
Sustainability: Indicators of Readiness and Ability to Promote Sustainable Systems Change

AN ORGANIZATION that is ready to promote sustainable systems change can demonstrate:

1. Strong organizational commitment to systems change as indicated by:

- A. A collective desire to be a champion team.
- B. A “*Yes I can*” attitude.
- C. Strong leadership commitment to the efforts needed for the proposed project to succeed.
- D. Leadership’s willingness to take risks and support innovative programming.
- E. Organizational mission and focus compatible with the Council’s intended outcomes for the project.

2. Consumer-driven focus as indicated by:

- A. Program flexibility that allows consumers’ needs and preferences to direct service provision.
- B. Long-term organizational commitment to self-determination for people with disabilities.
- C. Significant use of consumer input in developing plans and in operating and evaluating programs.

3. Moving the organization towards recognition as an expert in innovation by:

- A. Making positive use of factors like state funding or shifts in the job market
- B. Building on prior relationships with other organizations to implement system change projects.

4. Ability to build on existing resources as indicated by:

- A. The organization and its staff have experience with innovative programming and systems change.
- B. A history of making creative use of available resources in the community.

A PROPOSED PROJECT that will promote sustainable systems change will include activities that:

1. Actively spreading the word about project successes as indicated by plans for promoting:

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- A. Citizen, policymaker, and leader awareness of the project's successes.
 - B. Stakeholder buy-in to systems change, service innovation and other targeted outcomes.
- 2. Commitment to achieving change and success as indicated by plans for:**
- A. Eliminating and/or circumventing barriers to the project's objectives.
 - B. Evaluation that will provide ongoing information about their progress toward their goals.
- 3. Moving the organization towards recognition as an innovation expert by:**
- A. Developing expertise over time via projects and activities that build on one another, promoting a growing sense of competence and recognition within the organization and in the community.
 - B. Informing decision makers and community members of the organization's efforts and successes.
- 4. Promoting new philosophies and practices, indicated by plans for:**
- A. Formal and informal education campaigns to foster change in the community.
 - B. Promoting change in the policies and practices of community agencies.
 - C. Targeting the project to motivated consumers who *want* to pursue changes in their lives.
 - D. Using a holistic approach, recognizing that the project addresses only one part of participants' lives, and integrating project efforts with other important services in the community.
 - E. Establishing the project as a resource rather than as an ongoing service provider, and providing training for the community service system on how to provide the innovative services.
- 5. Creative development of long-term funding by plans for:**
- A. Identifying alternate sources of funding.
 - B. Applying for foundation grants and seeking community dollars.
 - C. Redirecting organizational funds for flexibility and to facilitate long-term funding.
 - D. Embedding project efforts into another, already existing line-item service.
 - E. Collaborating with other community organizations in long-term project funding.
- 6. Incorporating a strong consumer-driven effort by:**
- A. Plans for significant consumer involvement in planning and decision-making and in project operations.
 - B. Mobilizing consumers at a grassroots level to direct change.
 - C. Evaluation that engages consumers in assessing the project's progress, products and achievements, and in developing ways to use evaluation information to improve the project.

7. Creating effective collaborative relationships with key stakeholders by:

- A. Creating partnerships with needed stakeholders.
- B. Outsourcing service delivery to others who can easily integrate and sustain long-term efforts.
- C. Sharing resources and costs of service provision with other key community agencies.
- D. Recognizing and respecting partners' roles in the process.

8. Making it easy for consumers and staff to promote sustainability by plans for:

- A. Recognizing and respecting partners' roles in the process.
- B. Taking time to foster shifts in community attitudes through formal and informal education.
- C. Building the necessary support network by enhancing and building upon existing resources.
- D. Actively spreading the word about project successes.