

Assessing and Building Sustainability: Outline

What is sustainability?

- Our definition: the ability to maintain programming and its benefits over time.
- We are specifically addressing a program's *capacity* for sustainability, which we believe leads to actual sustained policies and outcomes.

Why is it important?

Development of the Tool:

- Literature review of sustainability in organizations and public health programs
- Concept Mapping to generate tool items and domains
- Advisory Committee input

Reliability Testing:

- We collected secondary data from over 590 users from over 250 different programs in tobacco control, obesity prevention, oral health, and diabetes.
- Psychometric analyses show that the revised tool is reliable with Cronbach's alphas for the 8 domains ranging from 0.79 to 0.92.

Audience:

- Tool was originally designed for public health programs, but is applicable for clinical care and social service programs too.
- Can be used at community, state, or national levels.
- Tool has been used by local health departments, community based organizations, coalitions, hospital programs, public works departments, state health departments, etc. across the US.

Program Sustainability Framework:

- Sustainability goes beyond just funding. The 8 domains interact to build sustainability capacity. See [Framework handout](#).

Using Program Sustainability Assessment Tool:

- Identify users: we recommend multiple people from same program complete.
- Define terms: make sure everyone is clear about what program/initiative/activity is being assessed.
- Assess: 8 domains, 5 items per domain, less than 15 minutes to complete.
- Review results and identify areas of strength and challenge.

Sustainability Planning:

- Envision future of your program: what do you want the benefits and activities to look like 3, 5, 10 years from now?
- Decide which elements of your program to sustain or cut.
- Prioritize the areas of sustainability capacity to address first.
- Engage in sustainability action planning: use SMART goals, involve stakeholders, be strategic, and anticipate opposition.
- Monitor progress on your sustainability goals and reassess your sustainability capacity on a regular basis.