The Road to Financial Stability: Partnering with Grantmakers

Partnering with Grantmakers: A Brief Guide

In the May 2013 Aligning Forces for Quality National Meeting session *The Road to Financial Stability: Partnering with Grantmakers*, decision makers from foundations already funding work in the healthcare world discussed their thinking around awarding grants. Understanding what foundations consider when awarding grants can go a long way in helping an alliance craft the right proposal or pitch. Here are some additional resources to inform your efforts to partner with grantmakers.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
The online Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) is a database containing information on all financial and non-financial federal assistance programs.

Website: www.gsa.gov/cfda

The Chronicle of Philanthropy
The Chronicle of Philanthropy is the newspaper of the nonprofit world. It is the #1 news source for charity leaders, fund raisers, grantmakers and others involved in philanthropy.

Website: http://philanthropy.com

Corporation for Public Broadcasting
The Corporation for Public Broadcasting has developed an easy guide enumerating the basic elements of grant writing.

Website: http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html

Council on Foundations
The Council on Foundations is a member organization supporting grantmakers in foundation management. While its purpose is not to provide services to those seeking grants, this is a good resource for learning more about philanthropy from the perspective of grantmakers. Members are foundations, corporations or philanthropic entities that primarily provide charitable support to two or more organizations or individuals on an annual basis.

Website: http://www.cof.org/

The Foundation Center
The Foundation Center is a leading source of information about philanthropy. The Center maintains a comprehensive database with information on grantmakers and grants. Close to 550 foundations support its work to connect people seeking positive change to the resources necessary for success.

Website: http://foundationcenter.org/

Foundation Tutorial: http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/ft_tutorial/index.html

Proposal Writing Short Course:
http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/index.html

Catalog of Nonprofit Literature (database of philanthropy literature, updated daily):
http://cnl.foundationcenter.org/

Foundation Directory Online Professional Database
The Foundation Directory Online Professional Database is available through the Central Library. It provides detailed information on over 90,000 foundations and 900,000 recent grants. Information includes application information, limitations, and funding interests of foundations.

Website: http://www.ilibrary.org/cgi-bin/ilib_authorize.pl?mode=single&dbident=73

Free Management Library
The Free Management Library is an online library of comprehensive resources informing self-management and leadership as well as management and leadership of other individuals, groups and organizations.

Website: http://www.managementhelp.org

Grantmakers In Health
Grantmakers In Health is a nonprofit, educational organization serving trustees and staff of foundations and corporate giving programs. Its mission is to help grantmakers improve the nation's health by strengthening grantmakers' knowledge, skills, effectiveness to fostering communication and collaboration among grantmakers and with others.

Website: http://www.gih.org/

GrantsNet
GrantsNet is a tool managed by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Grants Management. It is designed to facilitate the exchange of information about federal grant programs.

Website: http://www.hhs.gov/grantsnet

GuideStar
GuideStar manages a database of IRS-recognized nonprofit organizations and includes information about nonprofits' missions, programs, leaders, goals, accomplishments and needs.

Website: http://www.guidestar.org

Nonprofit Solutions Center
The Nonprofit Solutions Center maintains a free online database of pre-screened consultants and contractors who work with nonprofit organizations. Information about consultants includes their skills, backgrounds and competencies.

Website: http://www.nonprofitsolutions.iupui.edu

The Toolbox Guide to Development Funds
The Toolbox Guide to Development Funds is a database of local, state and federal funding available for community and economic development. It is maintained by the Center for Economic and Community Development.

Website: http://www.bsu.edu/cecd/toolbox

SUSTAINING IMPROVED OUTCOMES:

A Toolkit

by Scott Thomas, PhD
and Deborah Zahn, MPH

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SUSTAINING
IMPROVED OUTCOMES: A Toolkit

by Scott Thomas, PhD and Deborah Zahn, MPH

INTRODUCTION

As quality improvement continues to be a major focus in the areas of public health, healthcare, social service, education, and related fields, there is growing interest in developing strategies to ensure that such improvement is sustained in the long term. Although there is general agreement that it is ineffective from either an implementation or a funding perspective to make improvements that do not last, there is a need for clear definitions and models to guide sustainability. In this toolkit, we focus on sustaining improved outcomes and provide a framework for assessing and planning for sustainability.

DEFINITION OF
SUSTAINING IMPROVED OUTCOMES

This toolkit addresses how to sustain improved outcomes that have been achieved during project implementation. The definition of sustainability of improved outcomes that guides this toolkit is "when new ways of working and improved outcomes become the norm."[1] This definition has three important parts.

NEW WAYS OF WORKING

The first part of the definition is "new ways of working." This means that, due to an intervention of some sort, a targeted group of individuals has begun to work in new ways. These interventions can include trainings, systems changes, or policy development. For example, a health clinic that transfers the duty of providing foot exams for patients with diabetes from doctors to nurses has developed a new way of working for the clinicians. A local coalition getting store clerks to more consistently check the age of people buying tobacco products has developed new ways of working for the clerks.

IMPROVED OUTCOMES

The second part of the definition is "improved outcomes." This means that a measurable improvement has occurred as a result of the new ways of working. In the first example described above, this would mean that a significantly higher percentage of patients with diabetes are receiving foot exams because of the new way of working. In the second example, this would mean that fewer minors are illegally purchasing tobacco products from store clerks.

BECOMES THE NORM

The third part of the definition is "becomes the norm." This means that the improvements are permanent instead of temporary and do not need ongoing support to make them continue. Stated another way, the new way of working becomes the regular way of working. In the first example above, this would mean that the increased percent of foot exams are continuing a year later and that both doctors and nurses have accepted their change in duties. In the tobacco example, this would mean that tobacco sales to minors remained lower two years after making the changes, and the store retailers still accepted that this was now the regular way of operating.

NOTE: Other terms are sometimes used when addressing sustainability, including maintenance, institutionalization, continuation, internalization, and durability. However, most reports and journal articles now use the term sustainability, and we will be using it throughout this guide.

1 Sustainability: Model and Guide. National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement. (2007). Note: When our work in sustainability began, the Sustainability: Model and Guide was publicly available online. Access is now limited to those working in the United Kingdom.

DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY

There are many ways to define and address sustainability. This toolkit focuses on the sustainability of improved outcomes. Two additional definitions of sustainability also are often used: the sustainability of a specific program or service and the sustainability of an organization. The term sustainability is frequently used without a clear explanation of which type of sustainability is being discussed. Our experience is that both funders and grantees will generally default to defining sustainability as securing ongoing funding for programs and services.

The primary difference among the types of sustainability is that some level of ongoing funding is required for sustaining organizations and programs but not for the sustaining improved outcomes. Although we do not discuss the sustainability of organizations and programs/services in this toolkit, we believe that many of the principles and factors outlined here can be applied to all types of sustainability. However, fulfilling the need for ongoing funding likely will require additional strategies not discussed in this toolkit.

WHY FOCUS ON SUSTAINING IMPROVED OUTCOMES

SUSTAINABILITY DOES NOT HAPPEN AUTOMATICALLY

It is important to address sustainability because improved outcomes achieved during the implementation phase of a project do not *automatically* result in lasting improvements. For example, a social service agency might increase the number of referrals to a parenting program as a result of their activities during a grant project, but, once the grant has ended, that number drops back down to its earlier level. This occurs far too often Indeed, a frequently referenced study of organizational improvements found a 70% failure rate in sustaining long-term changes. Formally focusing on sustainability throughout the planning and implementation of an improvement project can increase the sustainability of those improvements.

FUTURE FUNDING SHOULD NOT BE THE SOLE OR PRIMARY FOCUS

Because there may be elements of projects that require ongoing funding, funding is included as one of the 12 factors in the sustainability framework described below. However, it should not be the sole or primary focus of sustaining improved outcomes. Our experience has been that when individuals or organizations do not *formally* focus on sustainability, they frequently default to seeking continued funding. However, if new ways of working have truly become the norm, sustainability can often be achieved without the need for ongoing funding.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM USING THIS TOOLKIT

We designed this toolkit to be used by a number of different audiences.

GRANTEES

This toolkit can be used by organizations that receive grant funding or contracts to make external changes and improvements. This includes community-based organizations, state and county departments of public health, social service agencies, voluntary organizations, and similar agencies. These organizations will be referred to as grantees throughout this toolkit.

ORGANIZATIONS

This toolkit can be used by organizations that are making improvements within their organization. This includes the same organizations noted above as well as schools, health and healthcare facilities, and other agencies.

FUNDERS

This toolkit also can be used by funders. This includes government, foundation, and corporate funders. While all of the information in this toolkit is useful for funders in supporting sustainability among their grantees, the second part of this toolkit specifically addresses sustainability from a funder's perspective.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The objective of this toolkit is to help individuals and organizations formally plan for sustaining improved outcomes. We present 12 factors and a set of tools that can contribute to the sustainability of improved outcomes. These factors can be used by grantees or by funders who want to assist their grantees in sustaining improved outcomes.

USING THE TOOLKIT

There are many ways that you can use this toolkit. We encourage you to use it in whatever way helps your project or your grantees' projects sustain improved outcomes. That said, our experience has shown that addressing sustainability *in some formal manner* is the most important step.

One way to use the toolkit is to read through it and become acquainted with the definitions and concepts. This can help you start to think about how you can formally address sustainability. It can help you develop a common understanding of how and what is trying to be sustained. Our experience has been that even this level of engagement can significantly improve sustainability planning. You also can read more about sustainability by reading the articles listed in the Resource section. These can provide you with additional models that can help you develop a working understanding of sustainability.

In addition, you can print out the list of definitions of the 12 sustainability factors and use it to guide you in a focused discussion with others about your sustainability for a project or your grantees' projects. Or you can just use the Sustainability Worksheet to provide you and others with a further level of detail for your sustainability planning. Finally, you can go through or support a more detailed, step-by-step process by using the Sustainability Assessment Tool and Sustainability Planning Tool together. These worksheets and assessment and planning tools are located in the appendices.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

PERCEIVED VALUE

MONITORING
AND FEEDBACK

LEADERSHIP

STAFF

SHARED MODELS

ORGANIZATIONAL
INFRASTRUCTURE

ORGANIZATIONAL FIT

COMMUNITY FIT

PARTNERS

SPREAD

FUNDING

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINING IMPROVED OUTCOMES

THE FRAMEWORK

This toolkit uses a 12-factor framework to address sustainability. These factors are listed on the left.

THE SOURCE OF THE FACTORS

These factors were developed from a number of sources. The primary source was a qualitative study conducted by the Primary Care Development Corporation and funded by the Commonwealth Fund[1]. Both authors of this toolkit worked with a research team on the study. That study examined factors that contribute to sustaining and spreading quality improvements in healthcare settings. Those factors were then compared with published studies and available reports on sustainability. (*See Resource section.*) One of the main publications used—and the source of our definition—was the *Sustainability: Model and Guide*[2], produced by the National Health Services' Institute for Innovation and Improvement in the United Kingdom.

The framework also has been influenced by more than 20 workshops that the authors have conducted on sustainability over the past three years. The feedback from workshop participants has been instrumental in helping us refine, narrow, and clarify the 12 factors we now use.

LIMITATIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

To date, there is limited research that examines both the factors responsible for sustaining improved outcomes and the contribution of each factor relative to others. There are exceptions to this, such as the National Health Service guide and the work of Mancini and Marek[3]. Because of this, we cannot yet say which factor is more important than another factor and in what situations and if a particular combination of factors is especially effective in producing sustainable outcomes.

However, the factors used in this framework have appeared with enough frequency in other studies to make them an excellent starting point for addressing sustainability. Additionally, workshop participants with experience in implementing improvement projects consistently indicate that these factors are useful in helping them sustain improved outcomes.

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1 K Hinchey Judge, D Zahn, N Lustbader, S Thomas, D Ramjohn, and M Chin. (2008) Factors Contributing to Sustaining and Spreading Learning Collaborative Improvements: Results of a Qualitative Research Study. Primary Care Development Corporation.
2 Sustainability: Model and Guide. National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement. (2007). Note: When our work in sustainability began, the Sustainability: Model and Guide was publicly available online. Access is now limited to those working in the United Kingdom.
3 Mancini, J. & Marek, L. (2004). Sustaining community-based programs for families: conceptualization and measurement. Family Relations, 53, 339-347.

GRANTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS
HOW TO WORK WITH THE 12 FACTORS

2

**IMPORTANT
QUESTIONS**

How important
is this factor to
your particular
improvement
project?

To what degree
do we believe
that you will be
able to influence
this factor?

It is a menu of options, not a to-do list

We have provided a list of 12 factors that you can use to develop a
sustainability plan. It is important to keep in mind that the 12 factors
are meant to serve as a *menu of options*, not a *to-do* list. You do not
need to plan and conduct activities for all 12 factors. Rather, choose
the factors to work on based on their importance to your particular
improvement project and on your ability to influence them.

Two important questions when choosing factors

As noted above, there are two questions that you need to answer
when choosing which factors to select. These questions will be ad-
dressed in more detail in the worksheet and tools. However, it is
helpful to keep these questions in mind from the start when considering
any particular factor.

How important is this factor to your particular improvement project?

When asking how important the different factors are to your improve-
ment project, remember that some factors will not be relevant. You
may be working on a community project in which the factor *Orga-
nizational Infrastructure* does not apply. Or you may be working on
organizational improvements in which *Partners* does not apply. Each
improvement project will have a different set of factors that is impor-
tant to its success in being sustained.

To what degree do we believe that you will be able to influence this factor?

Ask yourself to what degree you will be able to influence the factor
that you believe is important to affect. You will likely be able to influ-
ence some factors more than others. An example of this might be
the factor *Government Policy*. Changing a government policy might
be very important to sustaining the improvements you have made but
would take more resources than your organization has. Another ex-
ample might be *Leadership*. You might believe that leadership support
within your organization would be very helpful to sustainability but
realize that you have little access to leadership and, therefore, cannot
influence them.

HOW TO WORK WITH THE 12 FACTORS
– continued

Use three or four factors

Our experience has been that when first developing a sustainability plan it might be best to select only three or four factors to work with. This will allow you to develop a more in depth plan on each one, monitor how the sustainability activities are going, and make adjustments along the way. You can decide to start with just these three or four factors and move on to other factors at a later time. How many factors you initially select will depend on your particular project, your available resources, and the degree to which you believe you can impact the chosen factors.

Multiple subcategories

You can assess and plan for sustainability factors both generally and specifically. For example, you could generally assess how strong you think *Leadership* is overall in regards to sustaining the improved outcome. Or you could focus more specifically and assess subcategories of *Leadership*, such as executives, managers, or champions. As another example, you could plan general activities for *Monitoring and Feedback* to sustain the improved outcome. Or you could focus more specifically and plan *Monitoring and Feedback* activities directed at a community, clients, staff, or your funders. You can see examples of different subcategories for each factor in the *Sustainability Factors: Subcategories* sheet in Appendix C.

Factors strengthen factors

You often can strengthen factors by using other factors. As examples, you can frequently increase *Perceived Value* by providing ongoing feedback about the positive outcomes your project has achieved (i.e., *Monitoring and Feedback*). You can increase the continuous support of *Staff* by putting *Organizational Infrastructures* in place that are easy for them to use, such as a one-step referral system. Therefore, when thinking about how to strengthen a sustainability factor, consider how the other factors can work together.

How the factors work

The following 12 sustainability factors each have a definition, a suggestion on how to use the factor to influence the sustainability of improved outcomes, and an example of how that suggestion might be implemented.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **PERCEIVED VALUE**

DEFINITION: Acknowledged value by those affected by the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Conduct specific activities to increase your target stakeholders' perception of the value of your work and its outcomes.

EXAMPLES: Give regular feedback on your improved outcomes to key stakeholders; present data at meetings with leadership.

FACTOR: **MONITORING AND FEEDBACK**

DEFINITION: Information on improved outcomes is collected and communicated to target audiences.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Track and communicate your improved outcomes to your target audiences on a regular basis and in easy-to-understand formats.

EXAMPLES: Host quarterly information-gathering calls to monitor project outcomes; display charts and graphs of improved outcomes in locations within an organization where target audiences will see them.

FACTOR: **LEADERSHIP**

DEFINITION: The degree to which leaders, including decision-makers and champions, are *actively* engaged in the implementation stage and beyond

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that leadership is involved in program development and activities

EXAMPLES: Have leaders present updates on improved outcomes at regular management meetings; invite leaders to participate in planning meetings.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **STAFF**

DEFINITION: Staff have the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Provide staff trainings, technical assistance, and feedback on the success of the program.

EXAMPLES: Train staff on a new referral system and provide updates on its impact on patients; staff experience a new curriculum as more effective in achieving better outcomes.

FACTOR: **SHARED MODELS**

DEFINITION: Continued use of a shared model among those involved in the new ways of working.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Use a commonly accepted model to plan, implement, and evaluate program progress.

EXAMPLES: Use the Chronic Care Model at planning meetings to determine gaps in implementation; use the 40 Developmental Assets model to coordinate staff activities.

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

DEFINITION: Degree to which organizational operations support the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Embed changes to the organization that are difficult to get rid of.

EXAMPLES: Revise job descriptions to include new job roles; allocate resources to new ways of working.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the organization's overall goal and operations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that staff and administrators view the new ways of working as a important part of the organization's identity and operations.

EXAMPLES: Incorporate the new ways of working into the organization's strategic plan; train staff on the purpose and importance of new ways of working.

FACTOR: **COMMUNITY FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the communities' interests, needs, and abilities.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that community members and/or organizations view the new ways of working as helpful and important to their communities.

EXAMPLES: Provide health screenings at locations accessible to community members and available at convenient times.

FACTOR: **PARTNERS**

DEFINITION: Involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that partners have an active role in both decision-making and the provision of resources.

EXAMPLES: Develop agreements with partners to continue to contribute staff or resources after the implementation phase.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **SPREAD**

DEFINITION: Expansion of new ways of working and improved outcomes to additional locations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that multiple locations incorporate the new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Expand a new protocol for conducting foot exams for patients with diabetes from one community health center site to other sites.

FACTOR: **FUNDING**

DEFINITION: Funding beyond original project period.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Obtain additional funding to assist with the continued implementation of new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Obtain second-year grant funding for school-based asthma education because it was effective and well received in the first year of implementation.

FACTOR: **GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

DEFINITION: Degree to which new ways of working and improved outcomes are supported by government policies.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Policies are enacted that make it easier to conduct new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Secure reimbursement for providers to conduct smoking cessation with specific populations.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

SUSTAINABILITY AND PROJECT DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION

Improved outcomes are most likely to be maintained when sustainability is addressed during all phases of an improvement project. The following scenarios provide examples of how sustainability can be built into a project's design, implementation, and evaluation. The examples are composites informed by examples from the authors' work.

As has been noted throughout the toolkit, even focusing on just a few sustainability factors can have a positive impact. And you can address more factors as the project progresses.

DESIGN EXAMPLE

A public health organization designed an intervention to improve the monitoring and removal of lead-based paint in a low-income community. It received a small grant from the city government to design and implement the intervention over two years. As it was designing the project, it chose to focus on three primary sustainability factors: *Partners, Organizational Fit, and Staff*.

Partners:
Because the organization did not anticipate that the government would renew the funds at the end of the project, it chose to work with a partner organization that could conduct the monitoring and coordinating of the removal of lead-based paint in their clients' homes. The partner organization was actively involved in all aspects of the planning and design process. This involvement helped make sure that the partner organization felt that the project was its project too

Organizational Fit:
This new function of monitoring and removing lead-based paint fit well with what the partner organization already did in their clients' homes. It already had an ongoing contract with the government to provide a range of in-home health services, including helping its clients improve their living situations. It also recently identified addressing environmental hazards as a new priority area during an internal strategic planning process.

Staff:
The public health organization designed a training program that showed how important lead-based paint is to the health of the partner organization's clients. It also emphasized the skills the home care workers needed to monitor and coordinate the removal of lead-based paint.

SUSTAINABILITY AND PROJECT DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION

IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLE

A community health center was implementing a project to improve the health outcomes for their patients with diabetes. During implementation, they chose to focus on three primary sustainability factors: *Leadership, Spread, and Organizational Infrastructure.*

Leadership:

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was the main champion of the project. She did a number of things to ensure that her staff knew how important this project was to her and that she expected to see the health center's outcomes improve in a sustainable way. She kicked off the project during a meeting with all of her executive managers. At the meeting, she talked about how important this project was to her and the health center, giving a personal example of how diabetes impacted her family. She gave a presentation that showed data on how the health center's diabetes numbers compared with national standards and led a discussion on what the health center needed to do to improve and sustain those improvements over time. Throughout the implementation period, she routinely asked her managers to report on progress and spoke at several staff meetings about the project. She also worked with her managers to solve problems that the project encountered and ensured that the staff working on the project had the resources they needed to embed the new ways of working into regular operations.

Perceived Value:

The project staff worked to increase the perceived value of the improved outcomes among their leadership, staff, patients, and community partners. They regularly gave their leadership data on the diabetes improvements as well as personal stories about patients whose health outcomes had improved. They posted graphs showing the improvement in diabetes outcomes and patient thank-you letters throughout the health centers. They also worked with the marketing department to include articles in staff and member newsletters and on their public website. The CEO regularly provided updates on the project's outcomes at Board meetings.

Organizational Infrastructure:

The project staff incorporated the new ways of working into many aspects of the entire organization. They developed new protocols for how patients with diabetes were identified, monitored, and treated. They made changes to their electronic medical record system so that doctors and other health care staff were automatically alerted when their patients with diabetes needed a test or follow-up care. The project staff worked with the human resources department to incorporate the new roles that staff had to play into job descriptions and performance reviews. The CEO and the health center Board included a focus on diabetes in their strategic planning process.

SUSTAINABILITY AND PROJECT DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION

EVALUATION EXAMPLE

An organization was working on a project to reduce childhood obesity among students in a public school district. As they were designing and implementing the evaluation of the project, they chose to focus on three primary sustainability factors: *Monitoring and Feedback, Perceived Value, and Government Policies.*

Monitoring and Feedback:

The project evaluation was designed to capture information on outcomes at the end of the project and provide project staff with information and feedback throughout the implementation process that helped them assess and address sustainability. In addition to measures related to weight, the evaluators selected measures to monitor changes in the school environment that could help sustain reductions in childhood obesity over time. This included reduced availability of sugar-sweetened beverages, increased availability of fresh fruit and vegetables, and increased opportunities for physical activity. The project staff created easy-to-understand posters that showed how the school environments were improving and provided the data to each school's administration and district leadership. The data showed the district's outcomes and compared outcomes across schools. The staff also sent parents material with information on how to support improvements at their child's school.

Spread:

The project staff first implemented the project in one school. After achieving initial success at the first location, they implemented the project in the other schools in the district. This helped make the new ways of working become the norm throughout the entire school district. In response to new issues that arose as they implemented the project at the other schools, they made a few changes to their sustainability plan, such as bringing the Parent-Teacher Associations onboard as key stakeholders.

Government Policies:

The project staff identified policies that would help sustain the improved outcomes. Because several advocacy organizations were already working on the issue, the project staff decided to contribute to increasing government funding for physical activity in schools. The staff provided data from their project and personal stories to support the advocacy activities.

ANSWERING THE SUSTAINABILITY QUESTION IN GRANT PROPOSALS

In most grant applications, there is usually a question about how your planned improvements will be sustained after grant funding had ended. Many applicants answer this question by describing plans to obtain future funding. This answer is sometimes satisfactory to funders because they are also thinking of sustainability in terms of funding. However, many funders are beginning to expect grantees to address sustainability of outcomes and in a more formal and strategic manner. One way grantees can do this is to describe their sustainability plans using some of the factors that are outlined in this toolkit. Grant reviewers will then see that they are thinking through sustainability with the same attention that they are giving to design, implementation, and evaluation.

Using these factors to answer the sustainability question can be easy. This is because many of the activities that you will have described in the project description section of your grant proposal already or can have a sustainability component. These activities can include changes to forms, training staff to work in new ways, and status reports that you will be providing to people involved in the project. The following example is based on an actual grant proposal and shows how these sustainability activities can be described.

You will notice that in the description on the next page the names for the sustainability factors appear slightly different from the way that we have listed them in the toolkit. For instance, *systems changes* has been used for *Organizational Infrastructure*. This is because the term *system changes* is more immediately recognizable in this context. *Staff involvement* was used because the term *Staff* by itself did not have much meaning. Finally, promoting the value of the changes has been used for *Perceived Value* because that is also a phrase that is more easily understood by grant reviewers.

The key is to use whatever terms work for you and your project. It is more important that the grant reviewers be able to understand the description of your sustainability activities quickly than it is to use the exact names of the factors

> Many funders are beginning to expect grantees to address sustainability of improved outcomes in a more formal and strategic manner.

ANSWERING THE SUSTAINABILITY QUESTION IN GRANT PROPOSALS

– continued

EXAMPLE OF HOW TO ANSWER THE SUSTAINABILITY QUESTION FOR GRANT PROPOSALS

In order to maintain the improvements in the number of low-income pregnant women who receive smoking cessation services from our home care staff, we will be focusing on three specific sustainability factors: systems changes, staff involvement, and promoting the value of the changes that have been made.

We will be addressing systems changes by redesigning our intake and follow-up forms that are used by our home care staff during client visits. The new forms will require staff to document the details of the cessation activities that take place during home visits with pregnant women who smoke. These new forms will continue to be used after the end of the grant period.

Sustainability also will be strengthened by involving the home care staff in the development of the cessation activities that they will be using with their clients. This early and ongoing involvement of staff will ensure that they develop the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing these cessation activities.

We will also work to make sure that the value of adding cessation activities to the home care is clearly recognized by all those involved in the improvement project. This includes the home care staff, the clients, leadership within our organization, partners, and our funders. We will provide ongoing feedback to these individuals about the positive impact the cessation activities are having. We will provide this feedback in staff updates and brief email reports using both graphs and case reports.

USING THE TOOLS

We have included a number of tools that you can use to develop a plan for addressing sustainability. We encourage you to use some or all of the tools in whatever way helps you sustain improved outcomes. The tools in the appendix are:

APPENDIX A **SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS: DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES**

This sheet provides an easy reference to the factors and their definitions. It can be printed out on one double-sided sheet. This sheet can help focus a meeting in which sustainability activities are going to be discussed or planned.

APPENDIX B **SUSTAINABILITY: HOW FACTORS WORK**

This sheet lists the factors as they are described in the toolkit. It includes not only the definitions of the factors but also how to use the factor to strengthen sustainability and examples.

APPENDIX C **12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS: DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

These sheets describe the 12 sustainability factors in detail, including a definition of the factor, a suggestion on how to use the factor to influence the sustainability of improved outcomes, and an example of how that suggestion might be implemented.

APPENDIX D **SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS: SUBCATEGORIES**

This sheet provides subcategories for the main factors that can be used to assess and plan for sustainability in more detail.

APPENDIX E **SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEET**

This worksheet provides an easy and quick way to determine which factors you want to address and the activities you will do to address them. Refer to Appendix A – *Sustainability Factors: Definitions and Examples* or Appendix C – *12 Sustainability Factors* when completing this worksheet.

APPENDIX F **GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING WORKSHEETS**

The guide describes how to use the assessment and planning forms together to conduct a more thorough sustainability plan..

APPENDIX G **SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

This form helps conduct a more detailed assessment of each of the 12 factors as they relate to an improvement project.

APPENDIX H **SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING WORKSHEET**

This form will help you plan the sustainability activities that you will do to strengthen those factors that you have chosen.

FUNDERS
HOW THE FACTORS WORK

Funders often ask potential grantees to describe in their proposals how they will sustain their work once the grant funding has ended. Yet, often times, funders do not explain what they mean by sustainability or offer sufficient guidance to help their grantees achieve it.

In this section, we will discuss the sustainability factors and discuss the funder's role in promoting the sustainability of improved outcomes. We will discuss ways to develop your organization's definition of sustainability, support sustainability, communicate sustainability definitions and expectations, and contribute to the larger field of knowledge. We also will provide samples of sustainability content that can easily be incorporated into the grant making and management processes.

Multiple subcategories

Your grantees can assess and plan for sustainability both generally and specifically. For example, they can generally assess how strong they think *Leadership* is in regards to sustaining the improved outcome. Or they could focus more specifically and assess subcategories of leadership. *Leadership* subcategories could include executives, managers, or champions. As another example, they could plan general activities for *Monitoring and Feedback* to sustain the improved outcome. Or they could focus more specifically and plan *Monitoring and Feedback* activities directed at a community, clients, staff, or other funders. You can see examples of different subcategories for each factor in the *Sustainability Factors: Subcategories* sheet in Appendix C.

Factors strengthen factors

Grantees also can strengthen factors by using other factors. As examples, they can frequently increase *Perceived Value* by providing ongoing feedback about the positive outcomes achieved (i.e., *Monitoring and Feedback*). They can increase the continuous support of *Staff* by putting *Organizational Infrastructures* in place that are easy to use by them, such as a one-step referral system. Therefore, when thinking about how to strengthen a sustainability factor, grantees should consider how the factors can work together.

The 12 sustainability factors are described in detail in the next appendix. Each factor has a definition, a suggestion on how to use the factor to influence the sustainability of improved outcomes, and an example of how that suggestion might be implemented.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **PERCEIVED VALUE**

DEFINITION: Acknowledged value by those affected by the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Conduct specific activities to increase your target stakeholders' perception of the value of your work and its outcomes.

EXAMPLES: Give regular feedback on your improved outcomes to key stakeholders; present data at meetings with leadership.

FACTOR: **MONITORING AND FEEDBACK**

DEFINITION: Information on improved outcomes is collected and communicated to target audiences.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Track and communicate your improved outcomes to your target audiences on a regular basis and in easy-to-understand formats.

EXAMPLES: Host quarterly information-gathering calls to monitor project outcomes; display charts and graphs of improved outcomes in locations within an organization where target audiences will see them.

FACTOR: **LEADERSHIP**

DEFINITION: The degree to which leaders, including decision-makers and champions, are *actively* engaged in the implementation stage and beyond

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that leadership is involved in program development and activities

EXAMPLES: Have leaders present updates on improved outcomes at regular management meetings; invite leaders to participate in planning meetings.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **STAFF**

DEFINITION: Staff have the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Provide staff trainings, technical assistance, and feedback on the success of the program.

EXAMPLES: Train staff on a new referral system and provide updates on its impact on patients; staff experience a new curriculum as more effective in achieving better outcomes.

FACTOR: **SHARED MODELS**

DEFINITION: Continued use of a shared model among those involved in the new ways of working.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Use a commonly accepted model to plan, implement, and evaluate program progress.

EXAMPLES: Use the Chronic Care Model at planning meetings to determine gaps in implementation; use the 40 Developmental Assets model to coordinate staff activities.

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

DEFINITION: Degree to which organizational operations support the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Embed changes to the organization that are difficult to get rid of.

EXAMPLES: Revise job descriptions to include new job roles; allocate resources to new ways of working.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the organization's overall goal and operations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that staff and administrators view the new ways of working as a important part of the organization's identity and operations.

EXAMPLES: Incorporate the new ways of working into the organization's strategic plan; train staff on the purpose and importance of new ways of working.

FACTOR: **COMMUNITY FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the communities' interests, needs, and abilities.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that community members and/or organizations view the new ways of working as helpful and important to their communities.

EXAMPLES: Provide health screenings at locations accessible to community members and available at convenient times.

FACTOR: **PARTNERS**

DEFINITION: Involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that partners have an active role in both decision-making and the provision of resources.

EXAMPLES: Develop agreements with partners to continue to contribute staff or resources after the implementation phase.

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **SPREAD**

DEFINITION: Expansion of new ways of working and improved outcomes to additional locations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that multiple locations incorporate the new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Expand a new protocol for conducting foot exams for patients with diabetes from one community health center site to other sites.

FACTOR: **FUNDING**

DEFINITION: Funding beyond original project period.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Obtain additional funding to assist with the continued implementation of new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Obtain second-year grant funding for school-based asthma education because it was effective and well received in the first year of implementation.

FACTOR: **GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

DEFINITION: Degree to which new ways of working and improved outcomes are supported by government policies.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Policies are enacted that make it easier to conduct new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Secure reimbursement for providers to conduct smoking cessation with specific populations.

FUNDERS' ROLE IN SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY

DEFINE SUSTAINABILITY

Because it is easy for both funders and grantees to default to defining sustainability solely as continued funding for projects, services, or organizations, we encourage you to write out your definition of sustainability. If your organization does support the sustainability of projects, services, or organizations—a topic outside the scope of this toolkit—it will be important to include that in the definition. In this toolkit, we have defined sustainability as "when new ways of working and improved outcomes become the norm."[1] Choosing additional details in sample definition below can help make your definition even clearer.

SAMPLE DEFINITION:

The *[insert name of funder]* defines sustainability as when news ways of working and improved outcomes are maintained for at least *[choose one: one year/two years/other: _____] [optional: without needing ongoing funds].*

If your organization thinks that other details are important to include in your definition, please include those as well.

DETERMINE SUSTAINABILITY EXPECTATIONS

Before your organization can help its grantees sustain their improved outcomes, it needs to determine and articulate what it expects from its potential and existing grantees in terms of sustainability. There are several important questions for your organization to answer when determining sustainability expectations, including what grantees will need to submit and when. Remember that many other funders have not yet defined what they mean by sustainability or what they expect from grantees, so this information may be new to grantees. Therefore, clarity is essential. We have included a planning worksheet called *Our Organization's Approach to Sustainability* in Appendix L that can help you clarify your expectations and processes.

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1 Sustainability: Model and Guide. National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement. (2007). Note: When our work in sustainability began, the Sustainability: Model and Guide was publicly available online. Access is now limited to those working in the United Kingdom.

You will need to repeatedly communicate your new approach to sustainability before it is understood and becomes the norm.

FUNDERS' ROLE IN SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY – continued

SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

Your grantees are more likely to meet your expectations and sustain their improved outcomes if you provide them with support to do so. This is especially important because sustainability is a new field of inquiry and likely a new topic for grantees. For example, you may be the first or only funder to ask them to articulate the details of a sustainability plan. They may need help doing this the first time until it becomes the norm for them.

COMMUNICATE SUSTAINABILITY

As stated, the consideration of sustainability in an in-depth and detailed way is likely new to most grantees as well as to your organization's staff, leadership, and Board members. Therefore, you will need to repeatedly communicate this new approach to sustainability before it is understood and becomes the norm. We encourage you to communicate your organization's sustainability definition and expectations through multiple vehicles and embed sustainability content and tools throughout the grant making and management process. This should include content in Requests for Proposals, Frequently Asked Questions, reviewer guidelines and assessment forms, reporting guidelines, website, etc. You also may want to communicate to Board members, leaders, and stakeholders about your organizations new approach, activities, and progress related to sustainability. Appendices H-K includes sample content that you can adapt for your use.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE FIELD

Because sustainability is a new field, your organization has an opportunity to make an important contribution to the emerging body of knowledge about sustainability and to the general field of grant making. You may consider convening other funders to discuss your sustainability approach, publishing articles on your experience and outcomes, conducting and publishing evaluations and/or case studies of how grantees have sustained their outcomes, and presenting at conferences.

EMBED YOUR NEW SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH INTO YOUR ORGANIZATION

Like your grantees, you may have to establish new ways of working within your organization before you can better support sustainability. To facilitate that, you can use many of the sustainability factors. It may be helpful to involve staff, leaders, and Board members in the process of deciding how your organization will approach sustainability; train them on the topic, definition, and tools; and include the topic of sustainability and measures of your organization's progress in the area in regular communications, presentations, updates, and monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS:
DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

PERCEIVED VALUE – acknowledged value by those affected by the new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include project activities being considered potentially beneficial by clients, service providers, or community members.

MONITORING AND FEEDBACK – monitoring is conducted on a regular basis and feedback is shared in easy to understand formats. Examples include information-gathering calls to monitor the project, and feedback provided to key staff using easy-to-understand formats (e.g., graphs).

LEADERSHIP – the degree to which leaders (including decision-makers and champions) continue to be actively engaged beyond the implementation stage. Examples include ongoing attendance at meetings focused on the new ways of working and ongoing monitoring of outcomes.

STAFF – staff has the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing the new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include staff being able to use a new referral system capably or thinking that a new curriculum is more effective in achieving better outcomes.

SHARED MODELS – continued use of a shared model among those involved in the new ways of working. Examples include the Chronic Care Model, the 40 Developmental Assets, the 5As, or Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA).

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE – degree to which organizational operations support the new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include rewriting job descriptions to support the project activities and channeling resources to project activities through the organization's business plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL FIT – degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the organization's overall goal and operations. Examples include project activities becoming part of the organization's strategic plan.

COMMUNITY FIT – degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match community interests, needs, and abilities. Examples include an expressed desire for new or improved services and outcomes.

PARTNERS – involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include partners who continue to contribute staff or resources after the implementation phase.

SPREAD – expansion of new ways of working and improved outcomes to additional locations. Examples include expanding activities planned for one community agency or department to new agencies or departments.

FUNDING – funding beyond original project period. Examples include extensions of original grant funding or funding to expand project activities to additional populations or communities.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES – degree to which new ways of working and improved outcomes are supported by government policies. Examples include reimbursement for a new service or incorporating outcome measures into surveillance systems.

SUSTAINABILITY DEFINITION:

When new ways of working and improved outcomes become the norm.[1]

1 Sustainability: Model and Guide. National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement. (2007). Note: When our work in sustainability began, the Sustainability: Model and Guide was publicly available online. Access is now limited to those working in the United Kingdom.

APPENDIX B

SUSTAINABILITY: HOW FACTORS WORK

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

PERCEIVED VALUE

MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

LEADERSHIP

STAFF

SHARED MODELS

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

ORGANIZATIONAL FIT

COMMUNITY FIT

PARTNERS

SPREAD

FUNDING

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Multiple subcategories

Your grantees can assess and plan for sustainability both generally and specifically. For example, they can generally assess how strong they think *Leadership* is in regards to sustaining the improved outcome. Or they could focus more specifically and assess subcategories of leadership. *Leadership* subcategories could include executives, managers, or champions. As another example, they could plan general activities for *Monitoring and Feedback* to sustain the improved outcome. Or they could focus more specifically and plan *Monitoring and Feedback* activities directed at a community, clients, staff, or other funders. You can see examples of different subcategories for each factor in the *Sustainability Factors: Subcategories* sheet in Appendix C.

Factors strengthen factors

Grantees also can strengthen factors by using other factors. As examples, they can frequently increase *Perceived Value* by providing ongoing feedback about the positive outcomes achieved (i.e., *Monitoring and Feedback*). They can increase the continuous support of *Staff* by putting *Organizational Infrastructures* in place that are easy to use by them, such as a one-step referral system. Therefore, when thinking about how to strengthen a sustainability factor, grantees should consider how the factors can work together.

The 12 sustainability factors are described in detail in the next appendix. Each factor has a definition, a suggestion on how to use the factor to influence the sustainability of improved outcomes, and an example of how that suggestion might be implemented.

APPENDIX C

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **PERCEIVED VALUE**

DEFINITION: Acknowledged value by those affected by the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Conduct specific activities to increase your target stakeholders' perception of the value of your work and its outcomes.

EXAMPLES: Give regular feedback on your improved outcomes to key stakeholders; present data at meetings with leadership.

FACTOR: **MONITORING AND FEEDBACK**

DEFINITION: Information on improved outcomes is collected and communicated to target audiences.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Track and communicate your improved outcomes to your target audiences on a regular basis and in easy-to-understand formats.

EXAMPLES: Host quarterly information-gathering calls to monitor project outcomes; display charts and graphs of improved outcomes in locations within an organization where target audiences will see them.

FACTOR: **LEADERSHIP**

DEFINITION: The degree to which leaders, including decision-makers and champions, are *actively* engaged in the implementation stage and beyond

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that leadership is involved in program development and activities

EXAMPLES: Have leaders present updates on improved outcomes at regular management meetings; invite leaders to participate in planning meetings.

APPENDIX C

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **STAFF**

DEFINITION: Staff have the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Provide staff trainings, technical assistance, and feedback on the success of the program.

EXAMPLES: Train staff on a new referral system and provide updates on its impact on patients; staff experience a new curriculum as more effective in achieving better outcomes.

FACTOR: **SHARED MODELS**

DEFINITION: Continued use of a shared model among those involved in the new ways of working.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Use a commonly accepted model to plan, implement, and evaluate program progress.

EXAMPLES: Use the Chronic Care Model at planning meetings to determine gaps in implementation; use the 40 Developmental Assets model to coordinate staff activities.

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

DEFINITION: Degree to which organizational operations support the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Embed changes to the organization that are difficult to get rid of.

EXAMPLES: Revise job descriptions to include new job roles; allocate resources to new ways of working.

APPENDIX C

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the organization's overall goal and operations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that staff and administrators view the new ways of working as a important part of the organization's identity and operations.

EXAMPLES: Incorporate the new ways of working into the organization's strategic plan; train staff on the purpose and importance of new ways of working.

FACTOR: **COMMUNITY FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the communities' interests, needs, and abilities.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that community members and/or organizations view the new ways of working as helpful and important to their communities.

EXAMPLES: Provide health screenings at locations accessible to community members and available at convenient times.

FACTOR: **PARTNERS**

DEFINITION: Involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that partners have an active role in both decision-making and the provision of resources.

EXAMPLES: Develop agreements with partners to continue to contribute staff or resources after the implementation phase.

APPENDIX C

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **SPREAD**

DEFINITION: Expansion of new ways of working and improved outcomes to additional locations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that multiple locations incorporate the new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Expand a new protocol for conducting foot exams for patients with diabetes from one community health center site to other sites.

FACTOR: **FUNDING**

DEFINITION: Funding beyond original project period.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Obtain additional funding to assist with the continued implementation of new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Obtain second-year grant funding for school-based asthma education because it was effective and well received in the first year of implementation.

FACTOR: **GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

DEFINITION: Degree to which new ways of working and improved outcomes are supported by government policies.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Policies are enacted that make it easier to conduct new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Secure reimbursement for providers to conduct smoking cessation with specific populations.

APPENDIX D

SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS: SUBCATEGORIES

The sustainability factors can be assessed and planned for both generally and specifically. For example, you could generally assess how strong you think *Leadership* is overall in regards to sustaining the improved outcome. Or you could focus more specifically and assess subcategories of leadership. *Leadership* subcategories could include executives, managers, or champions. As another example, you could plan general activities for *Monitoring and Feedback* to sustain the improved outcome. Or you could focus more specifically and plan *Monitoring and Feedback* activities directed at a community, clients, staff, or funders.

The following are examples of subcategories that might be addressed with each factor. All of the examples may not be relevant to your improved outcome, and there may be additional ones that you want to consider.

PERCEIVED VALUE to:	SHARED MODELS for:	PARTNERS
• Community • Clients/patients • Staff • Leaders	• Planning Meetings • Strategic Plans • Grant Development	• Active Involvement • Resources • Staff Support
MONITORING AND FEEDBACK to:	ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE	SPREAD to:
• Community • Clients/patients • Staff • Leaders	• Systems • Job Descriptions • Business Plan • Performance Assessment	• Departments • Sites • Organization
LEADERSHIP	ORGANIZATIONAL FIT	FUNDING
• Executives • Managers • Champions	• Mission Statement • Strategic Plan • Business Plan	• Fees • Reimbursement • Grants • Government
STAFF	COMMUNITY FIT	GOVERNMENT POLICIES
• Front-line • Administrative • Volunteers.	• Interests and Needs • Access (e.g., transportation) • Cost • Format (e.g., group or individual)	• Local • State • Federal

APPENDIX E

SUSTAINABILITY **WORKSHEET**

Choose three or four factors that you believe would help strengthen the sustainability of your improvements. Use the *Sustainability: How Factors Work* sheet to help you think about and choose the factors. (See Appendix J.)

Remember that you can address more factors later.

Make a note in the second column about why you think it is important to strengthen that factor. Examples: You chose to strengthen *Perceived Value* because the leaders that need to support improvements do not know about them or you chose to strengthen *Organizational Infrastructure* because the new ways of working need to be written into job descriptions to make them officially part of peoples' duties.

Address a factor generally or specify a subcategory within that factor. If you decide to focus on a subcategory within a factor, you should circle which one (or write it in if it is not listed). Examples: You can address *Monitoring and Feedback* generally or focus on providing more monitoring and feedback just to staff. You can address *Organizational Fit* generally or focus on just on the mission statement.

List activities that you will conduct to strengthen the factor. Use the *Sustainability: How Factors Work* to find examples. Consider that one factor can often be used to strengthen another (e.g., *Feedback* strengthens *Perceived Value*).

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	WHY THE FACTOR IS IMPORTANT TO SUSTAINABILITY	ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE FACTOR Describe activities that will strengthen this factor
PERCEIVED VALUE **to the:** community • clients/patients • staff • leaders •		
MONITORING AND FEEDBACK **to the:** community • clients •		

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEET

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	WHY THE FACTOR IS IMPORTANT TO SUSTAINABILITY	ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE FACTOR Describe activities that will strengthen this factor
PERCEIVED VALUE **to the:** community ● clients/patients ● staff ● leaders ●		
MONITORING AND FEEDBACK **to the:** community ● clients/patients ● staff ● leaders ●		
LEADERSHIP executives ● managers ● champions ●		
STAFF front-line ● administrative ● volunteers ●		

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHEET

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	WHY THE FACTOR IS IMPORTANT TO SUSTAINABILITY	ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE FACTOR Describe activities that will strengthen this factor
SHARED MODELS for: planning meetings • strategic plans • grant development •		
ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE systems • job descriptions • business plan • performance assessment •		
ORGANIZATIONAL FIT mission statement • strategic plans • business plan •		
COMMUNITY FIT interest/needs access • (e.g., transportation cost) format • (e.g., group or individual)		

SUSTAINABILITY **WORKSHEET**

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	WHY THE FACTOR IS IMPORTANT TO SUSTAINABILITY	ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE FACTOR Describe activities that will strengthen this factor
PARTNERS active involvement • resources • staff support •		
SPREAD **to:** departments • sites • organizationst •		
FUNDING fees • reimbursement • grants • government •		
GOVERNMENT POLICIES local • state • federal •		

APPENDIX F

GUIDELINE FOR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING WORKSHEETS

The assessment and planning worksheets provide tools that you can use to plan for sustaining improved outcomes.

ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET OBJECTIVE

Use this worksheet to determine which factors are currently supporting the sustainability of your improved outcomes, important to sustainability, and that you have the ability to strengthen.

PLANNING WORKSHEET OBJECTIVE

Use this worksheet to determine what sustainability factors you are going to work on and what sustainability activities you are going to do.

DIRECTIONS

STEP ONE   Refer to *Sustainability: How the Factors Work* or *Sustainability Factors: Definitions* when completing the worksheets. Both of these sheets provide descriptions of the sustainability factors.

STEP TWO   Starting with the *Assessment of Sustainability Factors Worksheet*, go through each factor and place a checkmark in the column that best reflects how much of a *current impact* you believe that factor is having on the sustainability of your improved outcomes.

- The first column (–) indicates a factor that you consider to have a weak impact on sustainability. An example would be leadership knowing very little about the improved outcomes that had recently taken place.

- The second column (0) indicates a factor that you consider neutral in regards to its impact on sustainability. An example would be leadership expressing support for the improved outcomes that had recently taken place but rarely discussing those improvements in meetings or supported future work.

- The third column (+) indicates a factor that you consider strong in regards to its impact on sustainability. An example would be if leadership was continuing to attend meeting in which the improved outcomes are discussed and offered resources to assist with continuation of those improvements.

- The fourth column (N/A) indicates a factor that is not relevant to your sustainability. An example would be the factor *Community Fit* when the improvements were just taking place within an organization.

APPENDIX F

GUIDELINE FOR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING WORKSHEETS

STEP THREE Use the *Comments* column to make notes that you can refer to when returning to this worksheet. The notes may have to do with the factor's current level of support, its importance, or your ability to influence.

STEP FOUR Continuing with the *Assessment Worksheet*, score each factor as to its *importance* and your ability to influence it.

- **Importance** – score how important you believe that factor is to sustaining your improved outcomes. The range of importance goes from 1 for having no importance at all to 5 for being very important. An example of something that might score low in importance would
- be *Government Policy* if you were simply trying to increase referrals from one department in a health center to another department within that center. An example of when *Government Policy* might score high would be if you were trying to get providers to conduct more health screenings and you knew there it would happen more often if there was increased government reimbursement for that activity.

- **Ability** – score how much you believe you can improve that factor's impact on sustainability. The range for ability goes from 1 for not being able to improve it to 5 for being very able to improve its impact on sustainability. An example of something that might score low would be *Spread* if you did not have much access to other organizations or communities. An example of something that might score high would be *Staff* if you had direct access to staff and knew that providing them more feedback would increase their interest in the improvements that had been made.

STEP FIVE Write the name of those sustainability factors that scored high in both importance and ability on the *Assessment Worksheet* in the blank spaces in the *Sustainability Planning Worksheet*. Scores of 4 and 5 should be considered high. It may be most effective to initially limit the number of factors you transfer to the planning sheet to three or four. However, it is possible that more than three or four factors will have high scores. If that happens, you will need to decide if you want to first prioritize some factors over others or decide to focus on more than three or four from the start.

APPENDIX F

GUIDELINE FOR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING WORKSHEETS

STEP SIX   Complete each row on the *Sustainability Planning Worksheet* for those factors that you have written in.

- **Sustainability Activities** – list activities that you believe will increase the likelihood that the factor will have a positive impact on sustainability. It will be helpful to refer to *Sustainability: How the Factors Work* when listing and planning for these activities. Examples of sustainability activities are included on that sheet.

   Consider how activities related to one factor can help strengthen another factor. For example, you might use Monitoring and Feedback to strengthen *Perceived Value. Leadership* can be used to strengthen *Organizational Infrastructure. Community Fit* can be used to strengthen *Partners.*

- **Lead staff** – list who will be responsible for the activities for each factor.

- **Timeframe** – list when the activities will start and end or indicate if the activities are ongoing.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN COMPLETING THE WORKSHEETS

The worksheets list 12 sustainability factors. These are best thought of as a *menu* of factors and not a *to-do* list. The objective is to review the 12 factors and then determine which three or four (or more) factors are most likely to help with sustainability.

The worksheets are designed to be completed using just the information that is available to you. Both the assessment and planning sheets can usually be filled out during a single meeting time. More detailed assessment and planning can be undertaken as needed.

The list of factors may or may not address all of the factors that are important for a given project. Additional sustainability factors can be added to the worksheets if this will help with planning.

Many of the factors have subcategories. For example, *Organizational Infrastructure* includes numerous components such as job descriptions, business model, systems, etc. It may be helpful to list these subcategories separately when planning your sustainability activities.

A factor may also have a number of different groups to which they could refer. For example, *Perceived Value* can refer to the value that is attributed to the improved outcomes by leaders, providers, or community members. It may be helpful to break these groups out separately when planning your sustainability activities.

APPENDIX G
SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

CURRENT STRENGTH OF FACTOR: **–** (weak) **0** (neutral) **+** (strong) **N/A** (not apply)

IMPORTANCE: **1** (very little) **2** (little) **3** (somewhat) **4** (important) **5** (very important)

ABILITY TO INFLUENCE: **1** (very difficult) **2** (difficult) **3** (somewhat) **4** (able) **5** (very able)

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	–	O	+	N/A	COMMENTS	IMPORTANCE 1-5	ABILITY 1-5
PERCEIVED VALUE							
MONITORING AND FEEDBACK							
LEADERSHIP							
STAFF							
SHARED MODELS							
ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE							

APPENDIX G
SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

CURRENT STRENGTH OF FACTOR: − (weak) **0** (neutral) **+** (strong) **N/A** (not apply)

IMPORTANCE: **1** (very little) **2** (little) **3** (somewhat) **4** (important) **5** (very important)

ABILITY TO INFLUENCE: **1** (very difficult) **2** (difficult) **3** (somewhat) **4** (able) **5** (very able)

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	−	O	+	N/A	COMMENTS	IMPORTANCE 1-5	ABILITY 1-5
ORGANIZATIONAL FIT							
COMMUNITY FIT							
PARTNERS							
SPREAD							
FUNDING							
GOVERNMENT POLICIES							

APPENDIX H
SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING WORKSHEET

Transfer those sustainability factors from the *Sustainability Assessment Worksheet* that you have determined are important to be improved and you are able to do so. It may be most effective to initially limit the number of factors you transfer to this planning sheet to three or four. As those factors are strengthened, you may then decide to work on more factors.

SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	TIMEFRAME

APPENDIX I

SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS:
DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

PERCEIVED VALUE – acknowledged value by those affected by the new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include project activities being considered potentially beneficial by clients, service providers, or community members.

MONITORING AND FEEDBACK – monitoring is conducted on a regular basis and feedback is shared in easy to understand formats. Examples include information-gathering calls to monitor the project, and feedback provided to key staff using easy-to-understand formats (e.g., graphs).

LEADERSHIP – the degree to which leaders (including decision-makers and champions) continue to be actively engaged beyond the implementation stage. Examples include ongoing attendance at meetings focused on the new ways of working and ongoing monitoring of outcomes.

STAFF – staff has the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing the new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include staff being able to use a new referral system capably or thinking that a new curriculum is more effective in achieving better outcomes.

SHARED MODELS – continued use of a shared model among those involved in the new ways of working. Examples include the Chronic Care Model, the 40 Developmental Assets, the 5As, or Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA).

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE – degree to which organizational operations support the new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include rewriting job descriptions to support the project activities and channeling resources to project activities through the organization's business plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL FIT – degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the organization's overall goal and operations. Examples include project activities becoming part of the organization's strategic plan.

COMMUNITY FIT – degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match community interests, needs, and abilities. Examples include an expressed desire for new or improved services and outcomes.

PARTNERS – involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes. Examples include partners who continue to contribute staff or resources after the implementation phase.

SPREAD – expansion of new ways of working and improved outcomes to additional locations. Examples include expanding activities planned for one community agency or department to new agencies or departments.

FUNDING – funding beyond original project period. Examples include extensions of original grant funding or funding to expand project activities to additional populations or communities.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES – degree to which new ways of working and improved outcomes are supported by government policies. Examples include reimbursement for a new service or incorporating outcome measures into surveillance systems.

SUSTAINABILITY DEFINITION:

When new ways of working and improved outcomes become the norm.[1]

1 Sustainability: Model and Guide. National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement. (2007). Note: When our work in sustainability began, the Sustainability: Model and Guide was publicly available online. Access is now limited to those working in the United Kingdom.

APPENDIX J

SUSTAINABILITY: HOW FACTORS WORK

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

PERCEIVED VALUE

MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

LEADERSHIP

STAFF

SHARED MODELS

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

ORGANIZATIONAL FIT

COMMUNITY FIT

PARTNERS

SPREAD

FUNDING

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Multiple subcategories

Your grantees can assess and plan for sustainability both generally and specifically. For example, they can generally assess how strong they think *Leadership* is in regards to sustaining the improved outcome. Or they could focus more specifically and assess subcategories of leadership. *Leadership* subcategories could include executives, managers, or champions. As another example, they could plan general activities for *Monitoring and Feedback* to sustain the improved outcome. Or they could focus more specifically and plan *Monitoring and Feedback* activities directed at a community, clients, staff, or other funders. You can see examples of different subcategories for each factor in the *Sustainability Factors: Subcategories* sheet in Appendix C.

Factors strengthen factors

Grantees also can strengthen factors by using other factors. As examples, they can frequently increase *Perceived Value* by providing ongoing feedback about the positive outcomes achieved (i.e., *Monitoring and Feedback*). They can increase the continuous support of *Staff* by putting *Organizational Infrastructures* in place that are easy to use by them, such as a one-step referral system. Therefore, when thinking about how to strengthen a sustainability factor, grantees should consider how the factors can work together.

The 12 sustainability factors are described in detail in the next appendix. Each factor has a definition, a suggestion on how to use the factor to influence the sustainability of improved outcomes, and an example of how that suggestion might be implemented.

APPENDIX K

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **PERCEIVED VALUE**

DEFINITION: Acknowledged value by those affected by the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Conduct specific activities to increase your target stakeholders' perception of the value of your work and its outcomes.

EXAMPLES: Give regular feedback on your improved outcomes to key stakeholders; present data at meetings with leadership.

FACTOR: **MONITORING AND FEEDBACK**

DEFINITION: Information on improved outcomes is collected and communicated to target audiences.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Track and communicate your improved outcomes to your target audiences on a regular basis and in easy-to-understand formats.

EXAMPLES: Host quarterly information-gathering calls to monitor project outcomes; display charts and graphs of improved outcomes in locations within an organization where target audiences will see them.

FACTOR: **LEADERSHIP**

DEFINITION: The degree to which leaders, including decision-makers and champions, are *actively* engaged in the implementation stage and beyond

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that leadership is involved in program development and activities

EXAMPLES: Have leaders present updates on improved outcomes at regular management meetings; invite leaders to participate in planning meetings.

APPENDIX K

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **STAFF**

DEFINITION: Staff have the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Provide staff trainings, technical assistance, and feedback on the success of the program.

EXAMPLES: Train staff on a new referral system and provide updates on its impact on patients; staff experience a new curriculum as more effective in achieving better outcomes.

FACTOR: **SHARED MODELS**

DEFINITION: Continued use of a shared model among those involved in the new ways of working.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Use a commonly accepted model to plan, implement, and evaluate program progress.

EXAMPLES: Use the Chronic Care Model at planning meetings to determine gaps in implementation; use the 40 Developmental Assets model to coordinate staff activities.

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

DEFINITION: Degree to which organizational operations support the new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Embed changes to the organization that are difficult to get rid of.

EXAMPLES: Revise job descriptions to include new job roles; allocate resources to new ways of working.

APPENDIX K

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **ORGANIZATIONAL FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the organization's overall goal and operations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that staff and administrators view the new ways of working as a important part of the organization's identity and operations.

EXAMPLES: Incorporate the new ways of working into the organization's strategic plan; train staff on the purpose and importance of new ways of working.

FACTOR: **COMMUNITY FIT**

DEFINITION: Degree to which the new ways of working and improved outcomes match the communities' interests, needs, and abilities.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that community members and/or organizations view the new ways of working as helpful and important to their communities.

EXAMPLES: Provide health screenings at locations accessible to community members and available at convenient times.

FACTOR: **PARTNERS**

DEFINITION: Involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that partners have an active role in both decision-making and the provision of resources.

EXAMPLES: Develop agreements with partners to continue to contribute staff or resources after the implementation phase.

APPENDIX K

12 SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS
DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FACTOR: **SPREAD**

DEFINITION: Expansion of new ways of working and improved outcomes to additional locations.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure that multiple locations incorporate the new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Expand a new protocol for conducting foot exams for patients with diabetes from one community health center site to other sites.

FACTOR: **FUNDING**

DEFINITION: Funding beyond original project period.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Obtain additional funding to assist with the continued implementation of new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Obtain second-year grant funding for school-based asthma education because it was effective and well received in the first year of implementation.

FACTOR: **GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

DEFINITION: Degree to which new ways of working and improved outcomes are supported by government policies.

HOW TO USE THE FACTOR TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY: Policies are enacted that make it easier to conduct new ways of working.

EXAMPLES: Secure reimbursement for providers to conduct smoking cessation with specific populations.

APPENDIX L

FUNDER WORKSHEET: OUR ORGANIZATION'S APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

This toolkit uses the following definition of sustainability: *when new ways of working and improved outcomes have become the norm.*

Our organization's definition of sustainability:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Will we require potential grantees to submit a sustainability plan?

◯ Yes ◯ No

If so, when will we require potential grantees to submit a sustainability plan?

◯   When they submit a letter of intent
◯   When they submit a grant proposal
◯   Immediately after their grant has been approved
◯   Other: _____

Will we ask grantees to measure and report on sustainability as part of their normal reporting process?

◯ Yes ◯ No

What specifically will we ask them to measure and report?
◯ Sustainability measures? Specify:

_____
_____
_____
_____

When? (*Choose as many as apply.*)
◯   In the interim report(s)   ◯   During monitoring calls
◯   In the final report   ◯   During site visits

◯ Sustainability measures? Specify:

_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX L

FUNDER WORKSHEET: OUR ORGANIZATION'S APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

Our organization will provide the following kinds of sustainability support:

- ❍ Technical assistance
    - ❍ Web-based assistance
    - ❍ In-person through:
        - ❍ External consultant(s)
        - ❍ Internal staff
        - ❍ Telephonic assistance
- ❍ Workshops
- ❍ Hard copy and/or web-based tools
- ❍ Funding for evaluating sustainability after implementation
- ❍ Assistance with pursuing policies that support improved outcomes (*may apply only to select grants*)

How will we embed this new approach to sustainability into our organization?
(*Choose as many as apply, indicate specific activities, and indicate staff responsible*):

Select 2-4 factors you will work on first	SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES	STAFF RESPONSIBLE
❍	PERCEIVED VALUE		
❍	MONITORING AND FEEDBACK		
❍	LEADERSHIP		
❍	STAFF		

APPENDIX L

FUNDER WORKSHEET: OUR ORGANIZATION'S APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

Select 2-4 factors you will work on first

	SUSTAINABILITY FACTOR	SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES	STAFF RESPONSIBLE
○	SHARED MODELS		
○	ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE		
○	ORGANIZATIONAL FIT		
○	COMMUNITY FIT		
○	PARTNERS		
○	SPREAD		
○	FUNDING		
○	GOVERNMENT POLICIES		

APPENDIX M

SAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY CONTENT
FOR FUNDERS

SAMPLE DEFINITION

The Sample Foundation defines sustainability as when news ways of working and improved outcomes are maintained for at least one year after implementation.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

All proposals must include a sustainability plan using the sustainability plan template provided [insert link].

The Sample Foundation gives preference to projects that describe a reasonable plan to sustain improved outcomes for at least a year after the grant period ends and without additional funding.

The most promising proposals will demonstrate a clear and reasonable plan for sustaining the improved outcomes achieved during the grant period.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Sustainability *(2 page maximum)*

Describe how this project will sustain the improved outcomes outlined in the project description. Please download, complete, and upload a sustainability plan template. Please also include sustainability activities in the project work plan and timeline.

FAQ: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How important is the sustainability of my improved outcomes?

A plan for sustaining improved outcomes using the template provided is required *[insert link]*. Many proposals are turned down because they have not submitted a sustainability plan or their sustainability plan does not demonstrate how they will sustain improved outcomes. Stating that you would seek additional grants from other funders is not an adequate sustainability plan. If elements of the project (e.g., specific services) require ongoing funding, please describe a viable "business plan" for securing and sustaining that funding after the grant period ends.

APPENDIX M

SAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY CONTENT
FOR FUNDERS

FAQ: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - continued

Could you provide some examples of how projects have sustained improved outcomes?

A good example of a project that sustained improved outcomes is the Sample Organization's Sample Project. This project's objective was to improve clinical outcomes for patients with diabetes the Sample Family Health Center in Buffalo, New York by expanding the role of existing medical assistants. To support the sustainability of the improved outcomes, the project chose to focus on the following sustainability factors: *Monitoring and Feedback*, *Staff*, and *Organizational Infrastructure*. Examples of their sustainability activities include:

- *Monitoring and Feedback:* The project selected achievement targets for six clinical measures and tracked them through an electronic medical record system. The results were compiled into easy-to-understand charts and reviewed on a monthly basis during meetings with clinical staff and health center leadership. For the targets that were not met, the project presented plans to improve the measures.

- *Staff:* The medical assistants were included early on in the planning and implementation of the project. This resulted in stronger interest in the ongoing success of the project and increased confidence in their ability to conduct their new job duties.

- *Organizational Infrastructure:* The job descriptions for the medical assistants were revised to include their new duties. Improvement of the clinical measures was included in performance reviews and bonus systems.

REVIEWER GUIDELINES

The Sample Foundation defines sustainability as [insert definition]. When assessing the sustainability of a proposal, please use this definition. Please do not assess sustainability based on the likelihood of project activities or services continuing past the grant period.

APPENDIX M

SAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY CONTENT
FOR FUNDERS

REVIEWER ASSESSMENT FORMS

Sustainability – What is the likelihood that the improved outcomes achieved during the grant period will be sustained after the grant period ends? One (1) is not at all likely and ten (10) is absolutely likely.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Note: Sustainability and project replication are two distinct areas that require different strategies and should be separated in review criteria.

REPORTING GUIDELINES

Sustainability Activities *(1 page maximum)*

Describe the major sustainability activities of the project. Refer to your original sustainability plan as necessary. Indicate which activities you successfully completed and how the activities supported sustainability. Also indicate which activities you either did not complete or that changed in nature.

RESOURCES

The following resources include journal articles and foundation reports. We have included resources on improved outcomes and also on programs and organizations. We included resources on programs and organizations because there is not much available on sustaining improved outcomes and because all three types of sustainability overlap greatly.

Note: When our work in sustainability began, the *Sustainability: Model and Guide. NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement* was available publicly. This is no longer the case. Access to the guide is restricted to those working in the United Kingdom. While the information provided in that guide is helpful, we believe most of the concepts and factors can be obtained through the other resources provided. We have included the *Sustainability: Model and Guide* in the resources with the hope that it will become available again in the future.

IMPROVED OUTCOMES

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PROGRAMS – continued

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