

# SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING TOOL

FROM THE *GUIDE TO DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND ASSESSING AN INNOVATION, VOLUME 5*

The following tool provides questions to help you gather the information you may need to include in your sustainability plan. This tool provides a way to brainstorm answers to the questions that are key to planning for sustainability, but the completed Sustainability Planning Tool does not constitute your sustainability plan. Every sustainability plan looks different, depending on the organization and the innovation to be sustained. Sustainability plans may be documented using a variety of different formats, yet all should include or discuss:

- Objectives that the sustained innovation should achieve
- Evidence that the innovation should be sustained
- Potential strategies for reaching the outlined objectives
- Action steps to sustain the innovation
- Timelines
- Roles and responsibilities of key partners
- Ideas for monitoring and determining progress
- Cost estimates of sustaining the innovation
- An outline of whose help is needed to support the innovation
- Context for other systems change initiatives that are in process in the same jurisdiction and how the innovation can be incorporated into other on-going initiatives

The Sustainability Planning Tool is split into two parts. Part I addresses the preliminary considerations that need to be discussed before beginning to draft a plan. Part II addresses the three categories of sustainability planning (implementation infrastructure and processes, organizational infrastructure and processes, and fiscal strategies and resources). After discussing the questions in the column on the left, write answers to or thoughts about those questions in the column on the right.

***This tool may be used in two ways:***

- 1. Print the following pages and use them as a discussion guide with your team. Write your answers in the space provided.***
- 2. Type your information into the space provided and save to your computer. This will allow you to print the completed document or e-mail it to your team members.***

## Part I: Preliminary Considerations

<p>In what ways has this innovation improved outcomes? (These likely include a combination of program or service aspects and implementation supports.)</p>	
<p>What is the context of the innovation, such as population, community, and/or organization?</p>	
<p>Who is it helping? How is it helping them? What is known about early indicators of effects? How is it known?</p>	
<p>What, if anything, will change if or when you decide the innovation will be sustained? (For example, will any of the following change: administrative home, data collection processes, innovation design, or target population?) How will those changes affect implementation efforts?</p>	
<p>If evidence of effects is not yet available, is there new information about evidence-supported innovations to meet the needs of the target population? Is there information that may have been overlooked in previous research efforts?</p>	
<p>If a program developer or expert has supported implementation efforts, what will be the ongoing role of the program developer or expert?</p>	

## Part II: Three Categories of Sustainability Planning

The three categories of sustainability planning addressed in this tool are Implementation Infrastructure and Processes, Organizational Infrastructure and Processes, and Fiscal Strategies and Resources for Sustainability.

### IMPLEMENTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

The following discussion questions can help to determine the implementation supports that need to be embedded into the everyday work of an organization and its staff to support full and effective use of an innovation.

Training and Coaching	
What are the benefits of continuing training and coaching?	
What would be lost if training and coaching does not continue?	
Identification and Use of Data for Decision-Making	
What would be lost if gathering and tracking information about implementation supports, fidelity, and effects of the program or service do not continue?	
What data elements related to implementation supports, fidelity, and effects do we need to keep measuring and examining? Why?	
Fidelity Assessment Processes	
What components of the fidelity assessment process can be embedded into the current system? Who should be involved? How?	
What about this fidelity assessment process will require adjustments to continue?	

Evaluation	
If you have been undergoing a rigorous outcome evaluation, will that continue? Will you convert to a CQI/fidelity monitoring type of evaluation?	
If you have been working with an external evaluator, will that continue, or will you need to develop internal evaluation capacity?	

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESSES**

Organizational infrastructure and processes include the administrative home for the innovation; the organizational supports required to implement it; and ongoing practices, processes, as well as internal and external policies that need to be in place for an organization to maintain an innovation and support its continued implementation. The following questions will help guide this discussion.

Administrative Home	
Where will this innovation reside on a permanent basis? What administrative home makes sense or is available?	
Who will govern the project?	
Organizational Protocols and Practices	
What people and processes are needed in the system to maintain teaming and link teams at different levels of the organization?	
How might a relationship with a program developer who manages some of this work need to stay the same or change, both functionally and fiscally?	

<b>Leadership Engagement</b>	
Who will be responsible for problem-solving to guide implementation?	
What will be the teaming structure?	
<b>Community Partnerships</b>	
Who is this work connected to and why?	
What partnerships need to continue and why? Who else needs to be involved?	
<b>Organizational Partnerships</b>	
To whom is this work connected and why?	
What internal and external partnerships need to continue and why? Who else needs to be involved?	

Strategic Communication Protocols and Practices	
<p>What policies or procedures need to be developed for the intervention to be sustained? This could relate to the intervention itself or the ongoing supports for implementation (i.e., teaming structure, data, continuous quality improvement, communication).</p>	
<p>How will these policies and procedures be formalized, integrated, known, and shared?</p>	
Data-based Decision-making	
<p>Where are data going to be entered and stored?</p>	
<p>How are data going to be gathered?</p>	
<p>How are data going to be organized and analyzed? What is the process for sharing the data and interpreting what the data mean? Who will be responsible for this work?</p>	

## FISCAL STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Discussing plans for sustaining an innovation will include determining what financial strategies and resources are needed to fund direct services. Staff and organizational resources necessary for effective on-going implementation of an innovation must be considered.

Direct Services	
<p>What personnel, technologies to assist personnel, and other resources are necessary to carry out the innovation?</p>	
<p>What else needs to be created or changed to continue the innovation?</p>	
<p>What will be the annual cost to sustain the innovation, factoring in direct services as well as the implementation and organizational infrastructure?</p>	

Implementation and Organizational Infrastructure	
<p>What staff, technologies, organizational processes, and other resources are necessary to sustain implementation and organizational infrastructure?</p>	
<p>What funding may be needed to support the ongoing work of an existing program developer or expert?</p>	
<p>What funding may be needed to support the ongoing work of an existing program evaluator?</p>	
Funding Streams	
<p>What are the implications for budgeting current innovation work and work planned for the future?</p>	
<p>What existing opportunities might be available to incorporate funding for implementation supports?</p>	