



COP - R C O R P

Communities of Practice for Rural Communities Opioid Response Program

Local Sustainability Plan

Seneca County, OH

Seneca County Opiate Task Force

Mental health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties

December 2021

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Acknowledgements

HRSA CoP-RCORP is funded by the HRSA Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation: HRSA-19-082, CFDA: 93.912 grants GA1RH33532 and GA1RH33529.

The Seneca County Opiate Task Force acknowledges the time and efforts that consortium members and other stakeholders contributed to the development of this local sustainability plan.

As the convening leads for the CoP-RCORP master consortium, the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) and Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs (OU-VS) braid their funding through a shared services approach and work collaboratively with project directors and staff from the local CoP-RCORP backbone organizations to provide leadership, training, capacity building, technical assistance and evaluation services, and management oversight for project activities. This local sustainability plan represents the shared work of the Seneca County Opiate Task Force (local consortium), the Mental health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties (backbone organization), and the CoP-RCORP Facilitation Team (PIRE and OU-VS).

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Seneca County Opiate Task Force
Seneca County, OH
CoP-RCORP Local Sustainability Plan
December 2021

| | | |
|--|--|--|
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Introduction

RCORP Initiative

The Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) is a multi-year initiative supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to address barriers to access in rural communities related to substance use disorder (SUD), including opioid use disorder (OUD). RCORP funds multi-sector consortia to enhance their ability to implement and sustain SUD/OUD prevention, treatment, and recovery services in underserved rural areas. The overall goal of the RCORP initiative is to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses in high-risk rural communities by strengthening the organizational and infrastructural capacity of multi-sector consortiums to address prevention, treatment, and recovery. To support funded RCORP consortia, HRSA also funded a national technical assistance provider, JBS International.

CoP-RCORP Consortium

In 2018, with support from the state of Ohio (viz. Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Ohio Department of Health), Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs (OU-VS) and the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) applied and received two \$200,000 RCORP planning grants. In turn, OU-VS funded community organizations in Ashtabula and Fairfield counties and PIRE funded those in Sandusky and Washington counties. Through a shared services agreement, OU-VS and PIRE braided their funding together and created fiscal efficiencies to fund a fifth in Seneca County. In addition, the efficiencies allowed a project website to be created to organize, share, and archive innovative project strategies.

As system conveners (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015) of the Communities of Practice for Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (CoP-RCORP), faculty and staff from OU-VS and PIRE brought together representatives from three county behavioral health authorities in Ashtabula, Fairfield, and Seneca counties and two county health departments in Sandusky and Washington counties during the planning phase. Each of the five community-based organizations acted as backbone fiscal support for a local consortium and oversaw the project activities being carried out in their community. The CoP-RCORP master consortium utilized a community of practice (Wenger & McDermott, 2002) approach where representatives from the local consortia collaboratively engaged in peer learning and grant activities facilitated by OU-VS and PIRE.

At the end of the planning grant, OU-VS and PIRE each led efforts with respective community representatives and submitted separate proposals for RCORP-Implementation funding. HRSA awarded OU-VS and PIRE each \$1 million over three-years. In August 2019, OU-

VS and PIRE entered into another shared services agreement and braided funding to continue growing the community of practice model being utilized with the master consortium. The implementation funding includes 15 required core activities, which span the continuum of care and include prevention, treatment, and recovery to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses in high-risk rural communities. Sustaining those local efforts is a critical overarching goal.

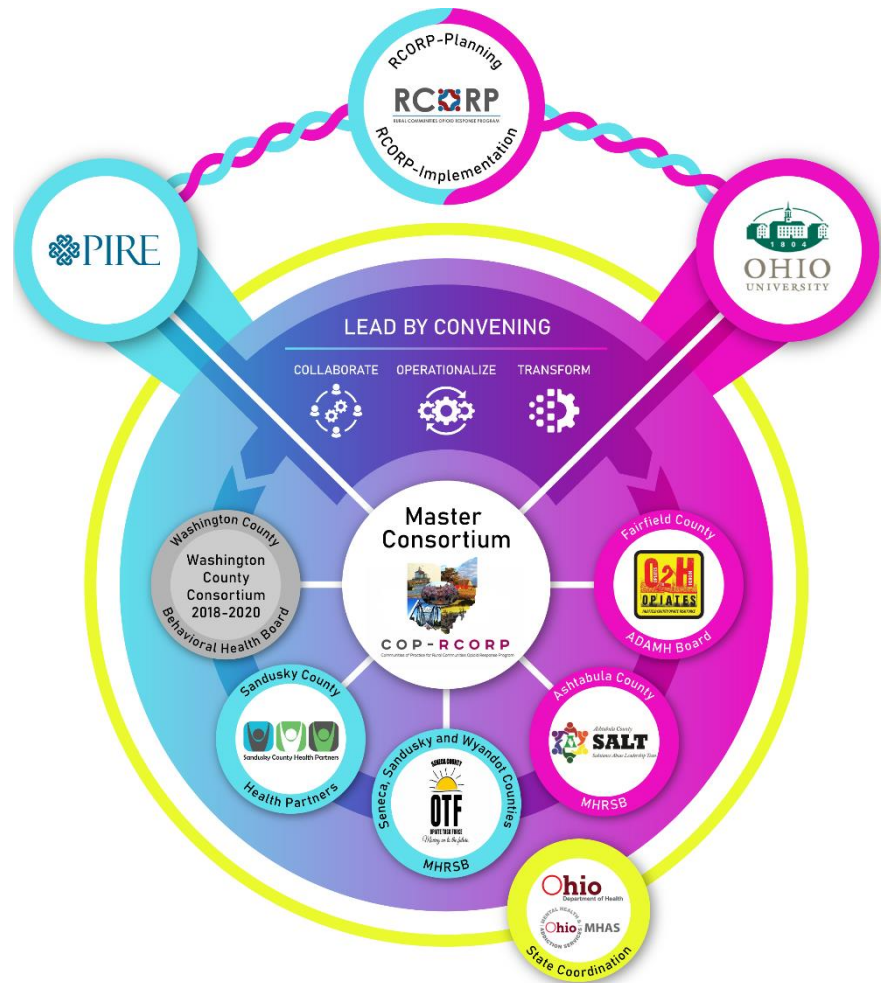
Process-wise, the CoP holds monthly master consortium meetings to learn from one another. At the conclusion of Year 1, the Washington County Behavioral Health Board and the CoP-RCORP Master Consortium separated. Currently, the master consortium includes

representatives from the following four communities: Ashtabula, Fairfield, Sandusky, and Seneca counties. As the convening lead for the master consortium, OU-VS and PIRE work with members of the master consortium to advance the core activities at the local level.

The master consortium also draws on state-based resources to inform policies, programs, and practices.

See the figure below for an organizational graphic. More information about the organizational structure and initiative may be found on the project website:

communitiesofpractice-rcorp.com.



Measuring Sustainability

Under the CoP-RCORP initiative, OU-VS and PIRE approached sustainability as a process with a two-fold purpose. First, we wanted to make sure we fulfilled the RCORP grant requirements. Moreover, we wanted to ensure local consortia had the information they needed to continue supporting their local infrastructure in addressing ongoing opiate use disorder (OUD) issues. This locally driven type of process follows a format that has successfully been used in other Ohio initiatives, which involves assessing what needs to be sustained first, followed by a set of reflection questions about how to shore up the issues identified.

In particular, OU-VS and PIRE wanted each local consortium to think about how they could continue to build and sustain their local capacity to plan and address OUD on an ongoing basis. We utilized this approach in part based on our developmental evaluation and capacity building experience over the years which has illustrated the importance of: (a) clarifying what to continue or sustain (Mancini & Marek, 2002; Weiss, Coffman, & Bohan-Baker, 2002), (b) understanding the public value, authorizing environment, and operational capacity needed for sustainability (Moore, 1995), and (c) viewing sustainability as a process rather than an outcome (Schell, et al., 2013).

Near the end of implementation year 1, HRSA and JBS International asked all phase 1 grantees to complete a set of sustainability assessments and develop a plan based on those findings. That process occurred at the master consortium level. In addition, OU-VS and PIRE asked each community organization to complete a local sustainability assessment process. The balance of this report describes that local process, the findings, and plan for next steps.

Washington University Program Sustainability Assessment Tool

Each of the four project directors conducted an online assessment utilizing the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT) from Washington University in St. Louis. The PSAT includes 40-items arranged into eight domains: Environmental Support, Funding Stability, Partnerships, Organizational Capacity, Program Evaluation, Program Adaptation, Communications, and Strategic Planning. Using a scale from 1 to 7, project directors rated the extent to which each process or structure exists in their consortium, with a 1 meaning no extent and 7 meaning full extent. See Luke, Calhoun, Robichaux, Elliott, and Moreland-Russell (2014) for more information about the tool.

Community organizations were offered two options for completing the sustainability assessment tool. In the first option, a core local planning team met as a group to discuss and rate each question. Upon reaching consensus, the group entered a score for each question and received a summary report with the results. Alternatively, each identified member of the core

local planning group answered all of the questions independently. The project director then received a report that averaged the responses. The Seneca County Opiate Task Force chose the option of group consensus.

Local Sustainability Plan

Seneca County Opiate Task Force

The Seneca County Opiate Task Force serves as the local consortium for the RCORP-Planning grant, while the Mental health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties operates as the backbone organization. In order to develop and strengthen the local consortium, the following individuals engaged in a sustainability assessment and reflection process (Core Sustainability Planning Team):

- Robin Reaves
- Shelly Biggert
- Nicole Williams

Sustainability Plan

Reflection questions and assessment results. After completing the online PSAT assessment tool, communities received a summary of their assessment results that reported the average score for each domain (see Appendix A for a copy of the Summary Assessment Results). Next, each community reviewed the summary results and reflected on several questions developed by OU-VS and PIRE based on the guidance from JBS International (see Appendix A for a copy of the Reflection Questions). Table 1 below shows the overall sustainability assessment results and prioritized domain and score for that domain.

Table 1. Sustainability Assessment Results for the Seneca County Opiate Task Force

| County | Assessment Approach | Overall Sustainability Assessment Score | Overall Assessment Range | Prioritized Domain(s) | Assessment Score(s) for Prioritized Domain(s) |
|--------|---------------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Seneca | Group Consensus | 5.3 | 4.2 - 6.4 | Communications | 4.2 |

Assessment summary. To begin reviewing the assessment results, the Seneca County Sustainability Planning Team conducted a SWOT analysis by categorizing the various domains as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats. They also discussed why they categorized a domain as a strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat (see Table 2).

Table 2. SWOT Analysis on the Sustainability Assessment Domains

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| <p>Environmental Support and Partnerships These two domains were the ones with the highest scores. We were not surprised by this result as the Seneca County Opiate Task Force prides itself in the success it has had working together over the years while addressing the opiate epidemic in Seneca County. We continue to have strong involvement and support from our local common pleas and juvenile/probate judges, treatment providers, law enforcement, health department, schools, and the faith-based sector.</p> | <p>Program Evaluation and Communications These two domains were the ones with the lowest scores, which does not come as a surprise. While we believe we have made some improvements in both sections in the past year it has been less of a priority than sustaining partnerships, funding, and programs. Focusing on COVID 19 pandemic related issues have also drawn more attention and therefore less time has been given in these domains as a result.</p> |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| <p>Communications The Communications domain continues to offer an opportunity as our resources are expected to increase in the coming year allowing more time to be devoted to promoting the task force and increasing community awareness of the epidemic and the task force. We also feel a great deal of willingness from local media to cover topics and we see an opportunity to capitalize on their willingness to cover our stories.</p> | <p>Funding Stability This domain continues to be one of our biggest threats. While funding is available now to address the task force’s efforts it comes with some restrictions or limitations at times and is always at risk of not being renewed.</p> <p>Organization Capacity Another domain with a threat is the Organization Capacity domain as it pertains to the task force having adequate staff to complete its goals. The task force itself has retained membership despite workforce challenges the provider agencies continue to struggle with an adequate workforce to carry out or deliver services. We also had three partner agencies who were delivering peer services and all three went through organizational challenges resulting in all three ceasing or decreasing their peer support efforts.</p> |

Problem statement. The Seneca County Sustainability Planning Team identified one domain area that represents a key weakness or threat for the sustainability of the local consortium to address OUD. The weakness or threat domain to address is: Communications.

Selecting this area was prioritized because we selected this domain last year and while we believe we made some progress we believe there is still more work to be done and we have the resources to adequately devote to addressing this domain. We tried to increase our communications on social media and local media outlets, and we moved from a 3.8 rating in 2020 to a 4.2 rating in 2021. We did feel that there were times that we succeeded in getting the work communicated we did not get the task force itself covered. This was not due to lack of effort; it just was not covered every time when it was out of our direct control. We also plan to implement a stigma reduction campaign as part of our work with the HRSA Stigma Workgroup and we believe we can further address this domain through those campaign activities.

Population of focus. The organizations, agencies, community leaders, and staff/personnel who need to be present to work on this problem include all members of the consortium with leadership from the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties. This Board has also recently hired an additional Community Outreach Coordinator to their organization who will also need to help address this weakness.

Goals and objectives. The goal this group will work toward addressing and at least one key objective follow. Table 3 lists the specific activities for the goal and objectives.

Goal Statement: We will need each local consortium or task force member to continue to commit to creating press releases and social media posts around the positive impacts the task force has had on the community. These releases and posts need to include language acknowledging the work and affiliation of the task force and not just the agency directly delivering the service or program.

Key Objective(s): Each member of the consortium will coordinate a post or release directly with the MHR SB/Community Outreach Coordinator.

Table 3. Specific Activities for Goals and Objectives

| Activity | Start Date | End Date | Responsible Party | Resources |
|--|-------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Communicate the task to each Opiate Task Force Member, insure they understand the importance of increased communication to the public via press releases and social media posts. | December 3, 2021 | December 3, 2021 | MHR SB | Media OTF Members |
| Monthly check ins with OTF members to see if they have posted a press release or if they need any assistance. | January 7, 2022 | January 6, 2023 | MHR SB | OTF Members |
| Compile list of major activities/events that the OTF is involved with | November 19, 2021 | Ongoing | MHR SB/Community Outreach Coordinator | OTF Members |

Long-term outcomes and indicators. Below are the long-term change outcomes and indicators to define how change will be demonstrated.

Long-term Outcome: A long-term change we hope to see by addressing the weakness of communication is to increase the publics knowledge of what the Opiate Task Force is working on and the value of the group.

Long-term Indicator: We will know we were able to achieve this outcome if we are able to release an article and success story at minimum one time per month for 12 months via various media outlets.

Conclusion

Affordability and Accessibility of OUD Prevention, Treatment, & Recovery

Throughout the implementation process the Seneca County RCORP Consortium will keep maintaining affordability and accessibility of OUD prevention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals as priority throughout the implementation process. We will be sure to utilize some of our press releases that will help raise awareness in the community, to educate the community of the affordable OUD services in our community.

Prioritization of Evaluation

As stated above, the Seneca County COP RCOPRP Local Consortium (Opiate Task Force) looks to address communication, one of our weaknesses from the sustainability assessment. In addressing this weakness, we hope to further our efforts for communicating with the public regarding the Opiate Task Force and their projects and values. We hope this will help further raise our communication score in the future and to create public awareness to all the hard work of the group. We plan to utilize the results of local surveys to help develop communication strategies and a stigma campaign.

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APPENDIX A

Local Consortium Sustainability Assessment Report

Many factors impact a program's ability to continue providing services and producing benefits over time. For example, funding, quality evaluation, infrastructure, strong partnerships, and clear communication all have a role to play in supporting program sustainability. The **Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT)** allows stakeholders to rate their programs on the extent to which they have processes and structures in place that will increase the likelihood of sustainability. This report summarizes the current sustainability capacity for your program. Results are based on your program's responses to the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool. Assessment results can then be used to identify next steps in building program capacity for sustainability in order to position efforts for long-term success.

Interpreting the Results

The table presents the average rating for each sustainability domain based on the responses that you provided. The remainder of the document presents the ratings for indicators within each domain. There is no minimum rating that guarantees the sustainability of a program. However, lower ratings do indicate opportunities for improvement that a program may want to focus on when developing a plan for sustainability.

Next Steps

- These results can be used to guide sustainability planning for your program.
- Areas with lower ratings indicate that there is room for improvement.
- Address domains that are most modifiable, quicker to change, and have data available to support the needed changes.
- Develop strategies to tackle the domains that may be more difficult to modify.
- Make plans to assess your program's sustainability on an ongoing basis to monitor program changes as you strive for an ongoing impact.

Here is your sustainability score: **5.3**

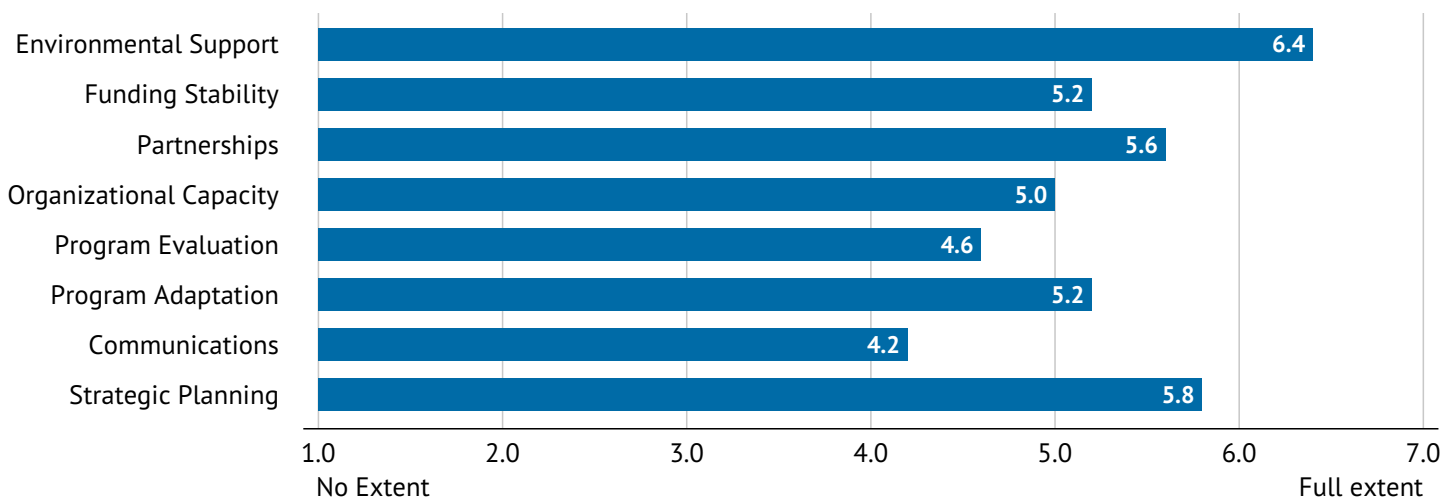
| Domain | Domain Score |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Environmental Support | 6.4 |
| Funding Stability | 5.2 |
| Partnerships | 5.6 |
| Organizational Capacity | 5.0 |
| Program Evaluation | 4.6 |
| Program Adaptation | 5.2 |
| Communications | 4.2 |
| Strategic Planning | 5.8 |

1 = program has this to no extent

7 = program has to the full extent

NA = not able to answer

Sustainability Capacity By Domain



 **Environmental Support** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Champions exist who strongly support the program. | 7.0 |
| 2. The program has strong champions with the ability to garner resources. | 7.0 |
| 3. The program has leadership support from within the larger organization. | 7.0 |
| 4. The program has leadership support from outside of the organization. | 6.0 |
| 5. The program has strong public support. | 5.0 |

 **Partnerships** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Diverse community organizations are invested in the success of the program. | 6.0 |
| 2. Community leaders are involved with the program. | 6.0 |
| 3. Community members are passionately committed to the program. | 6.0 |
| 4. The program communicates with community leaders. | 6.0 |
| 5. The community is engaged in the development of program goals. | 4.0 |

 **Program Evaluation** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The program has the capacity for quality program evaluation. | 4.0 |
| 2. The program reports short term and intermediate outcomes. | 5.0 |
| 3. Evaluation results inform program planning and implementation. | 4.0 |
| 4. Program evaluation results are used to demonstrate successes to funders and other key stakeholders. | 5.0 |
| 5. The program provides strong evidence to the public that the program works. | 5.0 |

 **Communications** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The program has communication strategies to secure and maintain public support. | 5.0 |
| 2. Program staff communicate the need for the program to the public. | 3.0 |
| 3. The program is marketed in a way that generates interest. | 4.0 |
| 4. The program increases community awareness of the issue. | 5.0 |
| 5. The program demonstrates its value to the public. | 4.0 |

 **Funding Stability** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The program exists in a supportive state economic climate. | 6.0 |
| 2. The program implements policies to help ensure sustained funding. | 1.0 |
| 3. The program is funded through a variety of sources. | 7.0 |
| 4. The program has a combination of stable and flexible funding. | 6.0 |
| 5. The program has sustained funding. | 6.0 |

 **Organizational Capacity** Rating

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. The program is well integrated into the operations of the organization. | 5.0 |
| 2. Organizational systems are in place to support the various program needs. | 6.0 |
| 3. Leadership effectively articulates the vision of the program to external partners. | 5.0 |
| 4. Leadership efficiently manages staff and other resources. | 5.0 |
| 5. The program has adequate staff to complete the program's goals. | 4.0 |

 **Program Adaptation** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The program periodically reviews the evidence base. | 5.0 |
| 2. The program adapts strategies as needed. | 6.0 |
| 3. The program adapts to new science. | 5.0 |
| 4. The program proactively adapts to changes in the environment. | 5.0 |
| 5. The program makes decisions about which components are ineffective and should not continue. | 5.0 |

 **Strategic Planning** Rating

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The program plans for future resource needs. | 6.0 |
| 2. The program has a long-term financial plan. | 6.0 |
| 3. The program has a sustainability plan. | 6.0 |
| 4. The program's goals are understood by all stakeholders. | 6.0 |
| 5. The program clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders. | 5.0 |

Results based on responses to the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool, ©2012, Washington University in St Louis.

For more information about the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool and sustainability planning, visit <https://sustaintool.org/>

APPENDIX B

CoP RCORP Sustainability Reflection Questionnaire



HRSA’s Communities of Practice: Rural Communities Opioids Response Program Reflection Questions for Developing a Sustainability Plan

| | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|--|
| Name of Person (s) Completing Form: | | | |
| Date: | | County Name: | |

Step 1 – Decide How to Complete these Reflection Questions

1. For communities using group consensus, you will want to reference your assessment report and the notes from your group consensus discussion. It is up to you to decide if you want to pull the core group back together to answer these questions.
2. For communities using average scores, you will need to pull together the 2-4 core planning members who completed the assessment and hold a group discussion with them to reflect on the findings from the Sustainability Assessment Report.

Step 2 – Begin by Reviewing Your Sustainability Assessment

1. Review the **Next Steps** section of the report (on page 1), which provides some helpful guidance for selecting domains that you may want to strengthen.
 - a. Note that the selection of domains that you want to focus on in your sustainability plan is not always governed solely by how low a domain’s score is.
 - b. The guidance also notes the importance of having data available to support the needed changes, and the importance of the domain being modifiable.
 - c. In addition to these considerations, you and your team will want to take into consideration local culture, history of prior efforts, and new trends that may be just emerging.

Step 3 – Reflect on Your Assessment and Document Your Plans

1. On page 2 of the Assessment report, look across the eight domains and complete a SWOT analysis.
 - a. What domains represent strengths and why?
 - b. What domains represent weaknesses and why?
 - c. What domains represent opportunities and why?
 - d. What domains represent threats and why?

| | |
|---|---|
| Strengths – Capture these domain(s) and why they are strengths in this box. Type your response here | Weaknesses – Capture these domain(s) and why they are weaknesses in this box. Type your response here |
| Opportunities – Capture these domain(s) and why they are opportunities in this box. Type your response here | Threats – Capture these domain(s) and why they are threats in this box. Type your response here |



2. Prioritize one key domain area that represents either a key weakness or key threat for your Local RCORP Consortium.
 - a. You will need to gather information about how you intend to shore up and address this weakness or threat. Guiding questions have been included below to help you capture that information.
 - b. Please type your responses where noted below. OU/PIRE will take your information and format it into a formatted Sustainability Plan document.
 - c. You only need to select one domain to address. It may be either a weakness or a threat from your SWOT analysis. You will then answer questions 3-9 below regarding that domain.
 - d. If you want to select an additional domain area to address, you will then need to answer questions 3-9 again for that domain.

3. Name the weakness or threat domain area that you have selected to address.

Weakness or Threat Domain to Address: **Type your response here**

4. How and why did you prioritize this weakness or threat domain?

Type your response here

5. Who needs to help address this weakness or threat domain? Include organizations, agencies, community leaders, staff/personnel, etc., as appropriate for the domain selected.

Type your response here

6. What is the goal you want this group of organizations, agencies, leaders, and/or staff to address related to the domain weakness or threat that you have prioritized? Please write a goal statement that you could provide to this group that would represent what they need to work toward addressing.

Type your response here

7. What is the change you are seeking?
 - a. Define the long-term change (outcome(s)) you want to see occur.

Type your response here



- b. How will you know that you have achieved that outcome? (List at least one indicator.)

Type here

8. List one or more objective for the group.

Objective: Type here

9. For the objective, identify a few key activities (e.g., convene the group, engage the issue, report back) and for each list a key person who will be responsible; other resources needed (staff, volunteers, space, money); and a planned start and end date.

| Activity | Start Date | End Date | Responsible Party | Resources |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
| Type here | Type here | Type here | Type here | Type here |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

10. HRSA is prioritizing the following outcome:

Maintain affordability and accessibility of OUD prevention, treatment, and recovery services provided to individuals.

Please write a one-two paragraph statement about how your Local RCORP Consortium will keep this outcome in mind throughout implementation process.

Type response here.

11. HRSA would like all Local RCORP Consortium to demonstrate that they are prioritizing evaluation.

Please write a one-two paragraph statement about how your Local RCORP Consortium is committed to developing quantifiable metrics that will be used to assess the impact of future activities.

Type response here.

Step 4 – Submit Your Reflection Report & Assessment Report to OU/PIRE

1. Save your Sustainability Reflection response document.
2. Send your completed Sustainability Reflection document to your TTAE.
3. Include a PDF copy of your online Assessment Report from Washington University.



4. OU/PIRE will transfer your information into a formatted Sustainability Plan and share it with you for final review and approval.