

Reaching for Sustainability

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Rural Health Innovations Purpose

Rural Health Innovations (RHI), LLC, is a subsidiary of the National Rural Health Resource Center (The Center), a non-profit organization. Together, RHI and The Center are the nation's leading technical assistance and knowledge centers in rural health. In partnership with The Center, RHI connects rural health organizations with innovations that enhance the health of rural communities.

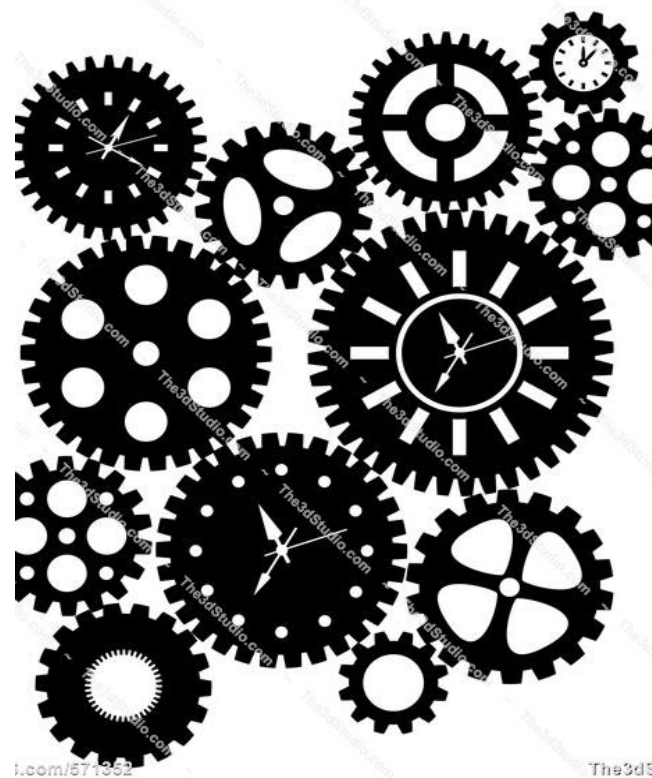


NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
RESOURCE CENTER



What is the Foundation?

Systems frameworks and
business ideas
lead toward sustainability.



Steps Toward Sustainability



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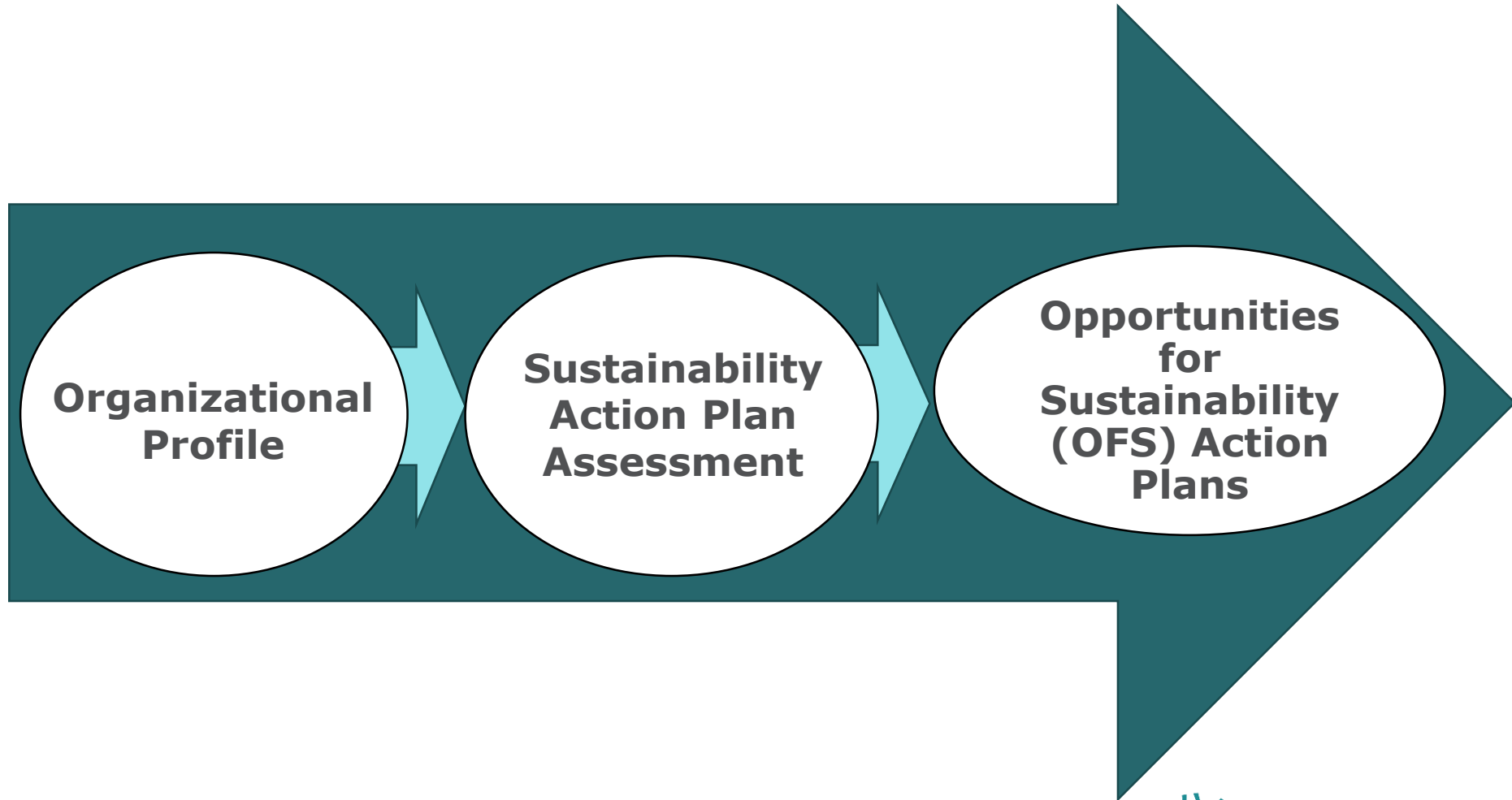
- Define sustainability
- Profile the organization
- Assess sustainability
- Identify opportunities for sustainability
- Design action plans to improve

Definition of Sustainability

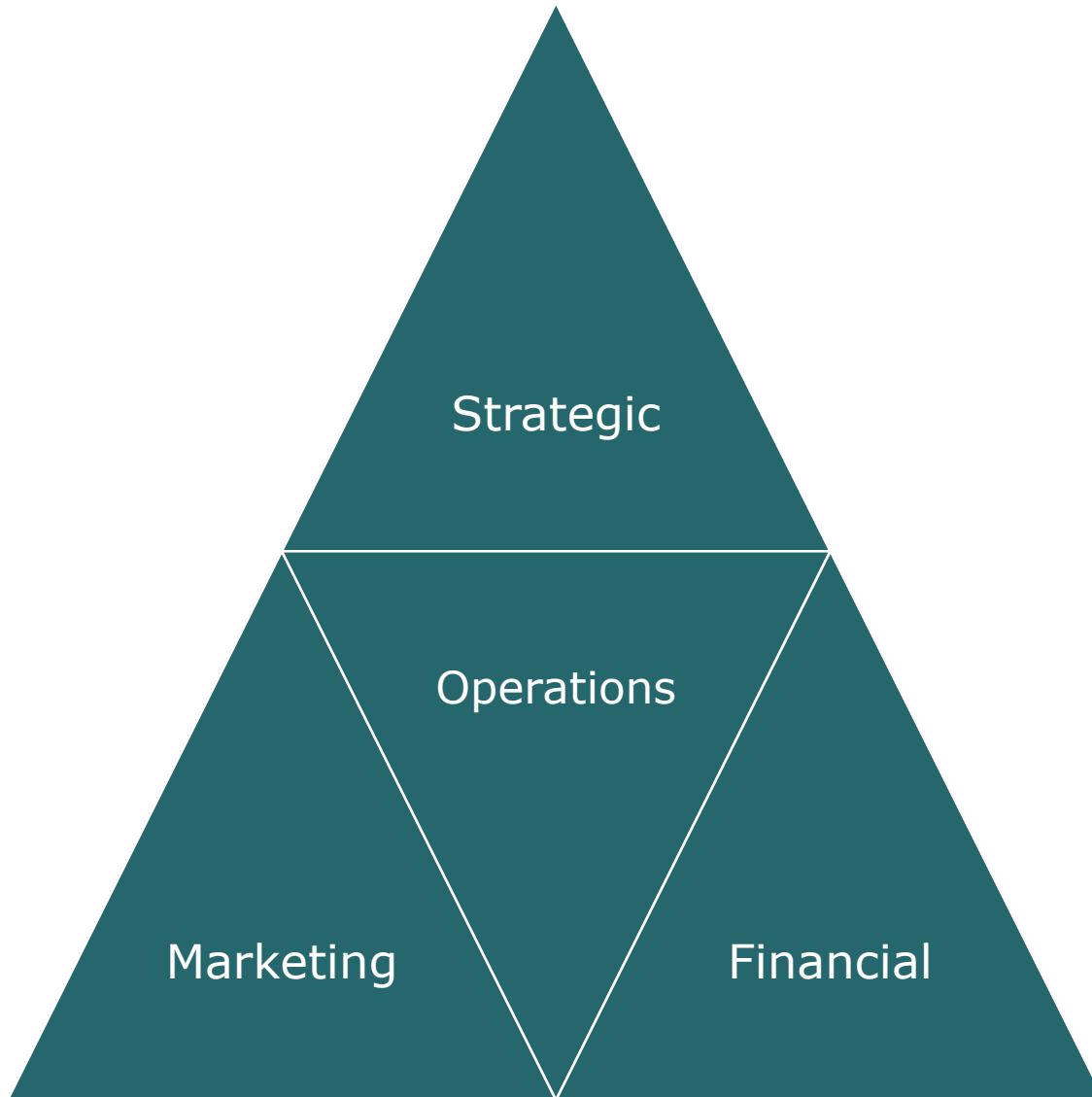
Sustainability is defined as the ability to achieve desired outcomes and financial viability through implementation and deployment of the organization's business plan.



Planning Steps Toward Sustainability



Organizational Profile



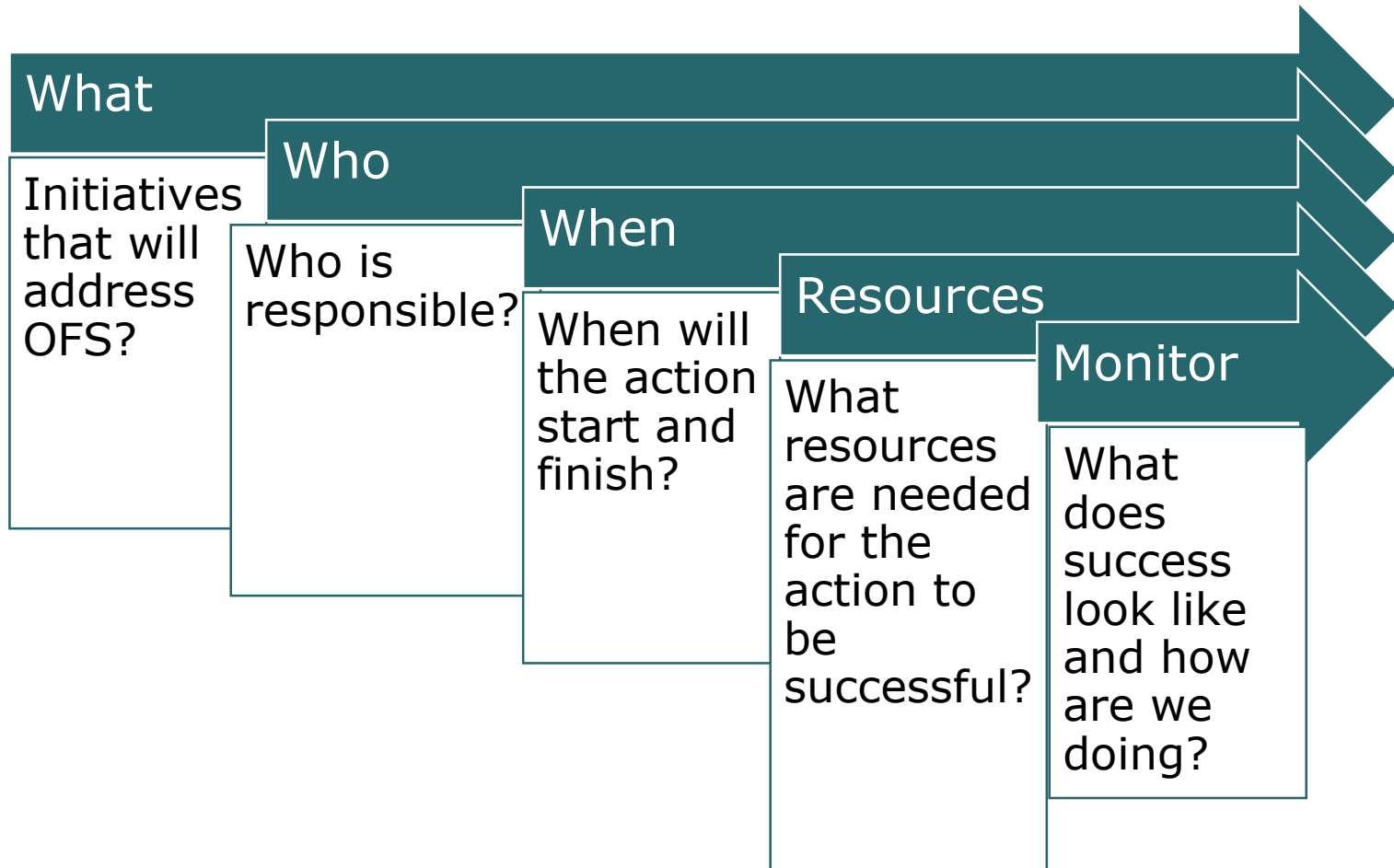
Sustainability Assessment



Opportunities for Sustainability (OFS)

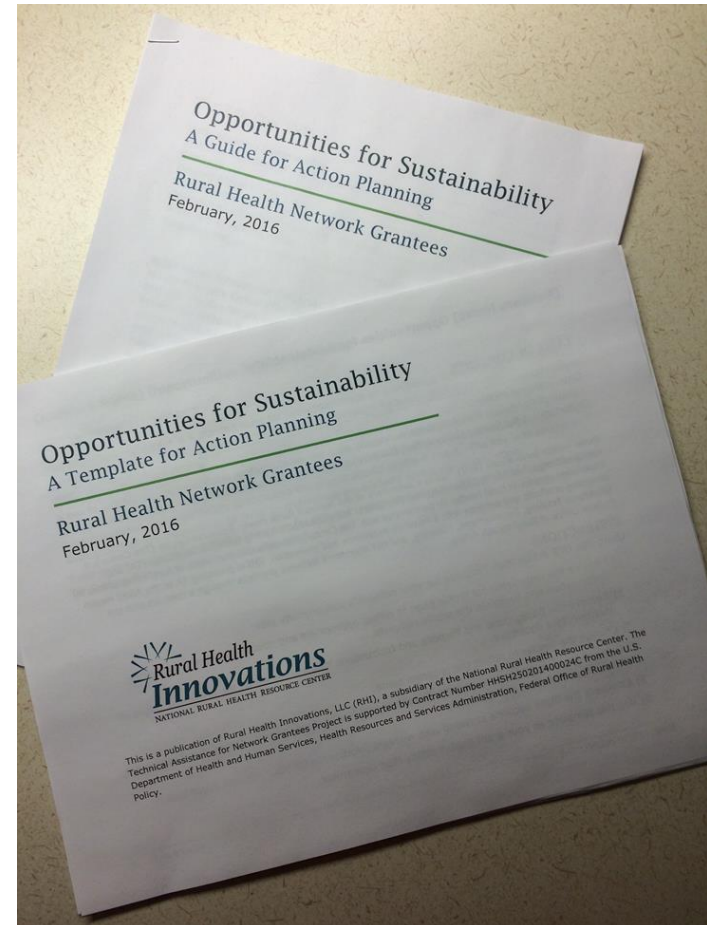


OFS Action Plans



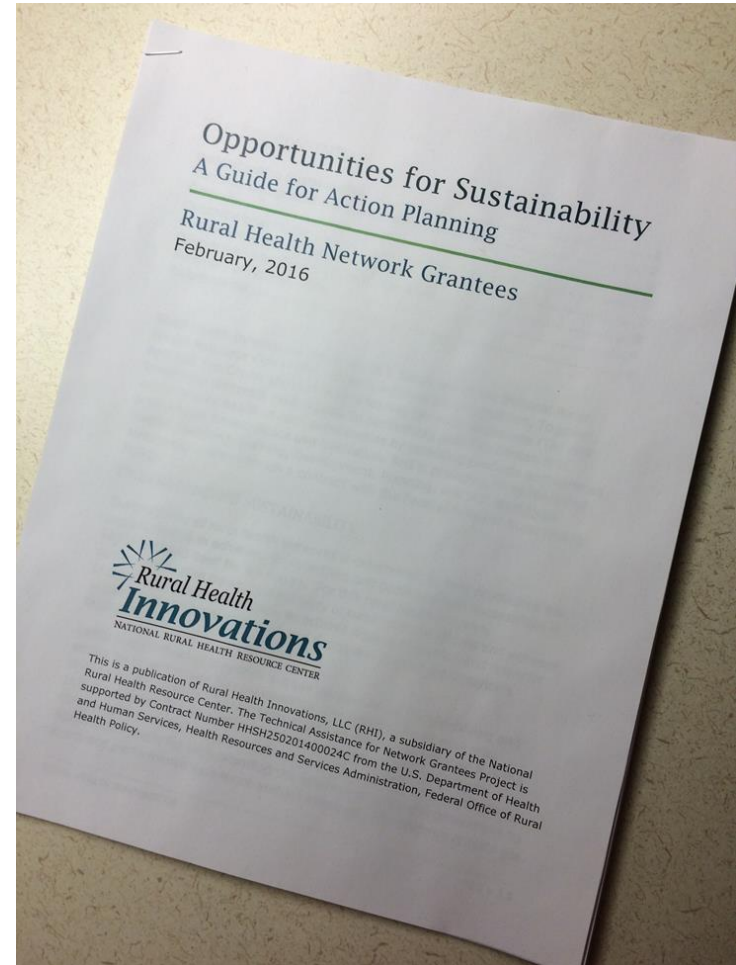
OFS Tools

- Opportunities for Sustainability: A **Guide** for Action Planning
- Opportunities for Sustainability: A **Template** for Action Planning



Guide for Action Planning

- Understanding Sustainability
- Purpose, Background, and Components
- Glossary
- Organizational Profile
- Sustainability Assessment
- Action Plans



Guide for Action Planning

- Understanding Sustainability
- Purpose, Background, and Components

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Understanding Sustainability	1
Purpose, Background And Components	2
Glossary	3
Organizational Profile	6
Sustainability Action Planning Assessment	7
Opportunities for Sustainability Action Plans	8
Summary of Actions Plans	8
Reference list	9

Rural Health Innovations (RHI), LLC is a subsidiary of the National Rural Health Resource Center (The Center), a non-profit organization. Together, RHI and The Center are the nation's leading technical assistance (TA) and knowledge centers in rural health. In partnership with The Center, RHI enhances the health of rural communities by providing products and services with a focus on excellence and innovation. RHI is providing TA to the Allied Health Workforce Training, Development, Planning, and HIT Workforce Network grantees through a contract with the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy.

UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability of rural health networks is determined by how productive the organization is in achieving its objectives and goals and how successfully it has positioned itself for the future. For this rural health network sustainability plan guide, sustainability of rural health networks and network projects is defined as the ability to achieve desired outcomes and financial viability through implementation and deployment of the organization's business plan.

Using a multi-faceted approach is a key success factor for identifying and acting on opportunities for sustainability. The Baldrige framework was

sustained performance excellence and achievement. The Baldrige criteria are widely accepted as the de facto standard for performance excellence. As Patrice Spath wrote in her excellent book, [Leading Your Healthcare Organizations to Excellence](#), "Rather than an ill-defined fad whose use-by date has expired, the Baldrige criteria represent an interrelated collection of time-tested principles, procedures, and techniques that turn performance excellence from an abstract (and empty) notion into an operationally useful management model." Spath identifies that using a multi-faceted systems approach is critical and necessary for sustained performance.

PURPOSE, BACKGROUND AND COMPONENTS

The purpose of this *Opportunities for Sustainability Action Planning Guide* is to act as a tool for rural health networks to actively plan for sustainability as network leaders deploy their networks' business plan. The goal is to create specific action plans that will address identified opportunities for sustainability (OFS). Sustainability can be addressed through careful consideration and assessment of an organization's efforts with specific guiding questions based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework, "is your organization doing as well as it could?", "How do you know?", "What or how can your organization improve or change?" Patrice Spath, [Leading Your Health Care Organization to Excellence](#), prescribes using a management framework, such as the Baldrige framework, for effectively diagnosing opportunities for sustainability. This guide provides a management tool to assess components of a sustained organization and then identify actions to continue progress toward sustainability.

The *Opportunities for Sustainability Action Planning Guide*, is designed to support rural health network leaders in both developing and writing action plans for network sustainability. There are three components within this guide for sustainably:

- **Organizational Profile:** understanding the systems of the network organization by summarizing the network's business plan components of strategy and leadership, marketing and communication, operations and

Guide for Action Planning

- Glossary of Terms

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following are terms you will find throughout the sustainability materials. They are terms from the Baldrige criteria, as the following sustainability materials are built off of the Baldrige Performance for Excellence Framework. Taking time to read through these terms creates a better frame of reference for your network's sustainability work. ([National Institute of Standards and Technology, Baldrige Performance Excellence](#))

Action plans: Specific actions that your organization takes to reach its short-term and longer-term strategic objectives.

Alignment: A state of consistency among plans, processes, information, resources decisions, workforce capability and capacity, actions, results, and analyses that support key organization-wide goals.

Approach: The methods your organization uses to carry out its processes.

Collaborators: Organizations or individuals who cooperate with your organization to support a particular activity or event or who cooperate intermittently when their short-term goals are aligned with, or are the same as yours.

Guide for Action Planning

- Organizational Profile
 - Summarizes the network's business plan
 - Components include:
 - Strategic Planning
 - Marketing Systems
 - Operations Review
 - Financial Outlook
 - SUMMARIZE key aspects

Organizational Profile

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE OVERVIEW			
<u>Vision</u> : A vision statement articulates your network's aspirations. It outlines where your network wants to be or wants to achieve; communicating your network's purpose and values. It is future-oriented and part of the Strategic and Business Plans.		<u>Mission</u> : A mission statement articulates your Network's purpose for being; communicating what the network does. It is present oriented and describes how the Network will achieve its vision in relation customer needs. It is part of the Strategic and Business Plans.	
Strategic Thinking			
<u>Environmental Analysis</u> : part of the Strategic Plan		<u>Strategic Objectives</u> : Goals that convert your mission statement into reality (located in the Strategic Plan and Business Plan) and include a high-level statement of each. Titles should be descriptive and action-oriented, i.e., 3-5 words: verb + adjective + noun. Example: Improve operating efficiency, provide outstanding customer service, and deliver timely and effective care. This is part of the Strategic, Evaluation, and Business Plans.	
<u>Blocks</u> : The top six events and happenings going on in health care, your community, and your organization that are hindering the network from moving toward its vision.	<u>Levers</u> : The top six events and happenings going on in health care, your community, and your organization that are helping the network move toward its vision.		
Marketing Thinking			
<u>Market Analysis</u> :			
<u>Environment</u> : Health care and other determinants that are influencing your network and members.		<u>Members/Customers</u> : Summary profile including the type of organization and years as members.	
<u>Member Needs</u> : Identifying those that drive service development. This is part of the Business Plan; Value Proposition Member Needs Assessment.		<u>Competitors</u> : Competitors and their strengths profile to identify other avenues for members to meet their needs.	
<u>Value Propositions</u> : Articulate the value that the network provides to its current and potential members/customers, answering the question, "what benefit does this network service provide to our members or customers?" Articulate value propositions for each network product and service with a focus on specific members or customers. Keep this description at a summary level. This is part of the Business Plan; Value Proposition Business Product and Service.			

Organizational Profile

Strategic Thinking		
Environmental Analysis: part of the Strategic Plan		Strategic Objectives: Goals that convert your mission statement into reality (located in the Strategic Plan and Business Plan) and include a high-level statement of each. Titles should be descriptive and action-oriented, i.e., 3-5 words: verb + adjective + noun. Example: Improve operating efficiency, provide outstanding customer service, and deliver timely and effective care. This is part of the Strategic, Evaluation, and Business Plans.
Blocks: The top six events and happenings going on in health care, your community, and your organization that are hindering the network from moving toward its vision.	Levers: The top six events and happenings going on in health care, your community, and your organization that are helping the network move toward its vision.	

Organizational Profile

Marketing Thinking

Market Analysis:

Environment: Health care and other determinants that are influencing your network and members.

Member Needs: Identifying those that drive service development. This is part of the Business Plan; Value Proposition Member Needs Assessment.

Members/Customers: Summary profile including the type of organization and years as members.

Competitors: Competitors and their strengths profile to identify other avenues for members to meet their needs.

Organizational Profile

Marketing Thinking

Value Propositions: Articulate the value that the network provides to its current and potential members/customers, answering the question, “what benefit does this network service provide to our members or customers?” Articulate value propositions for each network product and service with a focus on specific members or customers. Keep this description at a summary level. This is part of the Business Plan; Value Proposition Business Product and Service.

Promotion and Communication: The approach and methods of the network’s value propositions; such as, message, audience and mode of communication.

Delivery: How are network services delivered to the customer, such as, remote, in person, virtual, training, etc. Keep this section at a summary level. This is part of the Business Plan; Desired Customer Experience and Relationship and Communication and Delivery.

Organizational Profile

Operations Review

Leadership: Briefly describe the leadership skills and attributes that contribute to the success of the network. On organizational chart may be helpful. The key here is to show that you have the people resources in place to support network success. This is part of the Business Plan.

Key Initiatives: Describe key activities and initiatives focused on developing, implementing, supporting and providing products/services. This section is a summary or high-level description of your work plan or logic model. Initiatives are those activities that take place from 6-18 months that are aligned with your vision. This is part of the Business Plan.

Key Resources and Infrastructure: Describe the fundamental resources and infrastructure of the network that supports operations, (i.e. the 'guts or inner workings' that make the products/services possible to create and deliver). Provide just enough detail to show that the operations are effective, reliable, and stable. This is part of the Business Plan.

Key Partners: Identify the key partners and how they are supporting the operations of the network. Key Partners are those that are contributing to the success of the network's operations in meeting the mission. Key Partners may also be members. This is part of the Business Plan.

Key Results: This is an executive level summary of the top 3-5 measurements that help tell the story of network progress and impact. Include comparative data or trend information as appropriate. This is part of the Business Plan.

Organizational Profile

Financial Outlook

3-Year Net Income Forecast: Show the net income forecast for your network. If appropriate, illustrate the net income forecast (pro forma) for network products or services, i.e. individual value propositions or scenarios. If appropriate include assumptions that develop different scenarios about your network's future. For example; Changing the number of members: Scenario 1 = no growth, Scenario 2 = increasing members each year by a specific number or % increase, etc. This is part of the Business Plan.

Organizational Profile

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE OVERVIEW			
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Sustainability Action Planning Assessment

Sustainability Action Planning Assessment Questions	Self-Rating 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
Strategic Thinking	
Network mission and vision are complete and have been communicated organization wide.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
The network has a formal strategic plan in place that it updates at least annually.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
Network leadership uses a systems framework for planning to ensure a holistic approach.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
The network has gathered information on member needs and community health needs and incorporated this knowledge into its decision making strategies.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
Network leadership includes non-traditional health care organizations as members, partners, or advisors, such as, schools, allied health organizations, public health and community development organizations.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
Marketing Thinking	
Network leadership is aware of regional and national trends in the health care industry that could impact the network organization or its members.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
The network communicates the organization's strategic plan organization wide and to its partners.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
The network utilized planned communication to capture and share network activities with members, partners, and the community.	5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Sustainability Action Planning Assessment

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Sustainability Action Plan Assessment is a management tool based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence framework to identify performance gaps that are barriers for the network in sustaining its operations and reaching its vision. The overall purpose of the tool is to provide a means to consider your whole organization and identify Opportunities for Sustainability (OFS). It includes 22 questions, within the Baldrige components of leadership, strategic planning, members and partners, measurement and feedback, operations and process, and workforce. These questions are organized within the Business Plan sections. Please refer to "Opportunities for Sustainability: A Template for Action Planning" pages 10-12.

After completing this assessment, identify questions that were rated at 3 or below, these are the **Opportunities for Sustainability, OFS**. Use the conversation below to prioritize the top three OFSs.

Conversation to select three OFSs for action planning:

- Identify the questions that were rated 3 or lower. Read those questions aloud and / or post them to a flip chart for consideration.
- Ask: Of all of the low rated OFSs;
 - Which ones are you surprised that they are rated at a 3 or below?
 - Which ones make sense to you to be rated low?
- Ask: In considering these low rated OFSs;
 - Which ones have we already been working on?
 - Which ones do we think are not significant or we don't need to consider for our sustainability?
 - Which ones may be important to consider for our sustained work?
- Ask: In considering these low rated OFSs;

Opportunities for Sustainability

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW AND EXAMPLE

Create a separate action plan for each of the three selected OFSs that were identified as the lowest rated questions from the completed Sustainability Action Plan Assessment. 1) List business plan category the question was included within and 2) write out one of the three selected OFS question.

Business Plan Category: Operations

Selected OFS: The network leadership does not include non-traditional health care organizations as members, partners, or advisors.

Actions to change this OFS: (3-5 actions over 6-12 months) What are the actions that will begin to improve or change the rating of the selected OFS? <i>i.e.</i> what action needs to be taken to alleviate the gap?	Who will implement: Who (person / network) will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start Date and Anticipated Completion Date What is the timeline for putting these steps into place?
1. <i>Expand the board to include two representatives from non-traditional health care organizations as advisors. Will require a change to bylaws.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board chair and current network members</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1st Qtr. begin effort</i> • <i>Complete by end of 3rd Quarter;</i>
2. <i>Include two new partners or advisors from non-traditional health care organizations for next strategic plan event.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Network Leader</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>4th Quarter</i>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Action Plans

- Selected OFS
- Actions to change this OFS
- Who will implement
- Start date and anticipated completion
- Needed recourses
- Plan for monitoring and review
- Information and message
- Measure of evidence of success

Action Plan Summary

Action Plan Summary			
Selected OFS:	Key Actions for Change:	When/Date:	Status:
1.	•	•	•
1.	•	•	•
1.	•	•	•

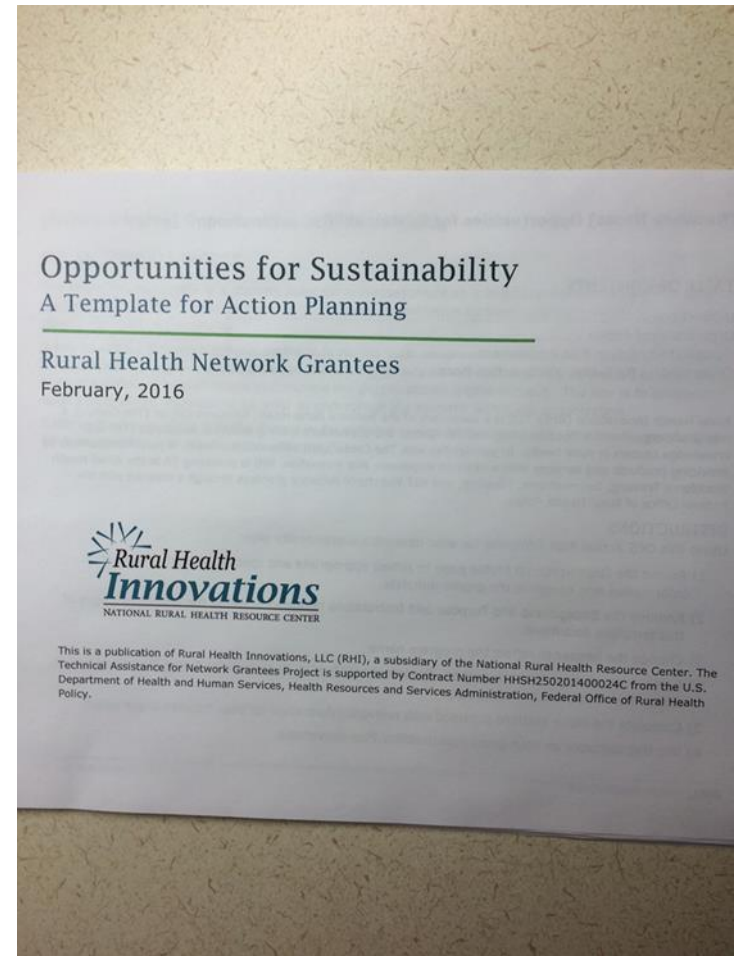
Reference List

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- Scheirer, Mary Ann (2005) Is Sustainability Possible? A Review and Commentary on Empirical Studies of Program Sustainability. American Journal of Evaluation / September 2005

Template for Action Planning

- Instructions
- Organizational Profile
- Sustainability Action Plan Assessment
- Opportunities for Sustainability Action Plans



Organizational Profile

[Network Name] Opportunities for Sustainability

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE		
<u>Vision:</u> (<50 words)		<u>Mission:</u> (<50 words)
Strategic Thinking		
<u>Environmental Analysis:</u> (top 3-4)		<u>Strategic Objectives:</u> (<6 objectives/strategies or outcomes)
<u>Blocks :</u>	<u>Levers:</u>	
•	•	•

Sustainability Action Planning Assessment

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Opportunities for Sustainability Action Plans

[Network Name] Opportunities for Sustainability

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLANS

These are your "Action Plans for Sustainability". Use the included form to develop one action plan for each of the three selected OFSs.

The "Actions Plan Summary" is a tool designed for helping a network track progress. Please use the included form.

Action Plan Summary			
Selected OFS	Key Actions for change:	When/ Date:	Status:
1.	•	•	•
2.	•	•	•
3.	•	•	•

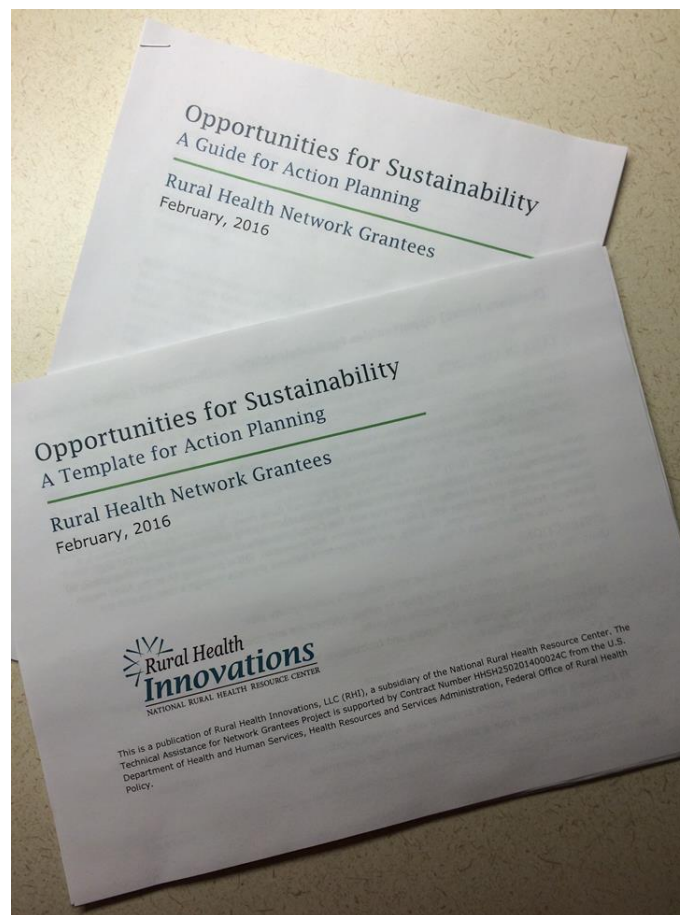
Opportunities for Sustainability Action Plans

[Network Name] Opportunities for Sustainability

OFS Action Plan #1		
Business Plan Category: <i>(for selected OFS, list business plan category)</i>		
Selected Key Opportunity for Sustainability (OFS): <i>(write out OFS question)</i>		
Actions to change this OFS: (3-5 actions over 6-12 months)	Who will implement:	Start Date and Anticipated Completion Date
1.	•	•
2.	•	•
3.	•	•
4.	•	•
5.	•	•

Opportunities for Sustainability Tools

- Opportunities for Sustainability: A **Guide** for Action Planning
- Opportunities for Sustainability: A **Template** for Action Planning



Sustainability Plan

- May Cohort
 - August 30, 2016
- September Cohort
 - November 30, 2016

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