

Brown School

Promoting Health Equity through Sustaining Comprehensive Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Efforts

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BACKGROUND

Comprehensive tobacco control programs are proven to reduce commercial tobacco use, but sustaining these efforts is challenging. Building sustainability capacity helps effective programs overcome challenges, like underfunding, and continue making an impact. The Center for Public Health Systems Science (CPHSS) at Washington University in St. Louis developed the Sustainability Framework and Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT) to help programs strategically leverage strengths and resources to sustain activities. The framework and tool identify eight domains contributing to program sustainability capacity: Environmental Support, Funding Stability, Partnerships, Organizational Capacity, Program Evaluation, Program Adaptation, Communications, and Strategic Planning.

Sustaining Tobacco Prevention Efforts

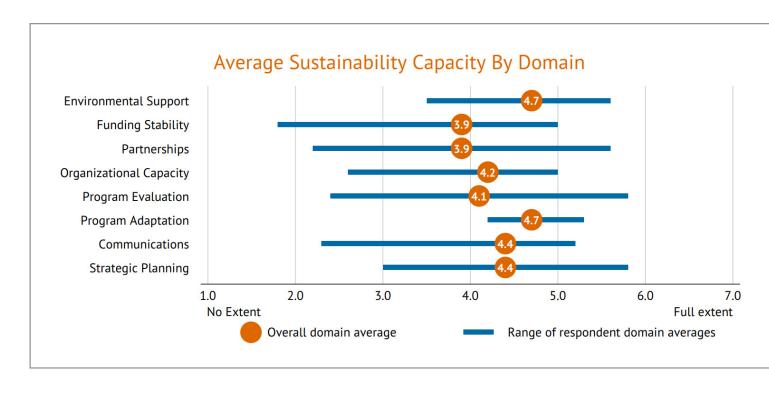
Through a cooperative agreement with CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, CPHSS works with awardees to build sustainability capacity for their commercial tobacco control efforts using a three-step process:

1. **Understand** the organizational and contextual factors beyond funding that influence sustainability by learning about the eight sustainability domains.



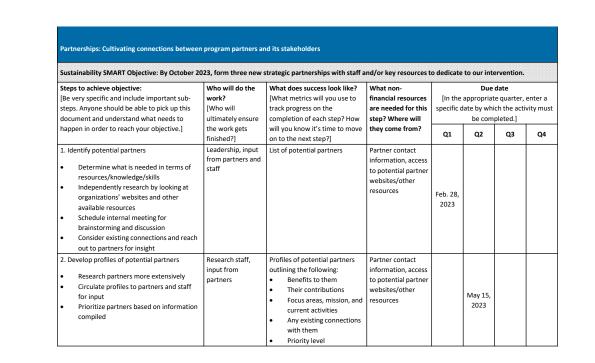


2. **Assess** program sustainability capacity by completing the PSAT as an individual or group self-assessment.





3. Use assessment results to develop an action **plan** focused on increasing program sustainability capacity in one on the eight domains.



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PROMOTING HEALTH EQUITY

To help sustain benefits for people most impacted by commercial tobacco use, tobacco prevention and cessation programs can develop sustainability plans that incorporate a health equity focus. Based on a literature review and working with programs, CPHSS has identified opportunities to promote and sustain health equity efforts through action plans focused on building capacity in the eight sustainability domains. When we work with programs, we ask that they develop a sustainability plan objective focused on one of the eight domains. The following are ideas for a health equity focus of a program sustainability plan in each of the domains.



Environmental Support: Identify decision-markers and champions who will support efforts to reduce tobacco-related health disparities. Promote a health equity approach and highlight tobacco use as a social justice issue to help gain community support for commercial tobacco prevention and cessation efforts.



Funding Stability: Develop a funding plan that considers how to allocate funding equitably and includes activities to secure funding needed to support health equity goals over the long-term. For example, identify funding opportunities that focus on health equity and include requirements promoting a health equity approach.



Partnerships: Identify and prioritize developing relationships with partners representing populations disproportionately impacted by commercial tobacco use. Consider a range of partners, including new and non-traditional ones. Working with diverse partners to share resources, perspective, and expertise can help implement and sustain effective strategies tailored to priority populations.



Organizational Capacity: Assess program capabilities to support a health equity approach and ensure the needed resources and staff expertise for this work. For example, maintain an inventory of necessary resources and skills to maintain health equity activities; hire staff representative and knowledgeable of the community; and provide cultural competency training opportunities.



Program Evaluation: Develop strategies to better understand local disparities and program impact on them. For example, develop evaluation questions assessing progress on health equity goals; monitor unintended consequences and factors contributing to disparities; and ask partners representing priority populations to participate in planning and implementing evaluation and monitoring activities.



Program Adaptation: Plan how to adjust activities to respond to gaps and meet priority population needs even as the environment and circumstances change. For example, develop strategies to ensure ongoing communication with community members for input to guide activities. Or develop a system for staying up-to-date on evidence and best practices for addressing tobacco-related disparities.



Communications: Develop strategies to reach communities most impacted by commercial tobacco use through tailoring messages and communication channels to their needs and values. Gain support for a health equity approach by communicating how industry influence and tobacco use disproportionately burden certain communities.

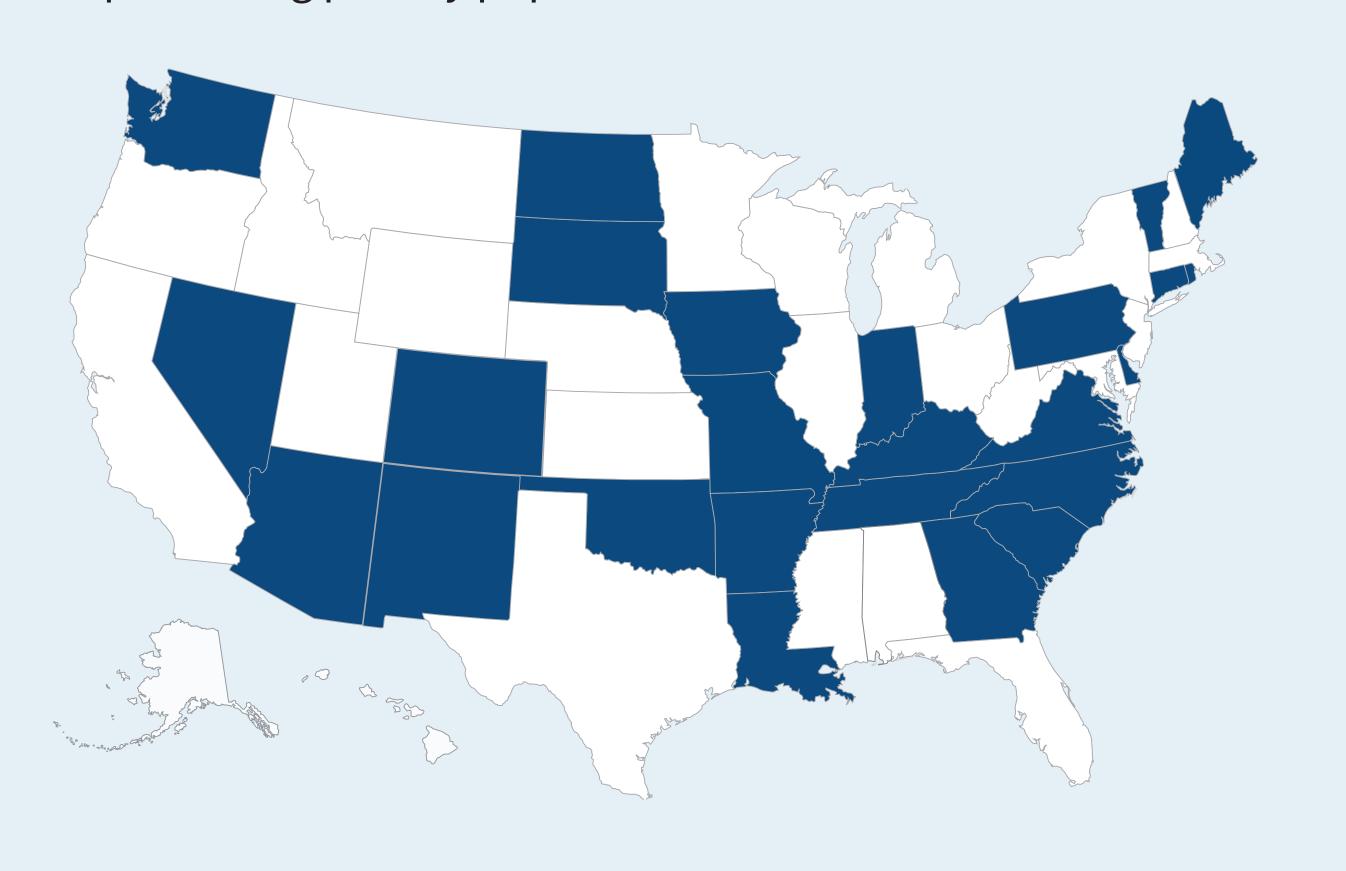


Strategic Planning: Develop a strategic plan that includes health equity goals and action steps to support these goals over the long-term. Invite partners and community members representing populations disproportionately burdened by commercial tobacco use to participate in the planning process and provide input.

Health Equity in Action

In partnership with CDC, CPHSS has worked with 25 states and DC to create a sustainability plan based on their PSAT results. This work supports CDC funding requirements and guidance in the *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2014* by helping states and territories create plans that are responsive and sustainable. Programs are also recognizing the importance of health equity and some are already incorporating it into their sustainability plans. For example:

- One state's plan objective was to use monitoring and evaluation results to develop strategies to meet priotiy population needs.
- One state focused on creating a funding opportunity for reducing inequities impacting commercial tobacco use in the state.
- One state prioritized building relationships with stakeholders representing priority populations in the state.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for incorporating health equity into sustainability action plans:

- Invite diverse stakeholders to participate in the sustainability process.
- Use sustainability assessment results to identify program strengths and opportunities to support health equity.
- Review tobacco control strategic plans and other relevant plans to align a sustainability plan with established health equity goals and activities.
- Determine activities to sustain based on their health equity impact.
- Routinely review plan progress with community partners and continue collaborating with diverse stakeholders throughout plan implementation.

LEARN MORE: You can learn about the sustainability domains, assessment, and action planning process at https://sustaintool.org.



