



Worksheet 3.1 Ways to Increase Your Sustainability Odds

For each item, mark with an \checkmark those you feel you are doing successfully and mark with a * those you feel need work.

Design and Implementation Factors

The effort's resources (e.g., staff, money, time)

- Create a project that came from the community versus one that was imposed by a funder.
- Make sure your efforts are effective and are viewed as effective.
- Set clear expectations and communicate them effectively (internally and externally).
- Engage in public relations to keep your activities/issue highly visible.
- Build in time during your current funding cycle for evaluation.
- Build on established activities.
- Choose an effort that is based on a demonstrated need in the community.
- Initiate a project that is aligned with your priorities and also helps other organizations fulfill their missions.
- Plan for sustainability.
- Obtain enough resources to generate an initial success.
- Make intentional efforts to creatively leverage existing funds to secure additional funds and in-kind support.
- Include a training component so that you can train others – you create a constituency of supporters and groom new leaders to take over later.
- Build the capacity of the community – this helps create volunteers, trainers, and advocates and can help leverage new funds.
- Obtain technical assistance to address strategic planning and sustainability needs.
- Maintain continuity in staff, community members, and political leaders.
- Include policy change to get more cost-effective, long-term outcomes.
- Have a separate group/committee focus on sustainability so that others can focus on desired outcomes.
- Make evaluation a priority - evaluate and revise activities on an ongoing basis so the project clearly demonstrates outcomes.
- Create sustainability benchmarks, especially for long-term initiatives.

Organizational Setting Factors

Structures and processes related to organization of the effort

- Work to create a strong institution (stable organization, projects are aligned with goals, strong leadership).
- Provide training and development opportunities for governance members that support their ability to effectively advocate for program and service support.
- Integrate the effort within existing systems.
- Make sure the activity fits with the organization's mission, activities, and priorities.
- Develop and nurture a well-positioned advocate/program champion.

- Gain endorsement, support, and/or commitment from the top of the organization.
- Build alliances with other groups that have a similar mission.
- Make your issue part of someone else’s agenda, plan, or operations (e.g., business, community, government, agencies).
- Give awards/recognition to key individuals and organizations to make their commitments more public.

Environmental Factors

Broader contextual factors in the political, economic, and social environment

- Look out for competing problems that might be a barrier to sustainability (e.g., downturn in the economy).
- Focus on your community’s assets versus needs.
- Involve residents in decision making so the activities are relevant and residents have a long-term commitment to the effort.
- Be flexible; look for windows of opportunity (e.g., new federal/state initiatives, new elected officials).
- Try to obtain core funding from within the community. Ask, “Who are the people with financial resources in our community who have an interest in seeing the community improve?”
- Build relationships. This will include funders (philanthropies, corporations, individual donors), other organizations, community at-large, media, etc. Be creative!
- Encourage funders to increase the proportion of funds dedicated to prevention (versus treatment, incarceration, etc.).

Adapted from KU Work Group for Community Health & Development 2010b; Mancini and Marek, 2009; Baum et al. 2006; LaPelle et al, 2006; Kaufman, 2002; Holder and Moore, 2000; DeJong and Davidson, 2000; Shediach-Rizkallah and Bone, 1998; Bracht et al, 1994; and Goodman and Steckler, 1989b.

“It’s important to take the things that we do in public health and understand that when we do them, it is serving more than one purpose. For example, press releases are not just about getting the word out today, but also about visibility for the long-run.”

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