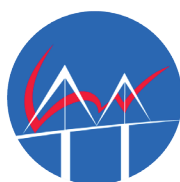


Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool Kit



Evaluating the Sustainability of future HealthWest Partnership Project Actions and Effects

December 2015



HealthWest
Partnership

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1. Purpose of the Tool kit

This Sustainability Self- Assessment Tool Kit has been developed to assist in evaluating future HealthWest Partnership (HWP) project actions and effects. Given the investment by HWP in projects with its member agencies and communities of interest to facilitate sustainable system change, evaluating the extent to which the project actions and effects are sustainable is essential. While this Tool Kit focusses specifically upon the ‘*Sustainability of HWP project actions and effects*’, the Tool Kit needs to be seen as the first stage of planning to evaluate HWP project actions and effects. **Supplement 1** provides more information on conducting an evaluation of HWP projects to assess what works, for whom and in what circumstances.

2. Audience for the Tool kit

HealthWest Partnership (HWP) is a member based organisation whose mission is to improve health and wellbeing, through building its member agencies and communities of interest capacity to implement, evaluate, and sustain evidence-informed practices - essentially influencing the practices (skills and behaviours) of its member agencies and communities – creating sustainable system change. This Tool Kit is targeted at all those individuals and organisations involved in developing, implementing and sustaining a project, including:

- HealthWest Partnership (HWP) Board members, Senior Executives and staff
- Partner agencies staff; and
- Communities of Interest

3. Outcomes from using the Tool kit

The Tool Kit will enable you to answer four key questions and will assist in evaluating the sustainability of the HWP project actions and effects:

1. What does the proposed HealthWest project aim to **achieve**?
2. What **pre-conditions** exist to sustain the HealthWest project actions and effects?
3. What **actions** are required to improve the sustainability of the HealthWest project actions and effects?
4. What **ripples (i.e., effects)** have resulted from planning and implementing the HealthWest project?*

**Please note: Q4: Ripples is designed to be asked 6 and 12 months following implementation of the project.*

4. Using the Tool kit

In the Tool Kit we use the phrase ‘*project*’ as an umbrella phrase for the multi-level (individual, community, organisation, system) level types of projects that HWP is involved in- for example: the Asylum Seeker & Refugee Project; the Health Literacy Project; and the Needle Syringe Project that focus on service delivery optimisation; organisational transformation and systems building.

The sustainability self-assessment tools are designed to facilitate a conversation about a proposed project, which may be driven by a policy, a funding opportunity, HWP membership desire, or an identified gap through needs analysis or mapping.

The Sustainability Evaluation Tool Kit is premised upon the following:

- **Project is within HWP scope (Vision, Mission, and Priority areas)**

The tools are designed to suit all the key stakeholders (HWP Board, HWP Senior Executive, Partner Agencies; HWP staff, Communities of Interest) involved in the planning, implementation and sustainability of the project.

In this tool kit, we refer to many terms including: **evaluation and sustainability** by which we mean:

- “...evaluation is designed to attribute value to an intervention by gathering reliable & valid information about it in a systematic way, by making comparisons for the purpose of making more informed decision” (Ovretveit, 1998)
- “sustainability is the process of ensuring a sustainable innovation that can be integrated into ongoing operations to benefit diverse stakeholders” Johnson et al (2013)

Given the complexity of sustaining project actions and effects, in this Tool Kit we recognise and propose that HealthWest’s projects are supported by a **Sustainability Framework** (see **Figure 1** below) that provides a visual representation of alignments that are required between the HWP Board (vision and strategy); HWP and Partner Agency Culture and Workforce and; Communities of

Interest needs and capacity that relate to the content and process of sustaining the project actions and effects.

New projects often appear to be the realm of management, and Boards leave that mission to them. Board agendas are often full with statutory governance issues and duties and boards expect management to exercise their responsibilities regarding how to plan, implement and sustain ideas.

However, evidence is building that the role of the Board is critical to shaping management’s approach to planning, implementing and sustaining project actions and effects. Sustaining project actions and effects requires vision and strategy, a supportive organisational culture and a capable workforce –all key governance responsibilities¹.

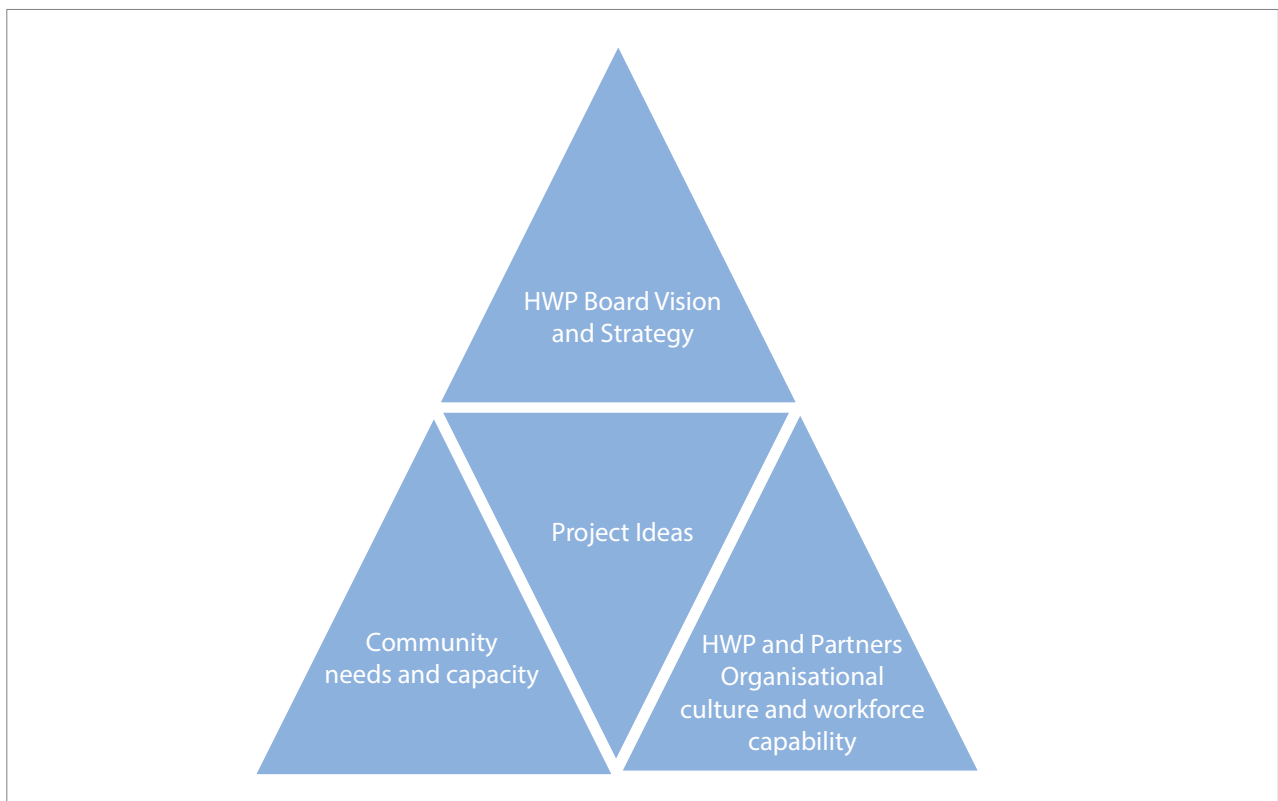


Figure 1: Sustainability Framework

¹ Greenhalgh T et al (2012). If We Build It, Will It Stay? A Case Study of the Sustainability of Whole-System Change in London. *Milbank Quarterly*, 90 (3): 516–547); Deschamps, JP (2013) What is Innovation Governance? – Definition and Scope. <http://www.innovationmanagement.se/2013/05/03/what-is-innovation-governance-definition-and-scope/>

Given that evaluating sustainability is NOT linear, a **Sustainability Evaluation Schema (Figure 2)** is presented that illustrates the interactions between the five key self-assessment tasks:

Pre-Project

1. Assessing the potential benefits of the project actions and effects
2. Assessing the pre-conditions for sustainability of the project actions and effects
3. Assessing the attributes of the project
4. Planning to act to optimise sustainability of the project actions and effects

Post-Project

1. Assessing the ripple effects resulting from the project actions

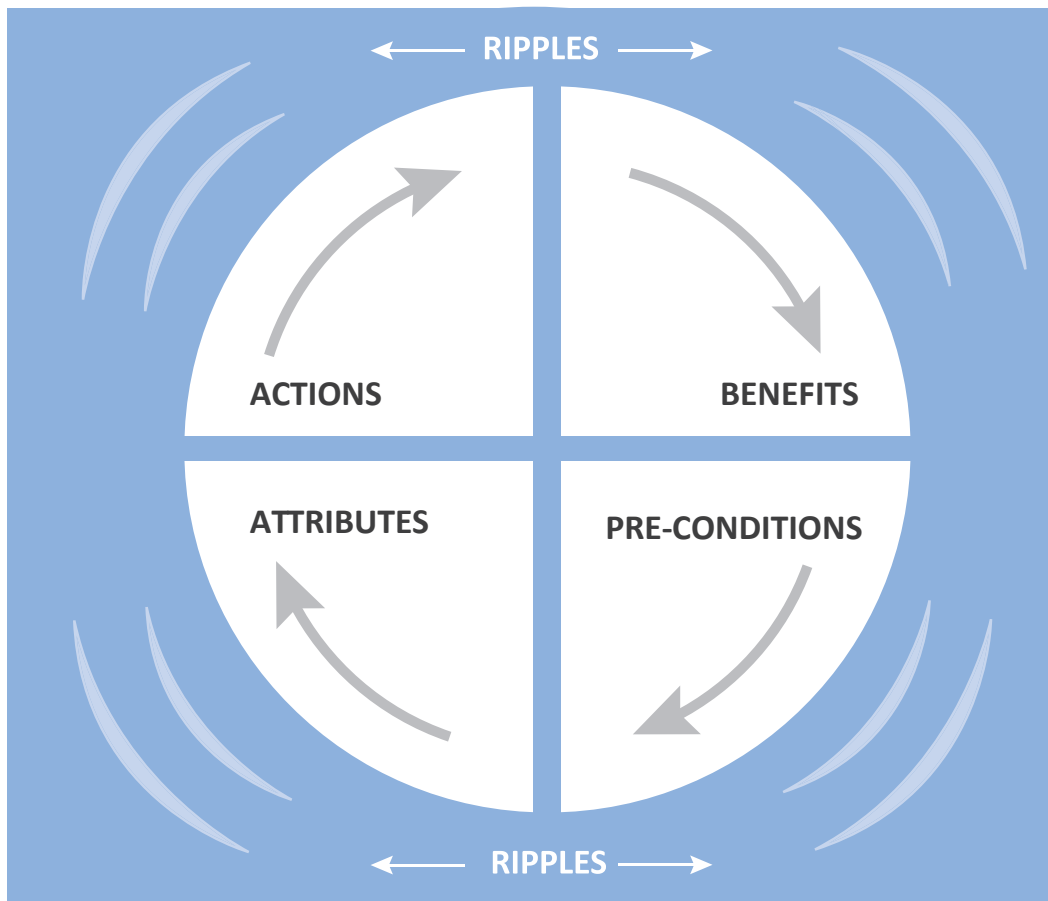


Figure 2: Sustainability Evaluation Schema

Ripple Effects (changes in mind sets, knowledge, skills and expectations) can occur during the process of assessing Project sustainable Benefits, Pre-Conditions, Attributes and Actions and after the implementing the Project

Structure and Process for Assessing the Sustainability of Project Ideas

In keeping with HealthWest Partnership’s network-based approach, we suggest the establishment of a **Sustainability Authorising Group**. The assessment of the potential for sustainability will work best when people and organisations come together to discuss and complete the evaluation tools. It is essential that the Group include active participants from the range of diverse communities of interest and agencies which have a stake in the sustainable outcomes of the proposed HWP project.

Ideally the Group members will: be connected to communities of interest and partner agencies that are key to achieving sustainable outcomes; be able to gather, analyse, interpret and make sense of information and data; have insights on specific issues associated with sustainable innovation; and be willing to work through the sustainability evaluation tools.

We suggest below a process for a **Sustainability Authorising Group** to work through the Sustainability Evaluation Tool Kit process:

Meeting	Activities	Actions
Pre-Project		
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a Sustainability Authorising Group & review Sustainability Evaluation Schema Assess Potential Benefits (Tool 1) Assess Preconditions for Sustainability (Tool 2) and review benefits Assess Project Idea Attributes (Tool 3) and review preconditions 	
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all results and consider Actions (Tool 4) required to improve potential for sustainability 	
Post-Project		
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Ripple Effects (Tool 5) – at 6 and 12 months to assess ripples and support required to sustain changes 	

5. Sustainability Self-Assessment Tools

The following section presents each of the Sustainability Self – Assessment Tools.

PRE-PROJECT

- **Sustainability Evaluation Tool 1: BENEFITS**
- **Sustainability Evaluation Tool 2: PRE-CONDITIONS**
- **Sustainability Evaluation Tool 3: ATTRIBUTES**
- **Sustainability Planning Tool 4: ACTIONS**

POST PROJECT

- **Sustainability Evaluation Tool 5: RIPPLE EFFECTS**

5.1 Sustainability Evaluation Tool 1: BENEFITS

This tool is designed for assessing the potential benefits of the project for the Communities of Interest, HWP Partner agencies and for HWP in the short, medium and longer term.

Questions	What is known?	What ACTIONS are required by HWP, Partner agencies and Communities of Interest?
To what extent is there a clear vision about what change needs to be achieved?		
To what extent is there a shared awareness, interest and understanding of the need for the project?		
To what extent do we know the best intervention points for the project?		
To what extent are there clear measures of success resulting from the project actions and effects?		

5.2 Sustainability Evaluation Tool 2: PRE-CONDITIONS

This tool is designed for assessing the pre-conditions for sustainability of the project amongst HWP, Partner Agencies and the Communities of Interest members.

Questions	What is known?	What ACTIONS are required by HWP, Partner agencies and Communities of Interest?
<p>To what extent is there shared leadership to support the project actions and outcomes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who else needs to be involved in the project to give it profile, validity and ensure success? 		
<p>To what extent do organisational capabilities exist to implement the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we need to build new skills and capacity to implement the project? 		
<p>To what extent is the current policy and funding environment aligned to support the sustainability of the project actions and effects?</p>		
<p>To what extent are Partner Agencies and Communities of Interest ready and capable to commit resources to implement project?</p>		
<p>To what extent do Partner Agencies and the Communities of Interest have the capacity and commitment to embed project outcomes to support the sustainability of the project actions and effects?</p>		

5.3 Sustainability Evaluation Tool 3: ATTRIBUTES

This tool is designed for assessing the attributes of the project.

Questions	What is known?	What ACTIONS are required by HWP, Partner agencies and Communities of Interest?
To what extent does evidence exist that project is worth piloting or implementing?		
To what extent does the project align with or meet communities of interest members' values, perceived needs and desired change ?		
To what extent does the project have a fit/alignment/traction with partner agencies ?		
To what extent are the project achievements easy to implement and transferable to differing contexts?		

5.4 Sustainability Planning Tool 4: ACTIONS

This tool assists in bringing together all that has been assessed in Sustainability Evaluation Tools 1- 3 and the discussed actions into a plan for what, how, who and when to act to build the sustainability of the project actions and effects.

Stakeholders	Identified Actions: WHAT	Recommended Actions: HOW, WHO, WHEN
HWP Board		
HWP Senior Executive		
Partner Agencies		
Communities of Interest		

5.5 Sustainability Evaluation Tool 5: RIPPLE EFFECTS

This tool assists in assessing the changes or ripples effects that have resulted from the project since the project funding ended, after **six** and **twelve** months.

Questions	What is known?	What ACTIONS are required by HWP, Partner agencies and Communities of Interest?
What drivers exist now to sustain project actions and effects?		
What actions have you, your agency or communities of interest undertaken as result of the project?		
What changes have resulted from the project for you, your agency or communities of interest?		
What have been the enablers and challengers to sustaining these actions and effects?		
What support is required or who needs to be involved to sustain these actions and effects?		

6. Next Steps: Putting evaluation into practice

Creating sustainable system change requires commitment and capacity amongst member agencies and communities of interest. This Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool Kit is the first stage of putting evaluation into practice, by specifically focussing on the sustainability of the HWP Project actions and effects.

Given that this Tool Kit is part of a transformative change process to assist you to assess the Sustainable Benefits, Pre-Conditions, Attributes, Actions and Ripples of the project, your feedback on the Tool Kit is valuable. Please reflect and comment on the following questions as this information will inform future iterations of the Tool Kit.

1. **Use of the Tool Kit:** Please comment on **how you have used** the Sustainability Evaluation Tool Kit?
2. **Usefulness of the Tool kit:** Please comment on **how useful** the Sustainability Evaluation Tool Kit has been?
 - What worked and why?
 - What did not work and why?
3. **Changes to the Tool Kit:** Please comment on **what changes** you would make to the Sustainability Evaluation Tool Kit
 - Content
 - Structure

Please email comments to Gail O'Donnell (Executive Officer, HealthWest Partnership)
gail.odonnell@healthwest.org.au

Thank you for your commitment to evaluative thinking

7. References and Resources

7.1 Sustainability

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Australasian Evaluation Society <http://www.aes.asn.au>

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Introduction to Program Evaluation for Public Health Programs: A Self-Study Guide- <http://www.cdc.gov/eval/guide/introduction/index.htm>