



Sustainability

Simply defined, sustainability is the ability to exist constantly. While grant opportunities and cycles come and go, sustainability is the ability to maintain and evolve the work of your coalition. It may look the same over time, or transform, but at the end of the day, it is about improving conditions that affect the wellbeing of men, boys and their families.

Sustainability requires advance strategic thinking and action, but can also be about strengthening, and leveraging, activities you are already doing. It includes additional funding, but can also be about leveraging non-financial resources and assets available. The concept of sustainability aligns with the environmental movement and reminders to reduce, reuse and recycle.

The following list are some ideas of how to go about developing a sustainability plan that works for your coalition. It is not meant to be exhaustive, and you may find that some aspects work better in your community than others.

The following activities are ones you are likely already doing as part of the initiative, but would benefit from looking at them with an eye toward sustainability, scaling, and succession.

- Tap into the strengths and abilities of the population of focus and partners
- Ensure that activities continue to build the capacity of the population of focus and partners through skills-building exercises, and relationship building and cultivation
- Maintain vibrancy of coalition to share responsibility for continuation and growth
- Assure that knowledge gained is shared across multiple team members and groups
- Highlight ongoing successes and reflections from the initiative in communications materials as part of outreach and marketing
- Embed equity- and prevention-focused strategies in the policies and practices of your organization and of your partners to ensure continuity through staffing transitions
- Alleviate budgetary strain by leveraging existing, non-financial organizational and community assets that can be invested in the initiative, including in-kind and other resources where possible

A critical component of sustainability is taking time for self-reflection to assess what's working well, what needs to be improved, and what can be scaled back.

- Minimize waste by learning from less than successful activities and identifying strategies that need to be phased out
- Prioritize durable investments, such as training residents or team members to continue the work

Resource development is an important component to sustainability and can allow you to continue your work in the long-term.

- Identify and reach out to local and regional funders, champions, stakeholders, and/or businesses/institutions to engage them in supporting ongoing and future efforts and activities; this includes signing up for listserves, inviting representatives to coalition events, participating in events that are open to the public
- Monitor grant programs that align with organizational goals and project objectives; assess with your coalition if there is capacity to apply for funding to complement current work, or if this funder/opportunity is something to monitor for future funding
- Diversify revenue through social entrepreneurship, legislated funding streams, community fundraisers, individual donors (particularly those that may have an employer matching program), etc.