



SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Sustainability refers to the continuation of a project's goals, principles, and efforts to achieve desired outcomes. Planning for sustainability requires appropriate decisions be made at each stage of program development. As you are developing or refining your sustainability plan, we encourage using this sustainability checklist as a guide or template when discussing strategies with your staff and stakeholders for sustaining the successful aspects of your America's Promise Grants Program.

This checklist provides examples and strategies in four important areas of sustainability planning: (1) sustainability and succession planning; (2) clarifying the vision for your program moving forward; (3) evaluating current partnerships and developing new ones; and (4) determining what resources are needed to sustain your project and building funding stability. We hope that you and your team will use this as a tool as you create or update your sustainability plan.

SECTION 1: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Begin by identifying the various activities that you have undertaken as a result of this grant and assess which ones have yielded or are yielding your successful outcomes. Keep in mind that it may not be possible for all activities to be sustained and focus on the ones that have the greatest impact or are producing desired outcomes.

Strategies

1. Review project outcomes to determine what aspects of the program were successful and should be sustained. (How do your performance outcomes play into your determination?)
2. Make a list of your promising practices that have been successful in your America's Promise grant, especially new practices or protocols that were implemented because of the grant funding. Provide details of how you are documenting and sharing these successes with partners and stakeholders, and if you are not documenting and sharing, make a plan to do so.
3. Review labor market statistics to determine if any elements of the project need to be modified to meet current industry needs.
4. Determine if program goals need to be updated to reach your vision for sustaining the program.

The Program Assessment Worksheet, located in the appendix, will help you describe your organization's promising practice(s) and share evidence that demonstrates success. It will also allow you to provide a vision to move each promising practice forward.

Program Assessment Worksheet Example:

Promising Practice	Provide Evidence or Examples that Demonstrate Success of the Promising Practice	Vision – What would it take to continue the promising practice? (After the grant ends)
<i>We partnered with our States' Department of Employment Services (DES) to track if participants who received services found a job placement.</i>	<i>We have increased our job placement performance numbers by 50% with the partnership from the DES.</i>	<p>★ Modifications (if any) to be made to the promising practice once the grant ends: <i>This partnership will continue with future grants. Instead of receiving information every six months we have asked for them to check their database every quarter.</i></p> <p>★ Resources needed: <i>None.</i></p> <p>★ # of Staff and their role: <i>One staff person to monitor the tracking process with the DES.</i></p>

★ SECTION 2: SUCCESSION PLANNING

As workforce development professionals, we know that staff and leadership changes can happen, especially towards the end of the grant lifecycle. It is important for participants to have continuity in services even if there are staff changes. One way to continue services without disruption is to document job duties and train at least one backup person for each staff position.

Strategies

1. Identify job duties and tasks for each staff person. (These may already be written in job descriptions.)
2. Name and train backup persons for each function.
3. Create and update a binder or digital file that includes key documents such as strategic/operational plans, job descriptions, and calendars of organizational activities.

CHECKLIST

Mark each step that you have completed. If the team has not completed these steps, you can use the succession planning worksheet located in the appendix as a guide to think through each step for succession planning.

- We have identified the strengths and challenges in our current team.
- We have identified potential staff successors and assessed individual and organizational gaps to determine developmental needs.
- We have identified and trained a backup person for each staff function.
- We have created/updated a binder or digital file that includes key documents such as strategic/operational plans, annual and monthly calendars of organizational activities, contact information for partners, and it's up to date.

Succession Planning Worksheet Example:

Action Steps <i>What Will Be Done?</i>	Staff Assigned	Due Date	Resources <i>A. Resources Available</i> <i>B. Resources Needed (financial, human, political & other)</i>	Status Notes
Step 1: Identify the strengths and challenges in your current team.	<i>Kate Miller, Program Manager</i>	8/12/19	<i>A. Quarterly Staff Reviews</i> <i>B. None at this time</i>	Completed
Step 2: Assess individual and organizational gaps to determine developmental needs.			<i>A.</i> <i>B.</i>	
Step 3: Identify and train a backup person for each staff function.	<i>Chrystal Taylor – train as Program Manager</i>	9/5/19	<i>A. Operational Manual for each position</i> <i>B. Need professional development funds to support an on-line leadership course</i>	In-Progress
Step 4: Create or update a binder or digital file that includes key documents.	<i>Bill Griffin, Case Manager</i>	8/7/19	<i>A. (see B)</i> <i>B. Leverage partner dollars to provide overtime to Bill</i>	Completed
Step 5: (Add your own) What does your organization need to include being successful?			<i>A.</i> <i>B.</i>	



SECTION 3: BUILDING AND MAINTAINING PARTNERSHIPS

Partners can play an important role in sustainability by connecting you to greater resources or expertise, providing services if your program no longer has funds available, and advocating on your behalf. Your team should raise or address any concerns regarding your current partnerships and consider the goals for each partnership.

Strategies

1. Conduct a regional partnership or stakeholder analysis by identifying the goals for each partnership.
 - Determine if your partners have an interest in sustaining the benefits of the project and are willing to be part of the planning process.
 - Which organizations or individuals will require a lot of time and energy to keep involved?
 - Who has influence in the community?
 - Create a stakeholder management plan based on this analysis.

2. Meet with employer partners to determine if the training provided by the project is still relevant to their needs.
3. Identify organizations and individuals that are not currently involved in program efforts, but are impacted by your program. Determine how they could contribute to or benefit from your work and engage them in your program.



CHECKLIST

Mark each step that you have completed. If the team has not completed these steps, you can use the building and maintaining partnerships worksheet located in the appendix as a guide to think through each step.

- We have conducted a recent partner or stakeholder analysis.
- We have met with each employer partners to determine if the training provided by the project is still relevant to their needs.
- We have identified organizations and individuals that are not currently involved in program efforts, but are impacted by the issues our program addresses.

Building and Maintaining Partnerships Worksheet Example:

Partner(s)	Responsibilities <i>What will each partner be responsible for?</i>	Resources <i>Resources Needed (financial, human, political & other)</i>	Potential Barriers <i>Are there any potential barriers from the partners listed?</i>
<i>Basin Ready International</i>	<i>They will continue to be our lead employer partner</i>	<i>Human Capital We will ask them to continue to serve as lead advisor</i>	<i>We have a strong relationship with the current CEO, although he is retiring soon. We will need to meet with the new CEO to continue the partnership.</i>



SECTION 4: FUNDING STABILITY

Planning for stable funding should be a strategic process that addresses the long-term needs of your program and adjusts to changing trends in economic cycles. Sustainability can depend heavily on diversification of funding sources. It is important to discuss funding strategies for the activities you would like to keep.

Strategies

1. Develop a funding plan to provide safeguards and ensure that key infrastructures are maintained (including an adequate number of qualified staff).
2. Determine the availability of other sources of financial support including local and state government funding, industry funding, and foundation support.



CHECKLIST

Mark each step that you have completed. If the team has not completed these steps, you can use the funding stability worksheet located in the appendix as a guide to think through each step.

- We have a funding plan to provide safeguards and ensure that key infrastructures are maintained (including an adequate number of qualified staff).
- We know the availability of other sources of financial support including local and state government funding, industry funding, and foundation support.

Funding Stability Worksheet Example:

Promising Practice <i>(Activity from your Program Assessment)</i>	Funding Strategy	Resources Needed <i>(financial, human, political & other)</i>	Which Partner can support?
<i>Partnership with our States' Department of Employment Services (DES)</i>	<i>Need additional funding for the staff to track participants with the DES.</i>	<i>Additional training for staff</i>	Community Outreach International <i>(They help us raise funds through the community foundations)</i>

Conclusion

Planning for sustainability is not something that should be left until a grant is coming to an end. Time will be needed to: identify short-term and long-term sustainability strategies that will work; conduct an assessment of the current project; and, use collected data to help determine what the future scale/scope of the program will be. It is important that you create time to plan for sustainability and develop buy-in from your partners and advisory board members. Your sustainability plan is an initial roadmap to help guide your future efforts.

APPENDIX

A word document of these checklists is available on the [America's Promise Community of Practice](#).

Program Assessment Worksheet

Use the worksheet to describe your organization's promising practice(s). Next, share evidence that demonstrates success, and then provide a vision to move each promising practice forward.

Promising Practice	Provide Evidence or Examples that Demonstrate Success of the Promising Practice	Vision – <i>What would it take to continue the promising practice?</i> <i>(After the grant ends)</i>
#1		Modifications (if any) to be made to the promising practice once the grant ends: Resources needed: # of Staff and their role:
#2		Modifications (if any) to be made to the promising practice once the grant ends: Resources needed: # of Staff and their role:
#3		Modifications (if any) to be made to the promising practice once the grant ends: Resources needed: # of Staff and their role:
#5		Modifications (if any) to be made to the promising practice once the grant ends: Resources needed: # of Staff and their role:

Succession Planning Worksheet

Use the worksheet to identify the necessary action steps to address your succession plan. Each action step should have an assigned staff, due date, and related resources required to ensure success.

Action Steps <i>What Will Be Done?</i>	Staff Assigned	Due Date	Resources <i>A. Resources Available</i> <i>B. Resources Needed</i> <i>(financial, human, political & other)</i>	Status Notes
Step 1: Identify the strengths and challenges in your current team.			A. B.	
Step 2: Assess individual and organizational gaps to determine developmental needs.			A. B.	
Step 3: Identify and train a backup person for each staff function.			A. B.	
Step 4: Create or update a binder or digital file that includes key documents.			A. B.	
Step 5: (Add your own) What does your organization need to include being successful?			A. B.	
Step 6: (Add your own)			A. B.	

Building and Maintaining Partnerships Worksheet

Use the below partnership template to conduct a regional partnership or stakeholder analysis.

Partner(s)	Responsibilities <i>What will each partner be responsible for?</i>	Resources <i>Resources Needed (financial, human, political & other)</i>	Potential Barriers <i>Are there any potential barriers from the partners listed?</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Funding Stability Worksheet

With your staff and stakeholders, look at each activity listed in your Program Assessment Worksheet and develop funding strategies for each activity to be sustained.

Promising Practice <i>(Activity from your Program Assessment)</i>	Funding Strategy	Resources Needed <i>(financial, human, political & other)</i>	Which Partner can support?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			