Sustainability Toolkit – 10 Steps to Maintaining Your Community Improvements

IPHA Pre-Conference Session

Sponsored by:

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Brian Talcott, MSW

www.civicpartnerships.org
Part of Public Health Institute

Support organization focused on community-building and organizational development
SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT

10 Steps to Maintaining Your Community Improvements
Agenda

• Overview of 10-step process
• Experience using some of the tools
• Tips and stories from work with communities throughout the country
• Resources and tools
• Question and answer/discussion
Groundrules

- Have some fun! 😊
- Confidentiality
- Respect the diversity of individuals and opinions.
- Share Discussion Time: Step Up/Step Back.
- Encourage sharing of experiences, especially successes and “failures”.
- One person speaks at a time.
- Honor time limits (e.g., breaks, lunch).
- Cell phones/pagers to off/silent.
Step 1: Create a Shared Understanding of Sustainability

- Definition – Sustainability can lead to continued health and quality of life benefits in a community
- Focus on community improvement outcomes vs. program or agency continuation
- Can also be sustained through policy change or capacity building
Step 1: Family Resource Center Example

- **Family Resource Center**
  - Education & Outreach Programs
  - Free, Facilitated Play-Groups
  - Medical/Dental Clinic
  - Insurance Eligibility Specialist

- **Definition of Sustainability**

  Sustainability is the continuation of community health or quality of life benefits over time.
Step 2: Position Your Effort to Increase Your Sustainability Odds

- Factors that influence the likelihood community improvements will be sustained
- Can work on this step from beginning, through implementation
Instructions: Step 2

- Review the list – pick **two** factors you’ve done well.
- Next, select **four** you would like to work on.
Step 2 - Role of Marketing

- Assistance with marketing is helpful
- Helps nurture program champions and allies
- Educates regarding policy changes
- If people don’t know who you are and what you’re doing, why should they care whether the work continues?
Step 2 - Role of Program Champions/Allies

- Who should be an ally?
- People with fiscal and policy decision-making authority
- Community voices
Step 2 - Connections Map Exercise

• Review the sector boxes
• Identify people you know in all the boxes
• Also identify (*) people you feel that you need to develop relationships with
In order to position our efforts for success, we have successfully **built community capacity** through our education sessions and have **involved residents in our decision-making process** through community surveys and workshop evaluations.

In order to improve our sustainability odds, we will also:

- Make evaluation a priority by…
- Develop a program champion by…
- Obtain core funding from the community by…
- Engage in Public Relations to …

We will need to secure the following resources in order to continue/accomplish the above efforts.
Step 3: Create a Plan to Work Through the Process

- Who needs to be involved?
- How long will it take?
- What is the commitment of individuals involved?
Step 3: Family Resource Center Example

- **Who needs to be involved?**
  - Group Members are…
  - Group Coordinator is…
  - Group Facilitator is…

- **How long will it take?**
  - 8 months; schedule attached

- **What is the commitment of individuals involved?**
  - Monthly, 2-hour meetings using consensus decision-making.
Step 4: Look at Current Picture and Pending Items

- Have a clear picture of what activities or efforts will be included in sustainability discussion
- Identify funding end dates
- Pending items – anything that will impact continuation of one of your efforts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Funding End Date</th>
<th>Pending Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Insurance Assistance</td>
<td>6/30/2009</td>
<td>Continued County funding?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Medical/Dental Clinic          | 12/31/2009       | • Facility lease is up 5/1/10  
• Partnership with local community clinic? |
| Facilitated Playgroups         | 6/30/2009        | • Proposal in to XXX Foundation – should hear by 1/15/09  
• Possible parent facilitators? |
| Parent Education/Outreach      | 6/30/2011        | Partnership agreement with instructor expires/is renewable on 10/1/2009       |
Developing Criteria

Impact

Resources Needed

Community Support

Still a Need
Impact Criteria Examples
Evidence-Based

- There has been an improvement in the way collaborative members work together as a result of this effort.
- There has been, or soon will be, a measurable improvement in community health.
- This activity has resulted in improvements in health promoting policy.
- There is evidence of increased community capacity to deal with the issues involved with this activity.
- The potential benefits (short and long term) justify the cost of doing the work.
- The scope of impact encompasses a broad community demographic and need.
- We have been able to leverage additional resources (money, services, collaborative expertise, etc.) through this effort.
- It is likely that we will be able to secure additional funding or resources to support this activity.
- We have the capacity to continue this work.
- There are individuals in this group willing to carry out the work.
- This efforts has demonstrated a greater sustainability success rate relative to other intervention possibilities.
- *The intervention has the potential for leveraging resources and activities of other interventions.*
Community Support Examples

- The community supports this effort.
- Key decision-makers support the effort.
- Individuals within the community are able to identify specific accomplishments/activities that we have conducted.
Still a Need Examples

- This effort helps meet a long-term community goal.
- The issue(s) addressed by this effort is/are still a community need.
- Discontinuing this activity will have a negative impact on the community and/or population served.
- This issue/problem is worth devoting our resources to, relative to other issues/problems in the community.
Step 5: Develop Criteria to Help Determine What to Continue

• What questions do you need to have answered to help you decide what to continue?

• Pick the 3-5 most important criteria

• Answer those questions for each activity/effort listed in Step 4
Role of Evaluation

- Consider sustainability when planning evaluation
- Select sustainability criteria in beginning and set up data collection systems
- Ensure use of evaluation findings in sustainability decision-making
**Step 5: Family Resource Center Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale:</th>
<th>1= DEFINITELY NOT</th>
<th>2= PROBABLY NOT</th>
<th>3= PROBABLY YES</th>
<th>4= DEFINITELY YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRITERIA ↓ (Enter agreed upon criteria below)</td>
<td>Project/Activity</td>
<td>Project/Activity</td>
<td>Project/Activity</td>
<td>Project/Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example:</td>
<td>Medical Insurance Assistance</td>
<td>Medical/Dental Clinic</td>
<td>Facilitated Playgroup</td>
<td>Parent Education/Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. We are filling a niche</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Measurable improvement in health</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consistent with our mission</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS:</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 6: Decide What to Continue and Prioritize

- Which efforts/activities should be continued? – prioritize
- Criteria results help with decisions
- Difficult step – neutral facilitator recommended
- Assist with transitions (e.g., clients, employees)
Step 6: Decide What to Continue and Prioritize

- Continue
- Ask someone else to continue
- Do Not Continue
- Need Further Information
Step 7: Create Options for Maintaining Your Priority Efforts

- What results have we achieved that justify continuing this effort?
- To whom is this effort important (or who benefits) and do we have their commitment to finding resources (not necessarily money) for this effort?
- What cost effectiveness, cost savings or other financial justification can we document?
- What resources (financial and other) are needed to continue?
- What are some possible sources of resources for continuing this effort?
Step 8: Develop a Sustainability Plan

2 Items:

- Action Plan – Who does what by when?
- Marketing Piece – Help get the word out about what you need
Sustainability Plan

• Who we are (history)

• What we’ve accomplished (outcomes)

• What we want to continue (Step 6)

• What we need to continue them (Be specific – not just money)

• 1 piece of paper, double-sided
Step 9: Implement Your Sustainability Plan

- Implement action plan
- Get the word out (marketing, networking)
- Be flexible!
- Celebrate successes
- Get additional support
Step 10: Evaluate Your Outcomes and Revise as Needed

- What did we want to continue?
- Is it continuing?
- Revise plan if needed
Questions ???

Please complete your session evaluation!

Thanks !!!