



Sustainability Working Group Meeting #2 – January 15, 2025 Summary and Key Takeaways

Welcome and Introductions

- New members were welcomed to the working group.

Recap of December 4th Meeting

Sabry provided a summary of the previous meeting, highlighting the following:

- **Challenges:** Funding dependence, high competition, and fiscal constraints were identified as key barriers to sustaining project impact.
- **Strategies:** The group emphasized the importance of knowledge sharing, capacity building, and adapting programs to diverse contexts.
- **Opportunities:** Alternative financing models, partnerships, and integrating programs into existing systems were explored as potential pathways for sustainability.
- **Key Themes:** The team discussed the importance of community involvement, evidence-based approaches, and navigating political and policy pathways to ensure long-term impact.

Review of the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT)

- The PSAT is an evidence-based tool designed to assess and improve the sustainability capacity of programs across sectors such as public health, social services, and education.
- Developed by the Center for Public Health Systems Science at Washington University in St. Louis, the tool underwent rigorous development, including literature reviews and psychometric testing, to ensure reliability and validity.
- It evaluates eight sustainability domains that collectively influence a program's ability to sustain its impact over time.
- To learn more on the PSAT tool and conduct your own assessment, please visit :
<https://www.sustaintool.org/psat/>

Previous Investments and Sustainability

- Jessica shared insights from her review of final reports from previous projects, emphasizing the importance of documenting lessons learned and impacts to ensure sustainability. The final reports are available on project pages on the KH website: [Project Profiles \(2015-2022\) - Knowledge Hub - Western University](#)

Sustaining Knowledge (KM to stakeholders)	Sustaining Effective Programs (integrating into existing orgs)	Scaling Programs (expanding delivery to additional sites)	Sustaining Collaboration (maintain productive working relationships)	Sustaining Impact (integrating programs into organizations and systems)
Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• manuals• training materials• website• journal articles• toolkits	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• community of practice• program embedded into CAPC• additional funding obtained• trained “master” trainers and all frontline staff	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• adapting for Indigenous partners and women who have immigrated• expanding to different kinds of organizations	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• community stakeholders engaging in implementation studies• communities of practice	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• community of practice• training• successfully embedded in organizations• additional funding sought secured

Pathways to Funding Sustainability

Katreana introduced four pathways for discussion, focusing on research, practice, funding, and sustainability. Discussions were facilitated with a whiteboard where each member added comments/idea about the pathway identified. Key points included:



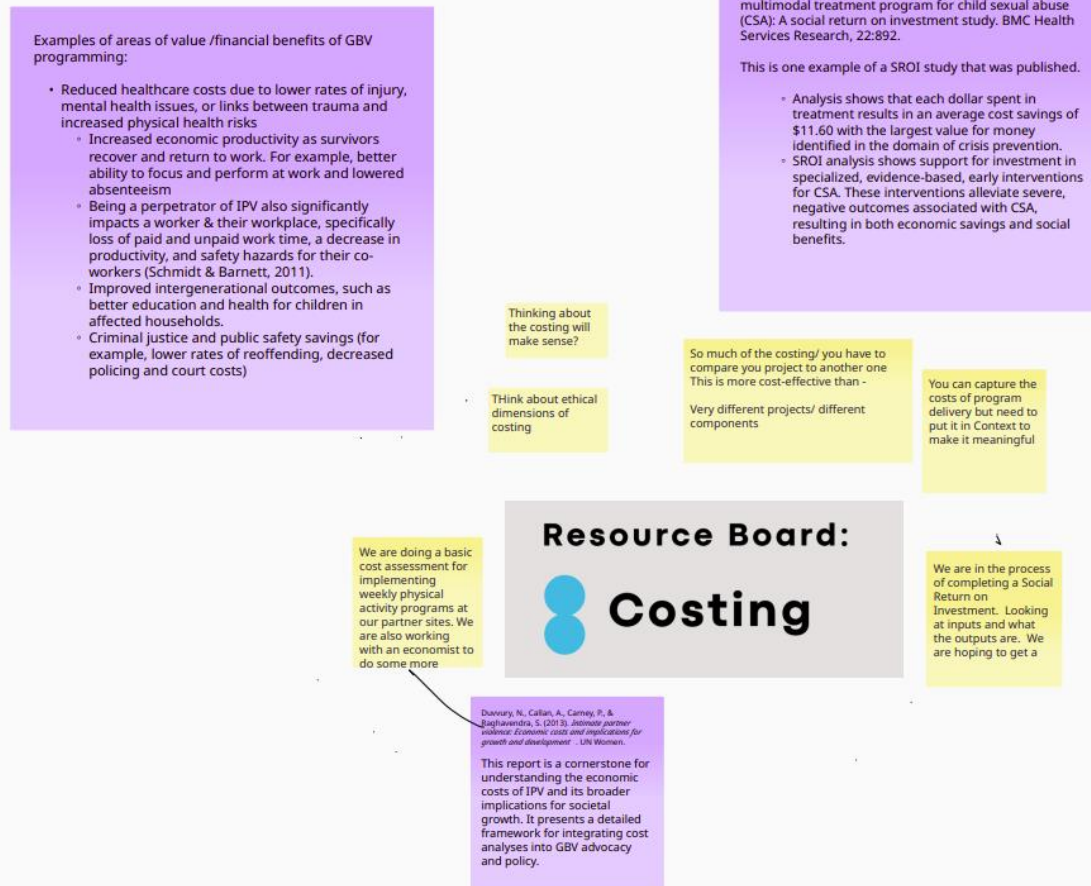
1. Research to Practice Pathway:

- Challenges include the slow pace of translating research into practice (e.g., Marilyn shared an example that took 15 years).
- The need for consistent researcher-practitioner relationships, strong grant writing, and culturally sensitive messaging was emphasized.
- Akm highlighted the importance of a bottom-up approach and understanding community needs.
- The team agreed on the importance of community involvement and flexibility in research to adapt to rapidly changing needs.



2. Advancing a political agenda

- a. Akm shared an example of a student project that integrated intersectionality and cross-sectoral collaboration. [DV Policy Scan Brief](#) [Policy Map - Presentation Slide](#)
- b. The team stressed the importance of building relationships with politicians and public servants, as well as presenting clear, concise asks.
- c. Francine introduced story maps as a tool for presenting community data and advocating for change.
- d. The discussion concluded with the recognition that political pathways should be distinct from policy pathways.



3. Funding Pathways, Costing Analysis, and Sustainability:

- Bhupinder shared their organization’s collaboration with an economist to develop a social return on investment approach.
- Marilyn highlighted the complexity and ethical considerations of costing analysis, urging careful implementation.
- The team discussed the importance of including sustainability planning in grant applications and providing concrete guidance on this topic.
- Capital W has offered a free consultation on fundraising opportunities for further exploration.

Next Steps

- The next meeting is scheduled for **February 12, 2025**
- The agenda will include:
 - A recap of this meeting.
 - A deeper discussion on foundation and private funding pathways.
 - Identifying information needed to effectively include sustainability plans and initiatives into funding applications; and identify how this information may be used by funders

This meeting underscored the importance of collaboration, community involvement, and strategic planning to ensure the sustainability of programs and projects. The group looks forward to continuing these critical conversations in the upcoming session.