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Streamline service delivery, policies, and practices

Integrate programs, services, and practices into the broader community fabric

³² Wolff, T. (2010). Tools for Sustainability. *Global Journal for Community Psychology Practice*, 1(1), 40-57. <http://www.gjcpp.org/pdfs/2009-0017-Final%20Version-011410.pdf>

³³ Johnson, K., Fisher, D., Wandersman, A., & Collins, D. (2009). A Sustainability Toolkit for Prevention: Using Getting to Outcomes. Available online at: www.ncspfsig.org/Project_Docs/Toolkit%201-15-09cjb.pdf.

opportunities to integrate program and services into the community fabric can help grantees garner support from the community and allow them to capitalize on the strengths of community partners.

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

Each grantee is likely to identify unique ways to deliver their programs and services more effectively. Similarly, each grantee will work with their own community differently to explore opportunities to integrate their services or programs into the larger health education and health promotion infrastructure. Their approach will largely depend on the relationships they have developed and the roles and responsibilities of their respective partners.

STREAMLINE SERVICE DELIVERY, PROGRAMS, AND PRACTICES

For programs and services to function efficiently and effectively, grantees must have the structures and capacity necessary to implement them.³⁴ It is important for grantees to assess their programs and procedures, and ensure that they capture their core principles and goals.³⁵ If they do not, grantees may strengthen or revise their current policies and procedures or develop new ones that will promote the longevity of their programs or services. Formalizing policies has a number of positive effects, including creating a structure designed to sustain a grantee's work during staff turnover, and solidifying the importance of its programs or services.³⁶

To streamline programs or services, grantees may assess their internal processes and consider exploring other similar-situated organizations to identify successful practices.

In assessing internal processes, grantees may consider the following questions:

- Do their programs or services align with their core principles, values, and mission?
- Does their budget align with their core principles, values, and mission?
- Are their core principles, values, and mission captured in their policies and procedures?
- Have they identified their staff's strengths and given them responsibilities that align with their capacities?
- How can they leverage those skills to build the capacity of other staff and community partners?

³⁴ Johnson K, Hays C, Center H, & Daley C. (2004). Building capacity and sustainable prevention innovations: A sustainability planning model. *Evaluation and Planning*, 27:135-149.

³⁵ Benz J, Infante A, Oppenheimer C, Scherer H, & Tilson W. (2010). Developing a Conceptual Framework to Assess the Sustainability of Community Coalitions Post-Federal Funding. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

³⁶ Johnson, K., Fisher, D, Wandersman, A., & David Collins (2009). A Sustainability Toolkit for Prevention: Using Getting to Outcomes. Available online at: www.ncspfsig.org/Project_Docs/Toolkit%201-15-09cjb.pdf.

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FACTOR 5: INTEGRATE PROGRAM SERVICES INTO LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURES

- What do they need to ensure that their staff has the capacity to implement their programs or services efficiently?

In looking to external sources to identify promising solutions for streamlining their program or service delivery, grantees may consider the following questions:

- How do their policies and procedures promote their core principles, values, and mission and address community needs?
- How do their programs or services align with their outlined policies and procedures?
- How have they built staff capacity to implement their programs or services, utilizing their outlined policies and procedures?

INTEGRATE PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES INTO THE BROADER COMMUNITY FABRIC

Successful programs or services are ones that not only can adapt to changing environments, but become so integrated into the community infrastructure that they provide long-term benefits to all relevant stakeholders – from partners to program participants.³⁷ Integrating efforts into the community requires linkages with other programs and services addressing a grantee's target populations' needs. The more successful grantees are at creating linkages in the community, the greater their chances for integrating their programs and services and facilitating long-term sustainability.³⁸ To explore whether grantees' programs or services have been integrated into the community composition, they may consider:

- How are their programs or services being utilized within their community?
- What opportunities are available to better infuse their programs or services into established organizations, such as school systems, community health promotion programs, etc.?
- What key linkages are needed to increase the relevance of their programs or services to the communities they serve?
- How can they leverage resources, such as supplies, materials, and equipment, from larger community efforts to continue implementing their program or services?

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used to coordinate discussions about streamlining practices and integrating them into the community infrastructure. The activities are meant to allow you to think broadly and creatively about accomplishing this.

³⁷ Johnson, K., Fisher, D., Wandersman, A., & David Collins (2009). A Sustainability Toolkit for Prevention: Using Getting to Outcomes. Available online at www.ncspfsig.org/Project_Docs/Toolkit%201-15-09cjb.pdf.

³⁸ Ibid.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN
FACTOR 5: INTEGRATE PROGRAM SERVICES INTO LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURES

The activity is:

[Activity 1: Assessing the Integration of Program Services](#)

Before we begin, let's explore what your goals are for this exercise. Answer the following question before you start the activities on the following pages.

What are your goals and objectives for integrating program services into community infrastructures?

FACTOR 5: INTEGRATE PROGRAM SERVICES INTO LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURES | ACTIVITY 1: ASSESSING THE INTEGRATION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

Instructions: Answer the following questions to better determine how well your services or programs are integrated into the community fabric. Use your answers to discuss with your leadership team and community partners ways in which you might better integrate your work.

How are your programs or services being utilized within your community?

What opportunities are available to better infuse your programs or services into established organizations, such as school systems, community health promotion programs, etc.?

What key linkages are needed to increase the relevance of your programs or services to the communities you serve?

How can you leverage resources, such as supplies, materials, and equipment, from larger community efforts to continue implementing your program or services?

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 6: BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM

Having a strong, diverse leadership team is a foundational requirement for ensuring a program's or service's sustainability. Leaders may come from within an organization,



but external champions can also help lead an organization towards its long-term sustainability goals. Building a leadership *team*, rather than identifying a single leader, can sustain organizational successes during transition and help grantees maintain connections with the community and critical external partners. Grantees can support leadership development by

creating opportunities for staff to build upon their strengths and participate in efforts to champion the organization's mission, while also fostering peer-to-peer learning and career development opportunities.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this section, grantees will learn the importance of having a strong leadership team comprised of internal and external partners. Specifically, grantees will learn to:

- Build teams of leaders, rather than relying on an individual;
- Engage their leadership team in their sustainability efforts;
- Identify leaders and key supports from the larger community; and
- Cultivate leadership development.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Strong, diverse, and effective leadership can help sustain and grow programs or services, develop strong community ties, and secure reliable funding sources.³⁹ Weak leadership can prevent a program or service from realizing its full potential. To maintain larger community support, seek out champions, whether board members or outside partners, who promote the importance of the program's or service's work within the community. Grantees will need different types of people with varied skill sets to help lead and ultimately sustain their work, including youth and parents who benefit from their services.⁴⁰ Promoting a feeling of shared responsibility and

STRONG LEADERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In a 2008 study of six community-based social programs, researchers found that having dedicated and competent leadership was a differentiating factor between programs that sustained and those that did not. According to the study, sustained programs had leaders that "fought hard" to maintain the program and "exercised considerable initiative, ingenuity, and flexibility to keep the programs going."

Savaya, R., Spiro, S., & Elran-Barak, R. (2008). Sustainability of social programs a comparative case study analysis. American Journal of Evaluation, 29(4), 478-493.

³⁹ Marek, LI. (2011). Program Sustainability: Presentation at Pregnancy Assistance Fund Grantee Conference. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. Pittsburgh, PA. http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/ta/paf_10.11_marek.pdf.

⁴⁰ Crocker, J. (2012). Financing and sustainability strategies for teen pregnancy prevention programs: Presentation at "Expanding Our Experience and Expertise: Implementing Effective Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programs" Conference. Baltimore, MD. http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/ta/experience_expertise_crocker.pdf.

leadership among staff and supporters encourages individuals to invest their time, energy, and talents to foster the success of the grantee's programs or services.

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

Each grantee will require different leadership skill sets to achieve sustainability. The approach each chooses when assessing its leadership needs will relate to the strength of its existing leadership team, as well as staff availability, training, and support

resources. When assessing and identifying leadership teams, consider the following action steps. These action steps are meant to spark thinking about who a grantee's champions and leaders are and how they can effectively support their long-term sustainability. Grantees may use and/or adapt the questions and worksheets to create a process that meets their needs.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Identify strong internal leaders

Keep organizational leaders engaged and secure their commitment

Identify external community champions

Promote leadership development

IDENTIFY STRONG INTERNAL LEADERS

Successful leadership teams share responsibilities and roles when leading a program or service. This creates a sense of shared ownership and also allows for continuity when individuals transition out of leadership roles. When assessing the current leadership team, grantees may think about what they already have and what they need to support their sustainability efforts. Do they have one or more internal leaders who:

- Can articulate the program or service's mission, vision and goals to potential funders, external partners, civic leaders and community members?
- Can manage the day-to-day operations of the program or service, including budgets and staff resources?
- Have strong knowledge of the program's or service's work, the research and data supporting the approach, and how the work meets the community's needs?
- Stay connected to the diverse community groups and agencies the grantee wants to be a part of?
- Can identify new opportunities and help develop and modify approaches and goals as community needs change?
- Can actualize and operationalize new approaches or ideas that meet community needs?
- Can identify best practices and establish standards in relevant areas of the grantee's work to help improve outcomes?
- Can offer adequate training and support to develop and sustain the above areas?

Leadership team members do not always have to be executive-level program staff. Leadership team members can also include individuals from various professional levels within the organization.⁴¹ Diversity in culture, age, professional background, and experience provides an important mix of ideas and perspectives that can benefit the program's or service's approach and relationship with the community and its external partners and champions.⁴²

KEEP ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS ENGAGED AND SECURE THEIR COMMITMENT

Leadership of the larger organization within which the grantee's programs or services are offered should be frequently engaged to maintain their commitment and understanding of the grantee's work. This can be accomplished by regularly inviting organizational leadership to staff meetings and sharing with them promotional materials, as well as evaluation and data results. It also can be accomplished by making sure organizational leadership is aware of community events grantees participate in and spearhead, inviting them to participate and, in some instances, having them speak about the program's or service's contributions to the community. Seeking out leaderships' thoughts and guidance on particular issues or challenges is another way to keep leaders invested in the work, feel ownership over successes, and driven to overcome its challenges.

IDENTIFY EXTERNAL COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

An important component to a program's leadership team is its network of champions who are outside the organization and program. In successful collaborations, leadership roles and responsibilities are distributed among all partners to foster a spirit of shared ownership and group cohesiveness.⁴³ Cultivating these community champions can help build name recognition and support for a grantee's work in the community. It can also help improve external partnerships, reveal funding sources, and share a grantee's message and goals with key leaders, community advocates, and community and government-based service providers. Grantees may look back at the environmental assessment from [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assess the Environment](#) and determine which external partners could be a champion for their program or service and specifically consider the following questions:

⁴¹ Crocker, J. (2012). Financing and sustainability strategies for teen pregnancy prevention programs: Presentation at "Expanding Our Experience and Expertise: Implementing Effective Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programs" Conference. Baltimore, MD. http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/ta/experience_expertise_crocker.pdf.

⁴² Johnson, K., Fisher, D., Wandersman, A., & David Collins (2009). A Sustainability Toolkit for Prevention: Using Getting to Outcomes. Available online at: www.ncspfsig.org/Project_Docs/Toolkit%201-15-09cjb.pdf.

⁴³ National Center for Community Education. The road to sustainability: Sustainability workbook. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>.

WHAT DO LEADERS DO?

Leaders establish goals and develop clear and realistic plans for development, implementation, and evaluation. They also:

Clearly establish the project's vision;

Inspire others to create and achieve a shared mission;

Develop and follow a realistic project plan;

Understand the relationship between short-term activities and long-term impacts;

Exert influence in leveraging support and resources;

Plan for sustaining the project;

Identify alternative (and multiple) strategies for project survival.

Adapted from Marek, LI. (2011) and Community Health Systems Development.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 6: BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Who are the current external champions and what aspects of the program or service can they promote to the community?
- Are there areas of their programs or services that are not being adequately promoted to the community?
- Can current external relationships identify champions who can promote the grant?
- Does the program have a diverse pool of community champions (see Figure III-5)?

FIGURE III-5: COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

- Business leaders;
- Civic leaders;
- Faith-based leaders;
- Community or government-based organizations working with the same populations;
- Philanthropists; and/or
- Current or former program participants, including youth and parents

PROMOTE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Most leaders aren't born, they are made. An important aspect to building a strong leadership team is providing its individual members the training and support they need to fully realize their leadership potential and enhance the strengths and skills they already have. Helping leaders learn new skills, develop their capabilities, and grow their knowledge benefits a grantee's programs or services as a whole, but it also helps motivate leaders to sustain their participation.⁴⁴ Some grantees may not have the capacity to support in-house professional development opportunities for

leadership team members, but can still consider outside community training resources or mentorship or shadowing opportunities between staff to bolster individual's leadership skills.

Having strong external partnerships also creates opportunities for peer-to-peer learning between program leadership, external champions, and other external collaborators and partners. By conducting cross-training events between partners on different aspects of leadership

development, grantees also create opportunities to build stronger relationships with

⁴⁴ Batan M, Butterfoss FD, Jaffe A, & LaPier T. Healthy communities program: Sustainability planning guide. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Washington, DC.
http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf



outside leaders and potential program champions. When planning leadership development, grantees may think about:

- Determining what leadership skills trainings may be useful to leadership team members and whether those trainings can be offered in-house or through a community training or conference event;
- Assessing the value and organization's capacity to create mentoring relationships for leadership team members to learn from each other; and
- Identifying opportunities to build relationships with potential community champions through cross-training, peer-to-peer learning, or information sharing forums.

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions about building a leadership team. The activities are meant to allow you to think broadly and creatively about incorporating community leaders and partners into your leadership team.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Identifying Internal Leaders](#)

[Activity 2: Identifying External Champions](#)

[Activity 3: Promoting Leadership Development](#)

Before we begin, let's explore what your goals are for this exercise. Answer the following question before you start the mapping exercises on the following pages.

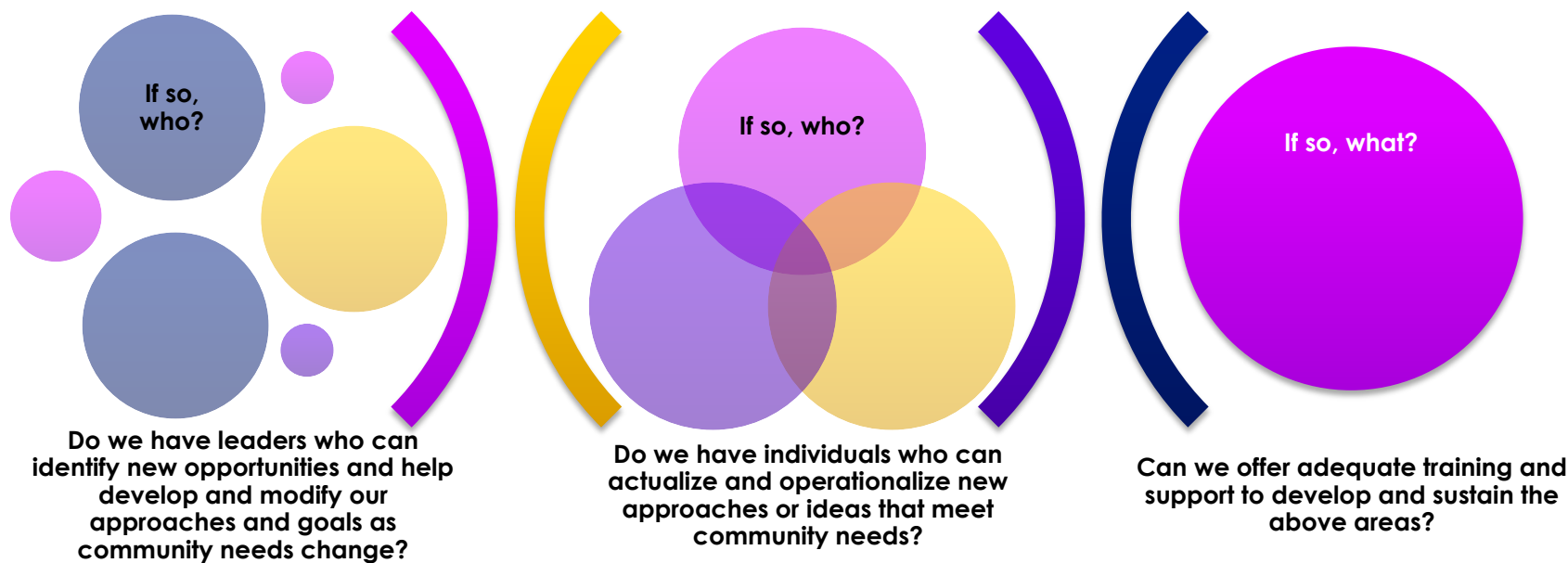
What are your goals and objectives in building your leadership team?

FACTOR 6: BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM | ACTIVITY 1: IDENTIFYING INTERNAL LEADERS

Instructions: Use the following chart to identify leaders from your team and their strengths.

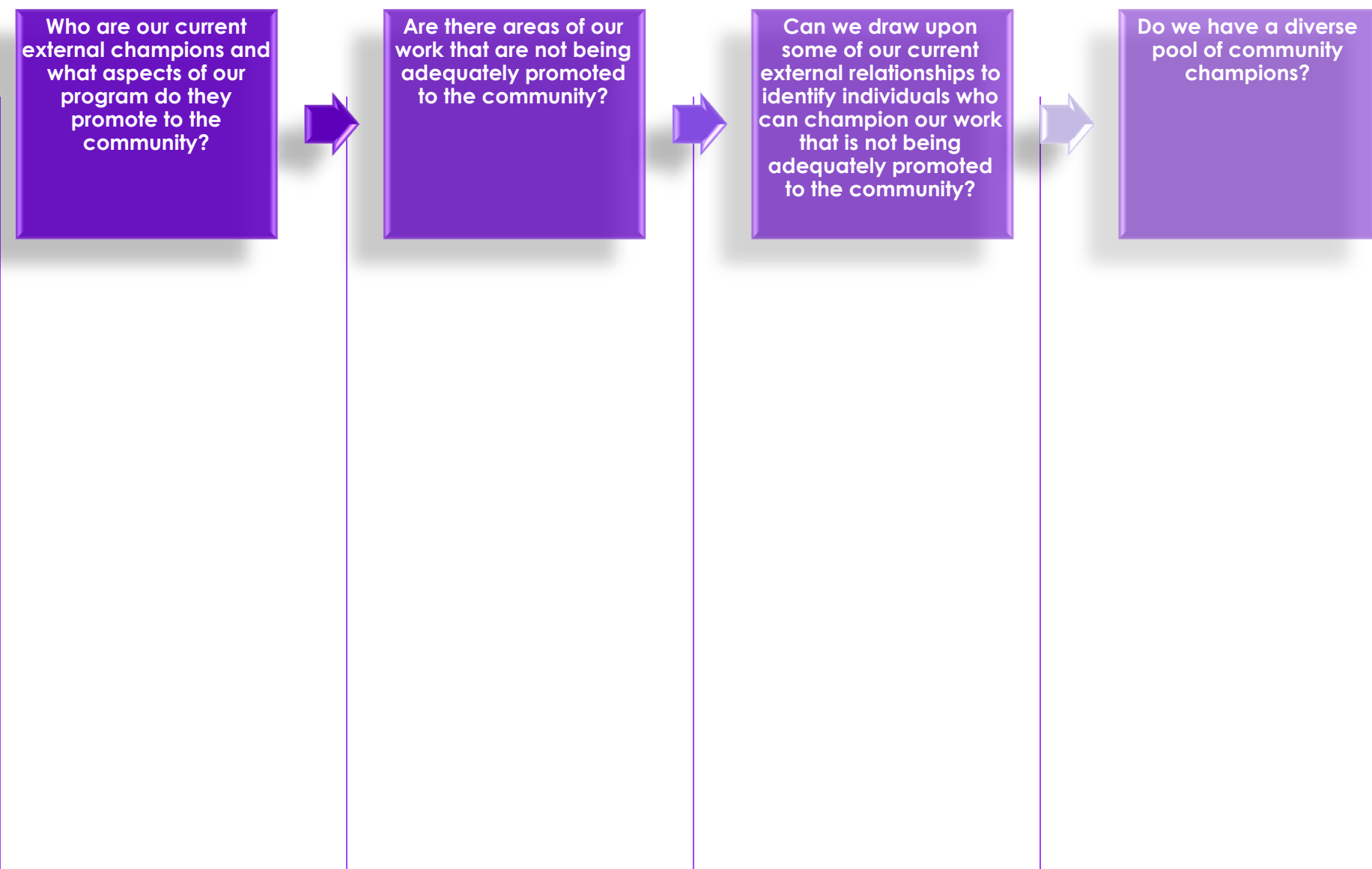


Instructions: Use the following chart to identify any gaps in your leadership capacities. Answer the questions below the graphic with staff that already have the skills and knowledge needed within each area.



FACTOR 6: BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM | ACTIVITY 2: IDENTIFYING EXTERNAL CHAMPIONS

Instructions: Use the following space to identify your current and potential external champions.



FACTOR 6: BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM | ACTIVITY 3: PROMOTING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Instructions: Use the following graphic to consider how you can build knowledge and capacity amongst your leadership team.

Notes

Determine what leadership skills trainings may be useful for leadership team members.

Assess whether those trainings can be offered in house or through a community training or conference event.

Consider whether creating a mentorship or shadowing program would promote leadership skill building.

Build relationships with potential community champions through shared leadership development opportunities.

Create peer to peer learning opportunities to increase leadership team capacities and strengthen relationships with community champions.

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

In this section, grantees are encouraged to take a critical look at their current external relationships to seek out and maintain true collaborative partnerships that are effective and lasting. Grantees are also encouraged to be strategic in forging new partnerships and to use partners to help them promote their program or service successes in the community (see also [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 4: Secure Community Support](#)). This section largely draws from the [OAH Collaboration Toolkit](#) which provides an in-depth review of creating and establishing strategic partnerships.⁴⁵

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this section, grantees will assess their current and potential community partnerships. Specifically, they will learn about:

- Developing strategic partnerships;
- Assessing and cultivating current relationships;
- Creating a shared vision and commitment to sustainability; and
- Marketing their program or service successes through their partners.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

External partners are important sources of support, training, resources, and even staffing for many grantees. They provide meaningful opportunities for cross-training, peer-to-peer learning, and possible joint financial ventures or supporters when grantees seek out new funding. External partners can also be a link to larger community networks that can help market grantee work and reach new clients, funding, and resource bases. Strong external partnerships can also help grantees assess changing community needs and modify or tailor programs their services to changing community needs

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

Each grantee will seek out and secure strategic partnerships differently and may have different types of partners in the community, depending on how and to whom their programs and services are delivered. The manner in which grantees forge new partnerships will vary depending on staffing and resources available to seek out and maintain new partnerships. When assessing current and creating new partnerships, grantees may consider the following action steps. They can use and/or adapt the



⁴⁵ US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. Collaboration Toolkit. Available online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/learning/coll-tk/>.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN
FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

accompanying questions and worksheets and create a process that meets their capacity and needs.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Develop strategic partnerships

Assess existing partnerships
continuously

Establish a shared vision and
commitment to sustainability

Engage partners to help market
program successes

Leverage partner resources

DEVELOP STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Grantees will have a wide variety of informal and formal relationships with various types of community organizations. This may range from long-term collaborative partnerships to memberships in coalitions, networks, or work or task groups. The [Collaboration Toolkit](#) has defined partnership as “a group of organizations with a common interest who agree to work together toward a common goal.”⁴⁶ The goal of each partnership will vary, some focusing on narrow time-limited tasks, while others will seek to achieve long-term, broader goals.

To identify new partnerships, grantees may look back at the environmental assessment in [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assess the Environment](#) with a focus on the gaps in their current partnerships. Discuss why certain types of partners might be missing and whether adding additional partners could facilitate sustainability:

- Identify the skills and resources new partners could bring to help realize sustainability goals.
- Establish goals and objective for new partnerships.
- Brainstorm ways to elevate and formalize new relationships that could help sustain the work.

Keep in mind that whether a program or service is mature or new, at all stages, grantees can learn important lessons from each other about implementation, community readiness, and needs. For newer or smaller organizations, partnering with more established or larger entities may increase exposure to the community and provide opportunities for the smaller organization to create coalitions or strategic relationships they may not have otherwise been able to support or develop. Partnering with newer organizations could provide more seasoned entities with an opportunity to learn new and innovative techniques for delivering their programs or services.

Figure III-6 provides a short list of the types of partners grantees may need to sustain services in the community. Grantees may also consider partnership opportunities with nontraditional partners, such as local businesses or higher education institutions, to

⁴⁶ US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. Collaboration Toolkit. Available online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/learning/coll-tk/>.

build relationships that stretch their program's or service's reach. Partnerships with a diverse group of organizations and individuals with a variety of backgrounds and skill sets increases the base of knowledge from which a program or service can draw.

FIGURE III-6: TYPES OF PARTNERS

- Public and/or private school systems;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Other community-based providers offering adolescent health services;
- Other social service, health, and/or education community-based providers who serve the same population in a different capacity;
- Policymakers;
- Youth or parent-run advocacy organizations;
- Relevant advocacy organizations; and/or
- Government and school-based entities.

Forging new strategic partnerships takes time and effort. Grantees can incorporate partnership building into the everyday work of staff and board members. This may entail a range of activities that allow staff to meet and interact with potential strategic partners, such as participating in relevant coalitions and working groups, exhibiting or speaking at local conferences or symposia, or finding

opportunities to participate in cross-training events with other adolescent health providers. It may also include taking extra time to build personal relationships with other social service providers with which the program works regularly or meeting with local civic leaders to discuss emerging or important issues relating to adolescent health.

ASSESS EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUOUSLY

Grantees may examine their current relationships as well as explore opportunities for new partnerships. They can look at their existing relationships to:

- Assess the current strengths and weaknesses of their existing partnerships;
- Examine which relationships are: (1) Informal, short-term without clearly defined missions or structure; (2) Based on a more formal arrangement, but relate to a specific goal or effort; or (3) More formal and long-term, with shared goals and commitments;⁴⁷
- Identify the skills and resources each external organization could bring to help them realize one or several of their sustainability goals;
- Identify goals and objectives for each new partnership; and
- Brainstorm about ways to elevate and formalize relationships to help sustain the program or service.

⁴⁷ The National Center for Community Education. The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook. Afterschool Alliance. Available on-line at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>.

COALITIONS CAN BE USEFUL

A coalition is a diverse group of people or organizations working towards a specific purpose. Being a part of community coalitions gives organizations the opportunity to have other entities champion their successes. They can also:

Give organizations a platform to obtain community buy-in and support;

Increase organizations' knowledge about other community efforts;

Limit duplication of services;

Improve trust and relationships between community partners;

Promote shared policy and practice reforms that can sustain change in larger systems of care; and

Help identify potential funders.

Batan M, Butterfoss FD, Jaffe A, & LaPier T. Healthy communities program: Sustainability planning guide.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

ESTABLISH A SHARED VISION AND COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

When creating a formal strategic partnership, consider the following recommendations to help facilitate the partnership's success and effectiveness.⁴⁸

- **A shared plan of action.** Partner organizations should take time to define their vision and mission for the partnership and outline the goals they hope to accomplish together. By doing so, the partners will have taken their first step towards designing a realistic and useful plan for collaboration.
- **Shared leadership and responsibilities.** Both partner organizations should have a sense of shared ownership over the goals and mission of the partnership. When creating a partnership plan, the partners should delineate duties between them, utilizing each partner's strengths and capacities.
- **Clearly defined roles.** The partnership plan should clearly state what each partner is expected to do and how and rely upon each partner's strengths and abilities to delineate duties.

Grantees may also find opportunities to regularly check-in with their partner organizations. Informal meetings to gauge progress, what concerns they may have, or what issues or challenges they may be facing can help strengthen and solidify the relationship.

ENGAGE PARTNERS TO HELP MARKET PROGRAM SUCCESSES

Once grantees have identified those external organizations with which they want to partner and understand the goals they hope to achieve through

these potential new partnerships, they can:

- Identify program leadership, staff, board members, or, in some instances, existing partners to become their 'messengers' and help reach out to existing or new potential partners. In identifying which individuals to conduct outreach activities, consider the individual's knowledge of the program, its mission and values and role in the community, as well as that person's existing relationships with potential community partners;
- Provide their 'messengers' with the resources necessary to communicate the importance of the program's or service's work and how potential new partnerships can help both organizations meet community needs and sustain efforts in the long-term; and
- Create and use an outreach strategy and message that:
 - Is consistent and at the same time adaptable to the audience;

⁴⁸ The National Center for Community Education. The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook. Afterschool Alliance. Available on-line at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>.

- Is clear about its purposes, who its audiences are, and what matters to those audiences;
- Clearly states the program's or service's goals and mission;
- Aligns with larger marketing and outreach strategies and messages; and
- Focuses on furthering the program's or service's mission in the community and increasing community awareness of its successes.⁴⁹

As is discussed in [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 4: Secure Community Support](#), each program or service needs a clear and consistent message to communicate to its target audience(s). That message should be a cogent and supported illustration of the program's or service's strengths, successes and value to the community. If the message is consistent and understandable, engaging partners to help share and spread that message will be easier. There are many ways grantees can engage their partners to market their successes, such as:

- Asking partners to share with their networks written products or materials the program or service has developed;
- Coordinating with partners to market to the community new services or programs offered;
- Seeking opportunities to conduct trainings or learning sessions for partner organizations to inform them about the program's or service's work in the community and successes;
- Inviting partners to participate, help build or lead workgroups or coalition to address relevant issues affecting the populations served; and
- Finding opportunities to co-present at workgroups, conferences, and symposia with partner organizations to share the utility and success of the program's or service's work.

LEVERAGE PARTNER RESOURCES

In addition to having partners promote program or service successes in the community, there are other ways in which the partnership may be of benefit, including:

- In-kind resources or supports the grantee may receive from its partner organization, this may be in the form of staff time and expertise, donations, or facilities or space for events or trainings;
- Opportunities to identify and seek out joint funding strategies and/or having partners help build relationships with potential funders;
- Expanding grantees' networks of community supporters through the relationships the partner has in the community; and

⁴⁹ US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health. *Collaboration Toolkit*. Available online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/learning/coll-tk/>.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

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- Helping grantees identify and recruit program or service participants as the partner organization works with them in some compatible or related capacity.

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted by a program to coordinate discussions around building network maps and developing strategic partnerships. The activities are meant to allow the program to think broadly and creatively about expanding your partnerships.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Mapping your Individual Network](#)

[Activity 2: Assessing Potential Partners](#)

Before we begin, let's explore what your goals are for this exercise. Answer the following question before you start the exercises on the following pages.

What are your goals and objectives in creating strategic partnerships?

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL NETWORK⁵⁰

Instructions: This exercise can be performed by key program staff, leadership, and board members. The intent of the exercise is for each individual to see where your **current partnerships** lie. Your organization's name should be put in the middle square. Fill in the map on the [following page](#) with organizations and/or individuals that you currently work with. Draw lines to indicate the direction of support and resources shared. If it is both ways, indicate that with a double headed arrow.

When thinking about your current relationships, also consider:

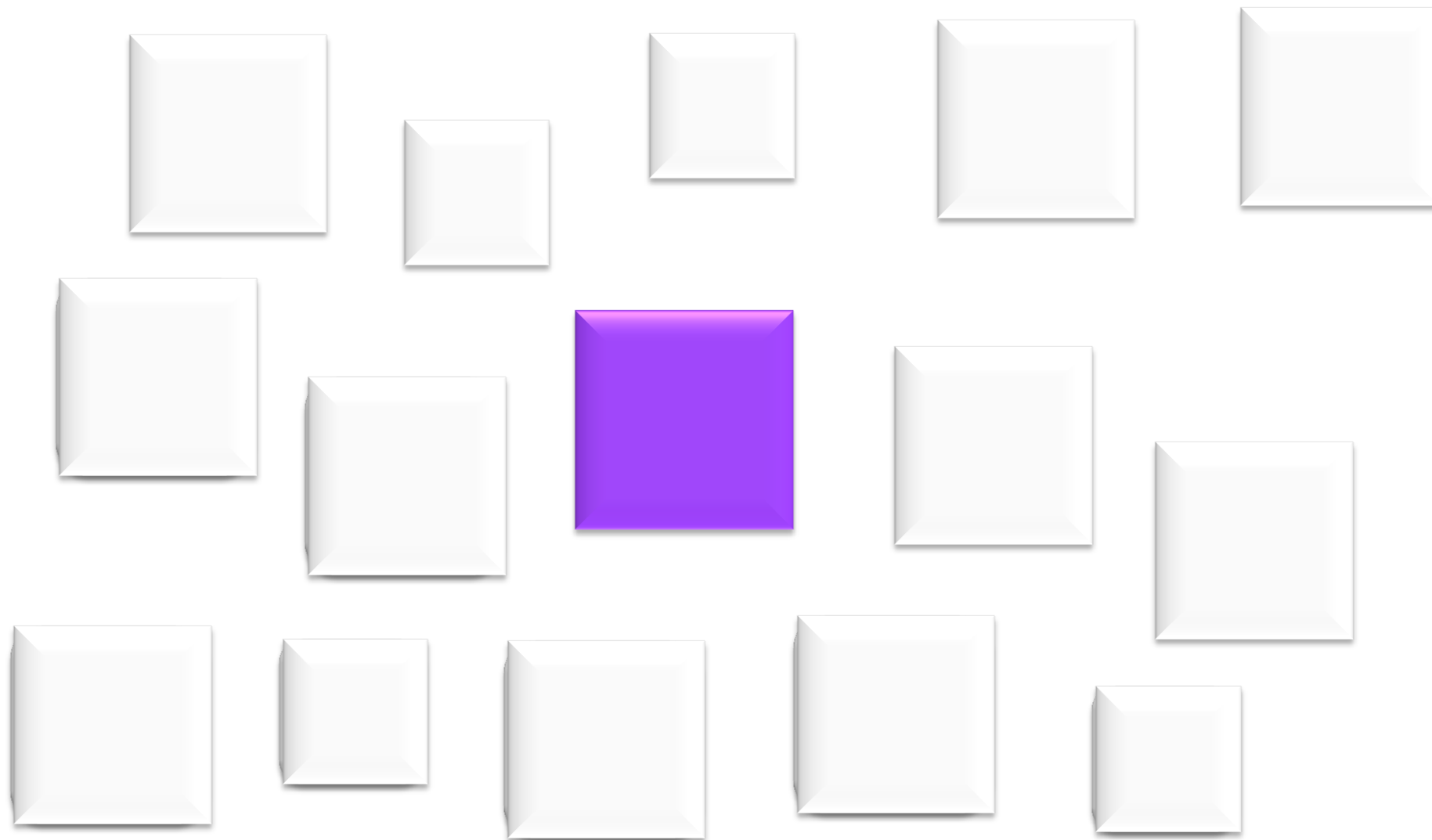
- Assessing their current strengths and weaknesses of your existing partnerships;
- Examining which relationships are:
 1. Informal, short-term without clearly defined missions or structure;
 2. Based on a more formal arrangement, but relate to a specific goal or effort; or
 3. More formal and long-term, with shared goals and commitments;
- Identifying the skills and resources each external organization brings to help you realize one or several of your sustainability goals;
- Identifying goals and objectives for each partnership.

⁵⁰ This activity is adapted from the National Center for Community Education. *The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook*. Afterschool Alliance. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL NETWORK⁵¹ (CONTINUED)

CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS

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FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL NETWORK

⁵¹ This activity is adapted from the National Center for Community Education. *The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook*. Afterschool Alliance. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL NETWORK⁵² (CONTINUED)

Instructions: The intent of the exercise is for each individual to identify their personal and professional networks that may be tapped when you are seeking out **new strategic partnerships**. Your name should be put in the middle square. Fill in the map on the [following page](#) with organizations and/or individuals that you have connections with. Draw arrows connecting the how resources and support might be provided and shared. If it is both ways, indicate that with a double headed arrow. When filling-in your network maps, include a range of connections, from your membership in your child's parent-teacher association to the partnership you have formed with a local school that implements the program's parenting curriculum.

Remember! New partners can come from many different areas of the community, such as:

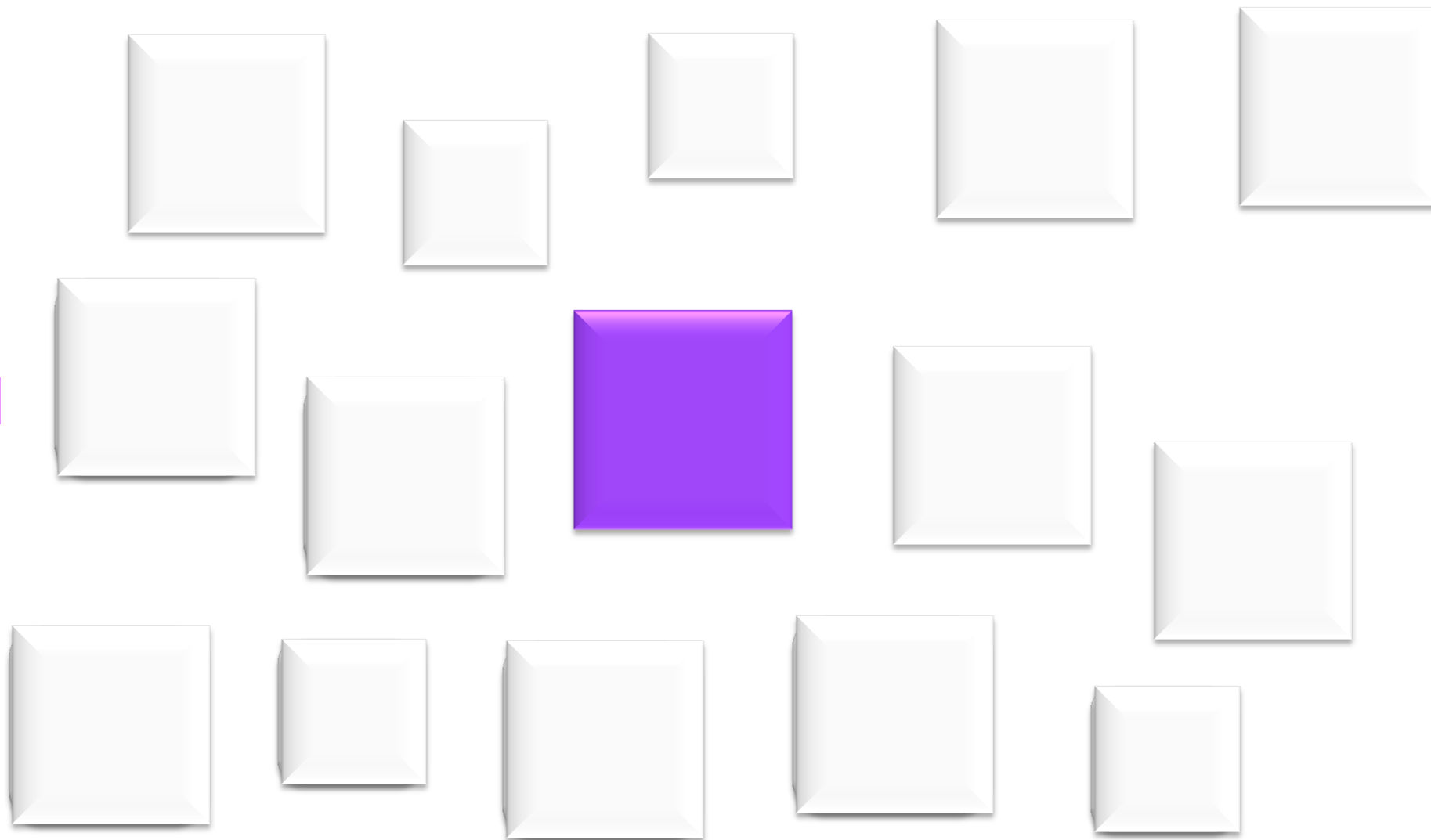
- Public and/or private school systems;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Other community-based providers offering adolescent health services;
- Other social service, health, and/or education community-based providers who serve the same population in a different capacity;
- Youth or parent-run advocacy organizations;
- Key leaders;
- Relevant advocacy organizations; and/or
- Government and school-based entities.

⁵² This activity is adapted from the National Center for Community Education. *The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook*. Afterschool Alliance. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL NETWORK⁵³ (CONTINUED)

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

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FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL NETWORK

⁵³ This activity is adapted from the National Center for Community Education. *The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook*. Afterschool Alliance. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING POTENTIAL PARTNERS⁵⁴

Instructions: Using the potential and existing partners you identified in the previous activity, for each row in the chart below list the name of an organization with which you hope to partner and discern the roles you and the partner might play in forming a strategic partnership.

Name of partner organization	Role in the community	Resources or support available through the proposed partnership	Action steps necessary to initiate a partnership	Things to consider when reaching out to the partner

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING POTENTIAL PARTNERS

⁵⁴ This activity is adapted from the National Center for Community Education. The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook. Afterschool Alliance. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS | ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING POTENTIAL PARTNERS⁵⁵ (CONTINUED)

Name of partner organization	Role in the community	Resources or support available through the proposed partnership	Action steps necessary to initiate a partnership	Things to consider when reaching out to the partner

FACTOR 7: CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
ACTIVITY 2: ASSESSING POTENTIAL PARTNERS

⁵⁵ This activity is adapted from the National Center for Community Education. *The Road to Sustainability: Sustainability Workbook*. Afterschool Alliance. Available online at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Toolbox/RoadtoSustainability.pdf>

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Securing diverse funding streams is essential to establishing long-term sustainability and achieving successful programs and services. Relying on a single funding source may be workable in the short-term, but often cannot sustain a program or service for



a long time. Continually explore diverse funding opportunities and secure a variety of funding streams when possible.

Securing diverse funding sources, particularly when resources are limited and state and local governments are facing budgetary constraints, is no easy task. First take a close look at what program activities are required to meet

community needs, and match funding requirements and opportunities to these needs. There are likely a number of opportunities available and grantees can devote both human and financial resources to exploring them. Not all of the options discussed in this section will meet the grantee's needs or financial structuring interests. This section builds upon [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assess your Environment](#) and that section can help grantees in determining what funding streams or financial structures will work best for their programs or services.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this section, grantees will examine their own funding streams and explore alternative models to program financing. Grantees will learn to:

- Review their program's or service's budget against the core services needed to address community needs;
- Identify alternative funding opportunities;
- Develop a strategy for securing potential funding opportunities;
- Devote a portion of program budget to sustainability planning; and
- Build the capacity of their leadership team in fundraising and grant writing.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Funding for programs or services can ebb and flow. Government, grant, and foundation funds will nearly always have time limits, so infuse financing research into day-to-day practices. By securing diverse funding streams,

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Review the program budget to identify core activities and services

Create a budgetary line item

Identify and seek funding opportunities

Develop a strategy for securing funding

Build fundraising and grant writing capacity

WHAT IS A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE BUSINESS MODEL?

Social enterprise addresses a social need and serves the common good through products or services. Social enterprise uses business solutions to address social problems. Social enterprises use earned revenue strategies to gain profits and reinvest these profits into the social service delivery system.

For examples of social enterprise business models, visit: <https://www.se-alliance.org/social-enterprise-examples>.

Social Enterprise Alliance. (2013). What is social enterprise?

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

grantees are better able to adapt when some sources of income decrease or end.

CRITICAL ACTION STEPS

Each grantee's approach to diversifying its funding sources will be unique. The following steps are provided to help grantees identify their community needs and to determine which programs or services are essential to meeting those needs. This section will also help grantees explore how sustainability planning and budgeting can be embedded into core program activities, as well as offer tools to help grantees identify potential funders and an action plan to seek alternative funding sources.

To begin, look at information gained by working through previous sections of this guide (particularly [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assess the Environment](#)) to understand local community needs and the financial environment in which the program operates.

REVIEW THE PROGRAM BUDGET TO IDENTIFY CORE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

A deep understanding of the community's needs is required to determine what core programs or services are provided to meet this need. Look back at the information gathered in *Factor 2: Assess the Environment* regarding the community environment before moving forward with the suggested budgetary analysis in this section. Using what was learned from that assessment, grantees can align their core services with community needs and ultimately with each line item in their budget. By exploring the minimum activities or services required to meet the needs of the community, grantees will gain a better perspective on what aspects of their services are essential and at what scale those services are needed. Explore:

- What services are currently being provided?
- What are the current costs of implementing the current services and programs?
- What components of these services are absolutely necessary to address the community's needs and fulfill the program's or service's mission?
- What resources are required to implement those essential programs or services identified through this exercise (e.g. curriculum, staff, trainings, other resources)?
- What are the cost differentials between current service delivery and services deemed essential?
- What changes can or should be made to the funding of certain programs or services to plan for sustainability?

Once these issues have been addressed, walk through each line of the program's or service's budget and answer the following questions:

- Is this expense essential to provide the program's or service's core activities or interventions?
- Is this expense scaled correctly?



CREATE A BUDGETARY LINE ITEM

Grantees may consider adding sustainability planning to their core budget. Creating a budgetary line item devoted to sustainability planning can aid in elevating its status and importance across one's program and services. Grantees will be better able to track and monitor their sustainability planning as it relates to their entire program or service funding.

IDENTIFY AND SEEK FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

In [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assess the Environment](#), grantees had an opportunity to explore the financial environment in which they work. Using the activities from that section, grantees may reflect on this financial environment and:

- Consider the impact their programs or services have in meeting community needs and their capacity to sustain services in the long-term;
- Identify funding opportunities through organizations that support services to their current target population, such as local community organizations seeking to bolster services to their adolescent populations, or with missions that specifically address adolescent health, pregnancy prevention, supporting expectant or parenting teens, or other related social issues;
- Strategize how to identify and secure funding from organizations that work in or finance related work, such as regionally-based organizations, community or national foundations;
- Identify internal and external supporters who can help promote their program and services to potential funders;
- Consider innovative funding alternatives to grant or foundation funding, such as social enterprise business models or impact investing (see the sidebars for more information); and
- Consider alternative financing opportunities, such as in-kind support, outsourcing select services, moving services under another community organization, or using a fee-for-service model.

DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR SECURING FUNDING

Once grantees understand the funding environment and have identified potential opportunities, they may develop a strategy to seek out and obtain new funding. Specifically, grantees may consider the previous sections and determine which funding opportunities or financing model most appropriately fit their program or service needs. It is likely that multiple options are viable and even critical for securing stable financing and ensuring program sustainability. To develop a successful strategy, grantees may:

WHAT IS IMPACT INVESTING?

Impact investments are a financial strategy whereby investments are made with the intention of generating measurable social impact plus a financial return. Investors are often rooted in the social issues in which they are investing and seek to place capital in nonprofits and businesses to harness the power of enterprise. According to the Global Impact Investing Network, the impact investing industry has the potential to place significant amounts of money in market-based solutions to address the world's most pressing challenges.

The Global Impact Investing Network. (2013). What is impact investing?

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Conduct regular budgetary reviews;
- Determine their goals for securing alternative funding;
- Identify the tasks needed to accomplish those goals;
- Assign a staff person to be responsible for implementing each task; and
- Identify success metrics, a timeframe, and the resources needed to accomplish each goal.

BUILD FUNDRAISING AND GRANT WRITING CAPACITY

Ensuring that a grantee's team has the knowledge and skills to fundraise for its programs or services is critical. Organizations wishing to build their staff capacity may see the benefit of devoting resources to it (see [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 8: Secure Diverse Financial Opportunities, Creating a Budgetary Line Item](#)).

Building this professional acumen requires grantees to explore the following questions:

- What fundraising skills trainings may be useful to their team and can these trainings be offered in-house or through a community training or conference event?
- Are there internal mentors that can teach grant writing or fundraising techniques?
- What opportunities are available for increasing their fundraising and grant writing capacity through cross-training, peer-to-peer learning, or information sharing forums by utilizing their relationships with partners?



SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages can be used and adapted to coordinate discussions around identifying alternative funding opportunities and how to secure them. The activities are meant to allow you to think broadly and creatively about securing diverse funding streams.

The activities include:

[Activity 1: Reviewing your Program Budget](#)

[Activity 2: Identifying and Seeking Funding Opportunities](#)

[Activity 3: Developing a Strategy for Securing Funding](#)

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN
FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Before we begin, let's explore what your goals are for this exercise. Answer the following question before you start the exercises on the following pages.

What are your goals and objectives in securing diverse funding?

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES | ACTIVITY 1. REVIEWING YOUR PROGRAM BUDGET

Instructions: Building on the assessments you performed in [Section III: Implementing a Sustainability Plan, Factor 2: Assess the Environment](#), you will explore how your budget aligns with your services. Performing this exercise will help you identify which line items in your budgets are critical to supporting your core activities and which are less necessary for short or long term sustainability.

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

What services are absolutely necessary to address our community's needs?

What services and activities do we currently provide?

Of those provided, what services and activities are critical for meeting the needs of our community and for implementing our programs?

What ancillary or internal program supports do we need to offer these services?

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES | ACTIVITY 1. REVIEWING YOUR PROGRAM BUDGET (CONTINUED)

UNDERSTANDING BUDGETARY NEEDS

What are our programs or services costs for implementing our program or intervention?

How would our costs change by implementing only the essential programs or services? Would our costs be different?

What financial resources are required to implement activities that would meet the community's core needs?

Once you have completed the assessment of your services and financial requirements, take out your program/service budget and assess each individual line. Answer each of the questions for each line of your budget:



How does this expense directly address the core community need?



Is this expense essential in providing the core activities, services, or intervention?

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES | ACTIVITY 2. IDENTIFYING AND SEEKING FUNDING

Instructions: Use the following path to begin identifying potential funding and financing opportunities. This activity should help you explore where you can begin looking for funding opportunities. In the following activity, you will develop a plan for how to reach out to the organizations and individuals you identify in this activity.



Funding source	Contact information	Program, service, or activity	Request	Giving cycle	Assigned to	Personalized appeal	Status	Results
Name of organization, individual, corporation, foundation, or government entity	Name of the contact person, address, phone, and email for applications and questions	What you are asking them to fund	Amount of your request or the specific in-kind service you are requesting	Date the application is due, dates awards are given, dates any reports or follow-ups are due	The lead person of your team assigned to manage this opportunity	Message should emphasize the services that you provide that have the greatest appeal to each opportunity	Stage in the funding process with this funder (to be updated periodically)	Whether the support was received and what you learned from the process



ACTIVITY 1: IDENTIFYING AND SEEKING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

WRAPPING UP

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Instructions: Now that you have completed these exercises, take a moment to write down any challenges you experienced in completing these activities and any additional resources that you might need to address these challenges.

What challenges did you face in completing the activities in this section?

What resources would be useful to help you better address these challenges?

PLANNING YOUR NEXT STEPS

Instructions: Write down three things you and your team can do right now with the information gathered during these activities to plan for sustainability. Be sure to include who is responsible, a time frame for accomplishing the task, and any metrics for assessing successful completion.

SECTION IV: CONCLUSION

Each factor discussed in this guide is supported by existing literature and research on the sustainability of social welfare and health programs, as well as on-the-ground experiences of OAH grantees and other federal sustainability frameworks.

The purpose of this guide, combined with OAH's accompanying sustainability resources (see [Figure I-I: OAH Sustainability Resources](#)), is to help OAH grantees effectively leverage their resources to facilitate the continuation of their programs or services, leading to long-lasting improvements in the health and well-being of adolescents. This guide provides practical and actionable steps by which grantees can begin planning for sustainability and infuse sustainability conversations and activities into their day-to-day work. It aims to help grantees better prepare to take on strategic sustainability planning and facilitate long-lasting improvements in adolescent health and well-being. Grantees should use all of the materials in the OAH Sustainability Resources collection as flexible, modular tools that can be adjusted to meet their individual needs.

While this guide is not meant to provide a list of all factors necessary for every program or service to succeed, it does aim to identify common challenges and issues grantees might face as they explore their own needs and capacities in building sustainable programs.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Planning for sustainability is critical to positioning adolescent health programs and services to thrive and have continued impacts over time. This Sustainability Assessment from the Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) will help Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) and Pregnancy Assistance Fund (PAF) grantees gauge their capacity and readiness to be sustainable.¹ The Sustainability Assessment is part of a several resources developed for the Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) grantees, which provides guidance to help programs and services achieve sustainable impacts.

THE SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

This tool includes statements relating to the eight key factors of sustainability. For more context and additional background on these factors, please review OAH's [Building Sustainable Programs: The Framework](#). By critically assessing your efforts, you may discover that there are strengths in some areas, but see opportunities in others. Don't worry! A low score for any particular factor does not indicate that you are unable to create positive impacts within the community. You should use this assessment as a stepping stone to identify areas for improvement and strengthen your sustainability planning efforts going forward.

Your assessment responses will identify your strengths and areas for greater focus. You should complete this assessment **after** reviewing [Building Sustainable Programs: The Framework](#) and **before** reading and completing the worksheets in [Building Sustainable Programs: The Resource Guide](#). By assessing your program's sustainability preparedness prior to working through the *Resource Guide*, you will be better positioned to use the *Resource Guide* in a way that will optimize your sustainability planning efforts.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE ASSESSMENT

It should take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete this assessment. Respond to as many questions as possible. For each, circle the number that best reflects your current practices. You will tally the total scores for each factor to determine where your planning efforts fall within that factor. Use the space provided next to each question to jot down any additional information or data sources that support your response. This additional information may be useful to you later as you develop your

¹ The assessment was adapted, in part, from two open source sustainability assessments: The Finance Project. (2007). Investing in the sustainability of youth programs: An assessment tool for funders. <http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/FundersTool.pdf>; and Center for Public Health Systems Science. (2012). Program Sustainability Assessment Tool. Washington University George Warren Brown School of Social Work: St. Louis. <https://sustaintool.org/>.

sustainability plans. Consider completing this assessment periodically, at least annually, to determine what progress you have made towards reaching your sustainability goals.

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THIS ASSESSMENT?

For some organizations, it may be appropriate to have the program director complete this assessment alone, but in many instances, the program director may consider convening the internal leadership team to reflect and complete the assessment together. It may also be appropriate to ask different individual staff members to complete sections that are specific to their work or expertise. Some organizations may want to invite their external partners to contribute to parts of the assessment, as well.

YOUR SUSTAINABILITY READINESS SCORE

After completing the assessment, tally your score for each section. Each response is weighted equally in the **Score Key**, but some questions may touch on areas that are of greater import for you and your program. You can use the “notes” sections next to each question to indicate those areas that are particularly relevant or important to your work. Then use the **Score Key** at the end of this document to determine your next steps in planning for sustainability. You can use your results to help you determine how you will focus your sustainability planning efforts going forward and how you will use the accompanying *Resource Guide*, which provides practical tools and guidance on building your sustainability plan.

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 1

CREATE AN ACTION STRATEGY

Notes

We developed a sustainability plan early in the implementation of our program or services.

0 1 2 3

We have a shared understanding of what sustainability means for our program or services.

0 1 2 3

We have an individual or team to focus on sustainability planning efforts.

0 1 2 3

We identified our sustainability goals.

0 1 2 3

We identified ways to measure whether our sustainability plan is successfully implemented.

0 1 2 3

Our program goals and vision are shared and understood by our key partners and stakeholders.

0 1 2 3

We embed sustainability planning efforts into our everyday activities (e.g., board meetings, staff meeting, continuing learning opportunities, etc.).

0 1 2 3

We have a long-term sustainability plan.

0 1 2 3

Our long-term sustainability plan contemplates how we will make sustainable impacts in our community, which may go beyond a single program or service.

0 1 2 3

We periodically revisit our sustainability plan and make modifications based on changing internal or external circumstances.

0 1 2 3

We have used the information we have gathered from assessing the environment to inform sustainability planning efforts.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

What was your score?

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 2

ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT

Notes

We examined community needs to determine whether our programs or services remain relevant and useful to the community.

0 1 2 3

We revisit our assessment of community needs in relationship to our services on a regular basis.

0 1 2 3

We use data to improve our services with respect to community needs.

0 1 2 3

We assessed the environment within our organization and how it supports sustainability planning.

0 1 2 3

We revisit our assessment of our organization on a regular basis.

0 1 2 3

We assess our relationships in the community and how they help our sustainability efforts.

0 1 2 3

We periodically revisit our assessment of community partnerships.

0 1 2 3

We have assessed our current funding situation.

0 1 2 3

We identified new funding opportunities through our assessment of our financial environment.

0 1 2 3

We continue to regularly reassess the funding environment in which we work.

0 1 2 3

We assessed the political environment of our community and how it affects our programs or services.

0 1 2 3

We continue to regularly reassess the political environment of our community and how it affects our programs or services.

0 1 2 3

We used the information we gathered from assessing the environment to inform sustainability planning efforts.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

What was your score?

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 3

BE ADAPTABLE

Notes

When seeing changes in our community's environment, we explore how these changes may affect our programs and services (such as changes in demographics, the economy, etc.)

0 1 2 3

When considering a change in programs or services, we assess how modifications may affect the fidelity of the model or best practice we use.

0 1 2 3

We modify our programs or services to the match the community's changing needs.

0 1 2 3

We stay abreast of relevant innovations, promising practices, and research that relate to our programs and services.

0 1 2 3

When appropriate, we strategize about ways to incorporate innovative and/or evidence-based and evidence-informed practices into our service delivery system.

0 1 2 3

We use data to inform whether to modify or discontinue certain programs or services.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

What was your score?

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 4

SECURE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Notes

We have an outreach plan that we follow to help strengthen our reputation in the community.

0 1 2 3

We develop strong and compelling messages for community members and partners about our program.

0 1 2 3

We include evaluation results and data to demonstrate our successes to key stakeholders.

0 1 2 3

We engage external partners and champions to share our message.

0 1 2 3

We engage current and former participants or clients in our community outreach efforts.

0 1 2 3

We increase community awareness of issues relevant to our work and demonstrate our value to the public.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

What was your score?

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 5

INTEGRATE PROGRAM SERVICES INTO COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURES

Notes

We strive to make our operations cost-effective and efficient to seamlessly deliver programs and services to the community.

0 1 2 3

Our services and programs are well-integrated and supported in the operations of our larger organization.

0 1 2 3

Our programs or services are supported by our partners and outside community organizations.

0 1 2 3

Our programs or services are embedded in and used by other community organizations.

0 1 2 3

Local community organizations are committed to continuing to use our programs or services in their organization.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

**What was your
score?**

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 6

BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM

Notes

We have a well-defined leadership team to help us accomplish our mission.

0 1 2 3

Our organizational leadership is engaged in helping us accomplish our program or service mission.

0 1 2 3

We regularly provide organizational leadership with information about our successes and challenges.

0 1 2 3

Our organizational leadership is knowledgeable about our work and is able to promote it in the community.

0 1 2 3

Our external partners are a part of our leadership team.

0 1 2 3

We have external champions who help promote our program or services to the community.

0 1 2 3

Our pool of external champions is diverse and can speak to different audiences about our work.

0 1 2 3

We offer capacity building opportunities for staff, partners, and key stakeholders to build their leadership skills.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

What was your score?

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 7

CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Notes

We have an outreach plan for developing and securing strategic partnerships.

0 1 2 3

We have a diverse list of strategic community partners who help promote our programs or services.

0 1 2 3

We involve a diverse group of community stakeholders in our work.

0 1 2 3

We regularly seek out new strategic partnerships in the community.

0 1 2 3

Our roles and responsibilities are clear within the partnerships we have established.

0 1 2 3

We communicate regularly with our strategic partners.

0 1 2 3

Our strategic partners are involved in program planning and evaluation.

0 1 2 3

Our community partners and stakeholders understand and support our work.

0 1 2 3

Our community partners are committed to the sustainability of our programs or services beyond the Federal funding period.

0 1 2 3

Our community partners and stakeholders help market our program and share our successes.

0 1 2 3

TOTAL

**What was your
score?**

SCALE: 0 = Have not begun.
2 = Have begun to implement this.

1 = Are in the planning phases.
3 = Have made solid progress in implementing this.

FACTOR 8: SECURE DIVERSE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES					Notes
We review our programs and services to identify additional funding needs.	0	1	2	3	
We regularly strategize about securing future resources.	0	1	2	3	
We have staff members who regularly dedicate time to search for private and public funding opportunities.	0	1	2	3	
We leverage our strategic partnerships and other relationships in the community to help identify and secure funding.	0	1	2	3	
We leverage our strategic partnerships and other relationships in the community to help identify and secure in-kind support and donations.	0	1	2	3	
Our program is funded through a variety of sources.	0	1	2	3	
We have a long-term financial plan in place.	0	1	2	3	
We periodically revisit or adapt our financial plan to changing circumstances.	0	1	2	3	
TOTAL					What was your score?

TALLY YOUR SCORE

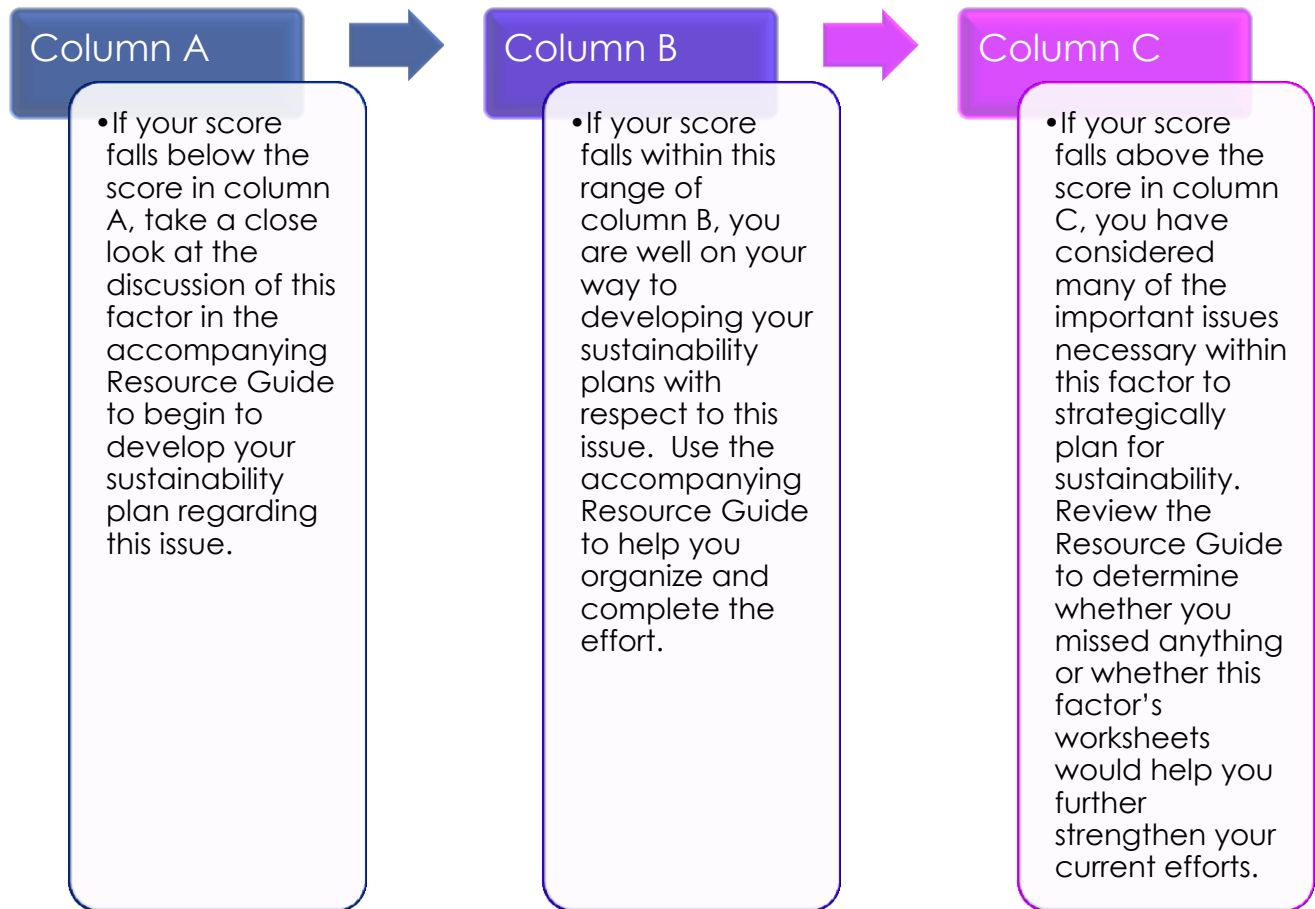
Tally your score for each section. Use this **Score Sheet** below and the **Score Key** on the following page to determine your next steps in planning for sustainability. You can use your results to help you determine how you will focus your sustainability planning efforts going forward and how you will use the accompanying *Resource Guide*, which provides practical tools and guidance on building your sustainability plan.

SCORE SHEET

	Column A	Column B	Column C
Factor 1: Create an action strategy •SCORE:	Less than 16	16-26	Over 26
Factor 2: Assess the environment •SCORE:	Less than 21	21-31	Over 31
Factor 3: Be adaptable •SCORE:	Less than 9	9-14	Over 14
Factor 4: Secure community support •SCORE:	Less than 9	9-14	Over 14
Factor 5: Integrate program services into the community infrastructure •SCORE:	Less than 8	8-12	Over 12
Factor 6: Build a leadership team •SCORE:	Less than 11	12-19	Over 19
Factor 7: Create strategic partnerships •SCORE:	Less than 15	15-24	Over 24
Factor 8: Secure diverse financial opportunities •SCORE:	Less than 11	12-19	Over 19

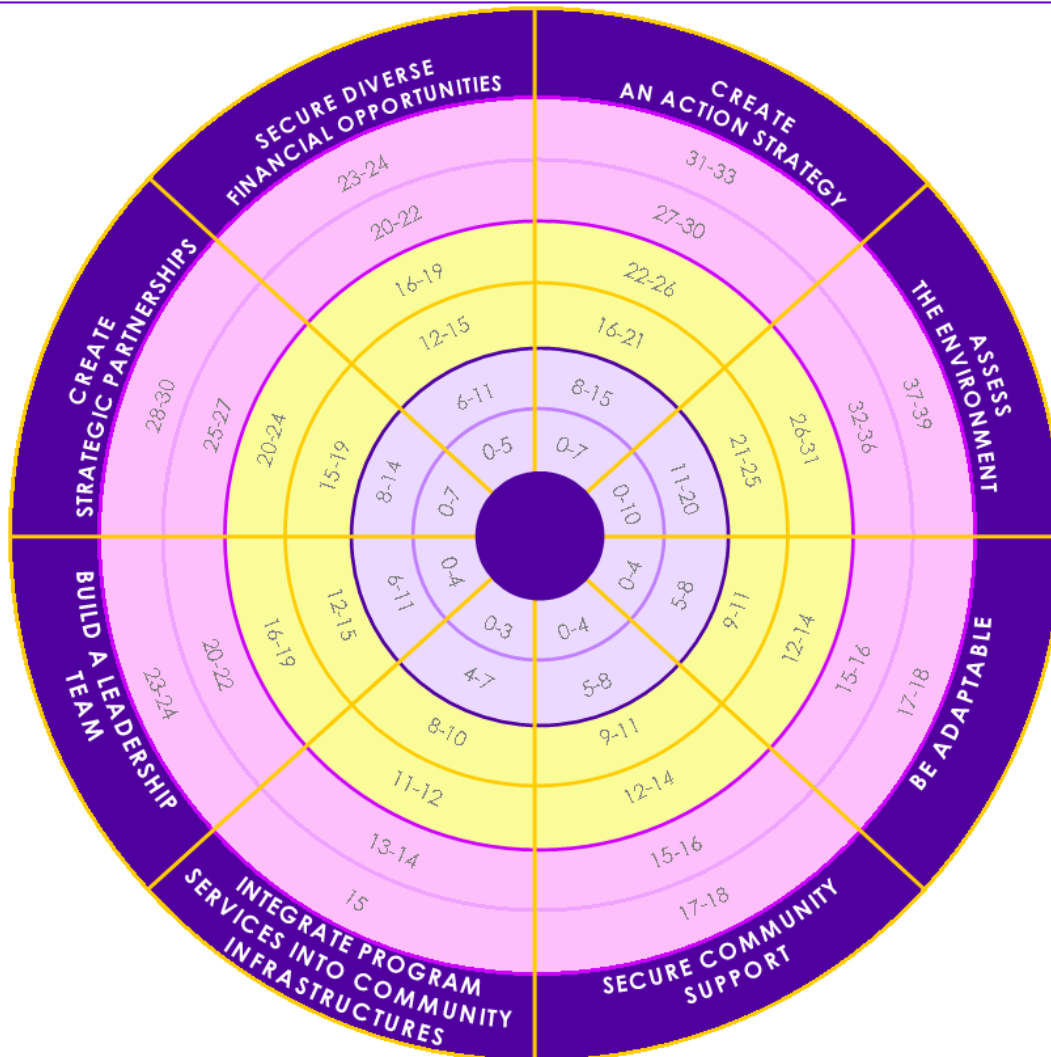
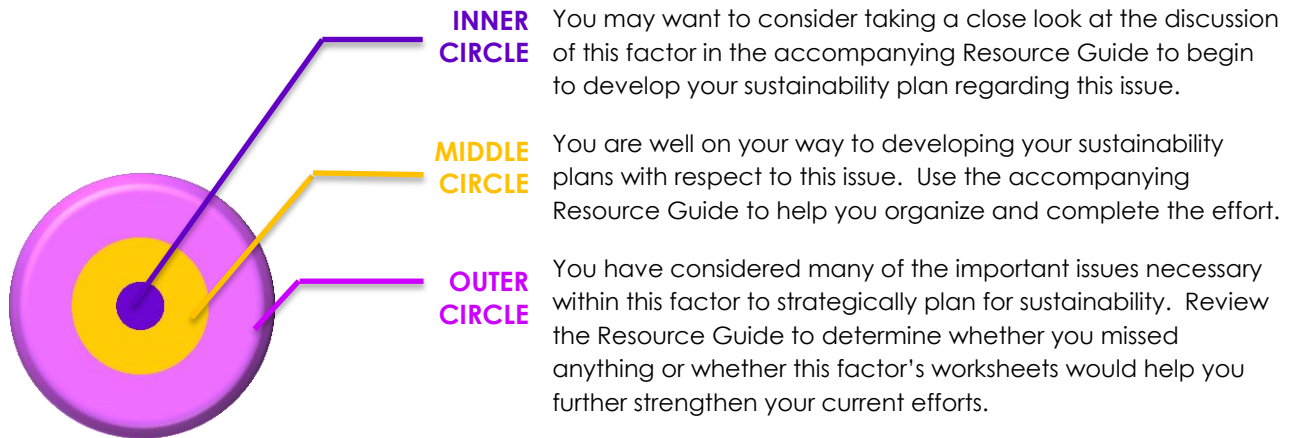
SCORE KEY

Using the score sheet on the previous page, determine which factors of sustainability planning you should focus your efforts on.



VISUALIZE YOUR SCORE

To plot your sustainability assessment, use the scores from each of the factors to fill in the wheel graph below. Individual segments within the wheel show where the numbers should be colored. Using these marks, color in the segment(s) that are within the range of your scores for each factor. Continue to plot your scores for all eight factors and use the following key to interpret your results.



APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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APPENDIX C: OAH GRANTEE EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY

EXAMPLE 1

NEW MEXICO EXPECTANT AND PARENTING TEEN PROGRAM: GRADS+ MAKING CONNECTIONS FOR SUCCESS

New Mexico Public Education Department

One of our program's goals is to promote effective collaboration by creating "strategic" partnerships that support the GRADS program and expectant and parenting teens. We formed a GRADS+ leadership team that includes key state level partners who support the goals of our program. The statewide leadership team includes representatives from the attorney general's office, teen pregnancy coalition members, the Department of Health and the forum for youth in community, among many others.

At the local level, our GRADS sites continue to strengthen strategic partnerships with school and community providers that assist in increasing teen family access to a continuum of health, behavioral health, educational and social services. Each site has a local advisory committee/resource team that includes key school and community stakeholders who promote the GRADS program. Some key partners include: school-based health centers (SBHC), school nurses, counselors and social workers, early childhood home visiting programs, early intervention programs, health clinics, mental health providers, domestic violence organizations, local workforce partners, universities/colleges, WIC, and public health offices. In addition to the GRADS teacher, the GRADS team may include the child care director, a GRADS case manager, a GRADS fatherhood mentor, and a SBHC representative, all of whom collaborate to meet teen family needs. Key GRADS partners are also regularly invited to attend annual GRADS trainings, which support collaborative relationships and provide opportunities for interdisciplinary networking and resource sharing.

Local strategic partnerships have been instrumental in saving GRADS programs that were recommended for closure. Two GRADS sites were able to effectively demonstrate the value of GRADS to their school administration through data and personal testimonies. The local GRADS advisory committee at one site sent letters from students and community partners to the superintendent and school board every day, calling for them to maintain the program.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Securing community support

Creating strategic partnerships

EXAMPLE 2

TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM (TPPP)

Arizona's Touchstone Behavioral Health

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (TPPP) was established by Touchstone Behavioral Health in 2010 to address the growing need for awareness and education on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. TPPP implements ¡Cuídate!, an evidence-based program designed for teens ages 13-18, to 1,000-1,500 youth each year. TPPP maintains a Local Advisory Committee (LAC), which consists of community members, various agencies, school officials, parents, and youth. The LAC's goal is to increase awareness of teen pregnancy and create a sustainability plan for the program.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Creating an action
strategy

Securing community
support

Integrating program
services into local
infrastructures

Creating strategic
partnerships

TPPP made relationships with community partners, key stakeholders, and other invested parties a priority early. With one elementary school district, TPPP began discussing sustainability when the program was first approved by the school board. The district served on our Local Advisory Committee, and we were able to build a network of community resources to support programming.

To equip the district to sustain our program, we took an iterative and collaborative approach regarding implementation responsibilities. During years one and two, teachers and staff observed Touchstone staff implementing the program and offered feedback. In year three, we began training school counselors as curriculum facilitators so they could co-facilitate with TPPP staff. In year four, two TPPP staff delivered the Training of Trainers (TOT) for ¡Cuídate!. TPPP provided a TOT for school counselors so they could train school staff to implement ¡Cuídate!.

We have worked to empower and equip the school district early in program implementation so that continuation of services would be achieved. Working within their infrastructure and training their staff helps sustain the program. A key to the success of this approach was to obtain community buy-in and involve stakeholders in the implementation, as opposed to telling them how our work should be ingrained in their systems.

EXAMPLE 3

IT'S YOUR GAME, KEEP IT REAL SC

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

The South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (SC Campaign) is working with middle schools across the state to implement “It’s Your Game, Keep it Real,” an evidence-based 24 lesson curriculum for 7th and 8th graders. The SC Campaign, in partnership with ETR Associates, is conducting a randomized control trial of the program, with 12 intervention and 12 comparison schools. Starting in 2014, the comparison schools have begun implementation of the curriculum. From the start of this project, the SC Campaign has talked with school partners about the need to plan for sustainability and has reviewed the research literature on sustainability. We have also collected considerable data; conducted focus groups with parents, interviewed principals; and surveyed teachers and students about their perception of the program to help inform our sustainability efforts.

In the second year of the project, SC Campaign leadership began to visit every school district, whether in the intervention or comparison group. Implementation schools receive more than one visit and multiple contacts each year to support high quality implementation. The SC Campaign frequently called upon the schools and districts to assist with data collection. But, we realized that we needed to also contact schools when we did not need anything; creating opportunities to build deeper relationships, listen to the views of the district without an agenda, and identify obstacles. Therefore, each summer, when school districts are not as busy, we travel to partnering districts to meet with superintendents and other district leaders.

As a result, we have developed deeper relationships and are more responsive to the needs of the schools. In each case, we have learned more about the school environment, what is important to the school and how our program fits into the school environment.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Assessing the environment

Securing community
support

Creating strategic
partnerships

EXAMPLE 4

SAFER FUTURES

Oregon Department of Justice, Crime Victim's Services Division

Oregon's Department of Justice, Crime Victim's Services Division's (CVSD) Safer Futures project supports seven non-profit victim advocacy organizations to place advocates on-site at Child Welfare branch offices, local Public Health departments, and other healthcare clinics. Each site offers: advocacy intervention, accompaniment, and supportive services by an on-site advocate; case consultation and provider training and technical assistance; and organizational and partner capacity building.

Each site has convened local leadership teams comprised of key stakeholders and collaborators who participate in project planning, training, and evaluation. The leadership teams are the mechanism by which the sites ensure success of the project.

The teams are tasked to 1) explore how the project can improve and expand on-site advocacy services, especially for teens and underserved populations; 2) develop new or improve existing protocols and forms for partners to use in referring victims; 3) adapt new or existing tools used for assessing and identifying inter-partner violence; 4) develop a sustainability plan, which will include implementation strategies focused on sustaining the project; and 5) implement lessons learned from evaluation into practice.

Membership on these leadership teams includes management and direct service representatives from the Child Welfare branch office, the local Public Health department, and local healthcare clinics. Some leadership teams also include other community providers who are interested in the safety and well-being of pregnant and parenting women who are victims of violence.

Successful collaboration of the leadership team requires considerable communication, time, and commitment from all project partners. CVSD observes that technology has been an important tool for communicating with and disseminating information to leadership teams, project partners, and key stakeholders. The local leadership teams have also agreed to and signed the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding, which has helped outline expectations of the group. Safer Futures project managers facilitate the work of and regular communication with the leadership teams, helping to motivate and maintain buy-in from members by connecting the team's work to something of value for each individual member.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Creating an action
strategy

Building a leadership
team

EXAMPLE 5

CHANGING THE ODDS

New York Morris Heights Health Center

Changing the Odds is implemented in 12 high-risk middle and high schools in Bronx, New York. Many of these schools are classified as priority or focus schools and have been at risk of being shut down due to low student performance, high truancy and low graduation rates. We provide the Teen Outreach Program (TOP©) curriculum once or twice a week during the school day and after-school for grades 6 through 12. We have cultivated an extensive list of community service partners to provide our 500 students with 20 hours of community service learning. We provide an in-classroom facilitator and, over the years, have had a handful of teachers serve as facilitators, but our experience has been that providing outside facilitators better suits the program.

We regularly meet with the principals of our participating schools to determine (1) if they like the program; (2) if they have seen changes in their participating students as a result of the program; and (3) how they would sustain the program if they are interested in doing so. These efforts have led to many fruitful conversations, including principals committing to setting aside money in their budgets to not only sustain the program, but expand it. This support and expansion efforts relate to the success of the program and the need for our project to continue to cultivate stakeholders, especially principals.

Throughout the grant period, we have met with principals on a regular basis to report on the program and share our data. As a result, we have principals who are committed to our work and some who are looking for ways to integrate our project into their school curriculum.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Securing community support

Creating strategic partnerships

Integrating program services into local infrastructures

Securing diverse financial opportunities

EXAMPLE 6

POSITIVE PREVENTION PLUS: SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR YOUTH San Bernardino Superintendent of Schools

The California Education Code requires HIV/STD prevention education in all middle and high schools, and provides guidelines for comprehensive sex education. All California school districts, therefore, have HIV/STD education policies in place, which are typically overseen by the director of Secondary Curriculum or Director of Student Services in each community. The challenge lies in expanding each district's

commitment to providing exemplary instruction beyond what is minimally required, assigning this instruction to well-prepared and credentialed health teachers, linking this instruction to Common Core State Standards and expanding collaborative partnerships to include community agencies, health services providers, and the parent community.

Traditionally we have provided classroom curriculum and sexual health-related trainings to high school science and health teachers who in turn implement the Positive Prevention PLUS curriculum in their classrooms. The School Board, school administrators and the parent community have been largely

uninvolved in these efforts. However, in the interest of increased collaboration, awareness and support, we are modifying the format of our monthly one-day curriculum trainings to include a one-to-two hour "Network Meetings" for interested school administrators, PTA representatives and community agency partners. The purpose of these meetings will be to share program/policy/services updates, prior to the actual teacher training. These stakeholders will also be invited to observe the curriculum in-service.

We are also moving beyond curriculum trainings into pressing topics, such as assuring safe and inclusive environments for transgender students and assuring student access to reproductive health services. This expansion has drawn the attention of school district leaders and collaborating agencies who are interested in meeting and discussing these issues. As a result, our agency is being asked to provide a variety of additional support materials, resources, consultations, and presentations to stakeholder groups. As we produce outcome data to share with stakeholders, and as we move beyond a focus on classroom lessons to other timely issues, HIV/STD prevention and comprehensive sex education is gaining visibility and traction as a valuable and acceptable component of K-12 education.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Being adaptable

Securing community
support

EXAMPLE 7

CIRCLE OF LIFE

University of Colorado Denver

Circle of Life (COL) is a sexual risk reduction program for Native American youth ages 10 to 12. It is the only culturally specific sexual risk reduction program for Native youth. Originally class room-based, the curriculum was adapted to an on-line format with supplemental adult-led group activities to meet the needs and interests of youth today, particularly Native youth, many of whom live in remote areas.

Since the curriculum is in the public domain, this increases its accessibility, but sustainability depends on the extent to which it is user friendly and well received by students. To this end, we have worked with the program developer to improve a number of user interface issues and have developed a comprehensive set of facilitation materials that are easy to use. These include a facilitator's guide, lesson plans and information on community development, as well as short YouTube videos that show how to teach each class.

Experience with the new online version of the intervention is limited to a research setting and we are still learning how it will be taught in the real world. To help answer these questions, we will provide technical assistance to those who are interested in implementing the intervention, which will also teach us about the challenges and successes communities are facing when using it in real world settings. This will also allow us to tailor information on the website to better meet the needs of the public and may spawn new ideas for ways to support implementation. We will also collect information about traffic to our website. This will include data on factors such as number of hits, number of pages viewed, time spent on pages, etc. This will provide an additional perspective on how the website and intervention are being accessed and potential areas for improvement.

In a research setting, we have already seen differences between sites in terms of how the intervention has been implemented. Although our goal was to have all sites implement it the same way, there have been logistical factors, technological problems, staffing and competing demands on student schedules that have affected implementation. We have come to recognize that sites will need to adapt the intervention to their unique circumstances. We hope to continue collecting information on real life implementation so that we can provide better guidance to sites that are interested in our intervention.

RELEVANT SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Being adaptable

Assessing the environment

