Center for Public Health Systems Science

Brown School

Preserving Progress:

Assessing and planning for program sustainability

Kim Prewitt I October 2, 2023

Goals for today

- **Explore** factors that influence sustainability capacity
- **Learn** about a tool you can use to assess program sustainability
- **Introduce** three-step planning process for building capacity for sustainability

Why Sustainability?

Health Equity and Sustainability

More than
just money

Cuts to public health funding are crippling Stop Smoking Services

Category: Science blog **November 16, 2016** Dan Hunt Comments are closed 4 minute read

NEWS NOW Gov. Cuomo touts NY's alcohol industry, vows more help ... Spanish Colonial horses v

Funding cuts to hit smoking cessation programs

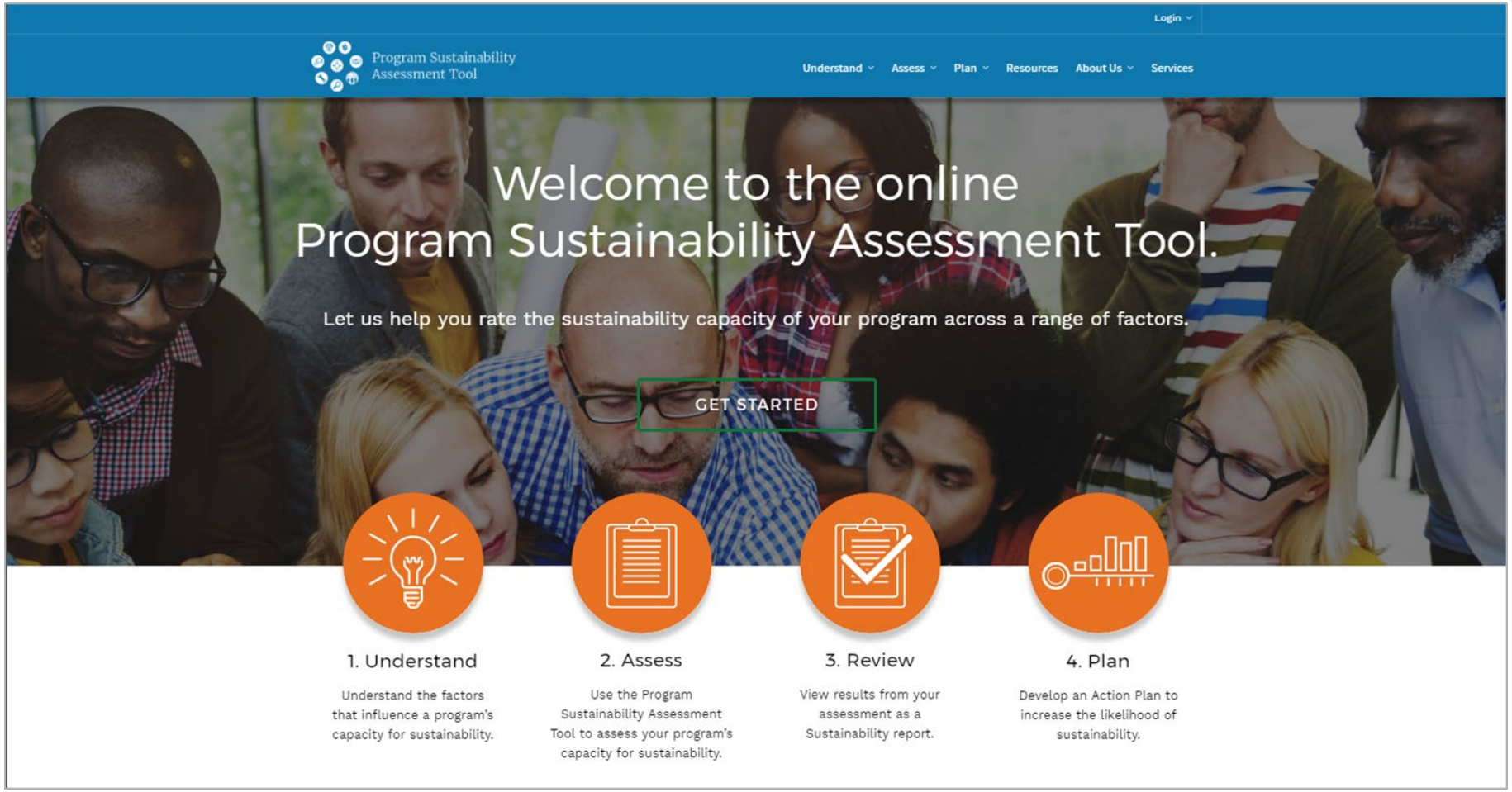
Want to quit smoking? Think a class could help? Better take it by June 30. Further cuts to the state's tobacco control funding will kick in July 1 and tobacco cessation classes will be one of the casualties, said Eileen Gleason, tobacco cessation ...

suh-stey-n*uh*-**bil**-i-tee

the ability to maintain programming and its benefits over time

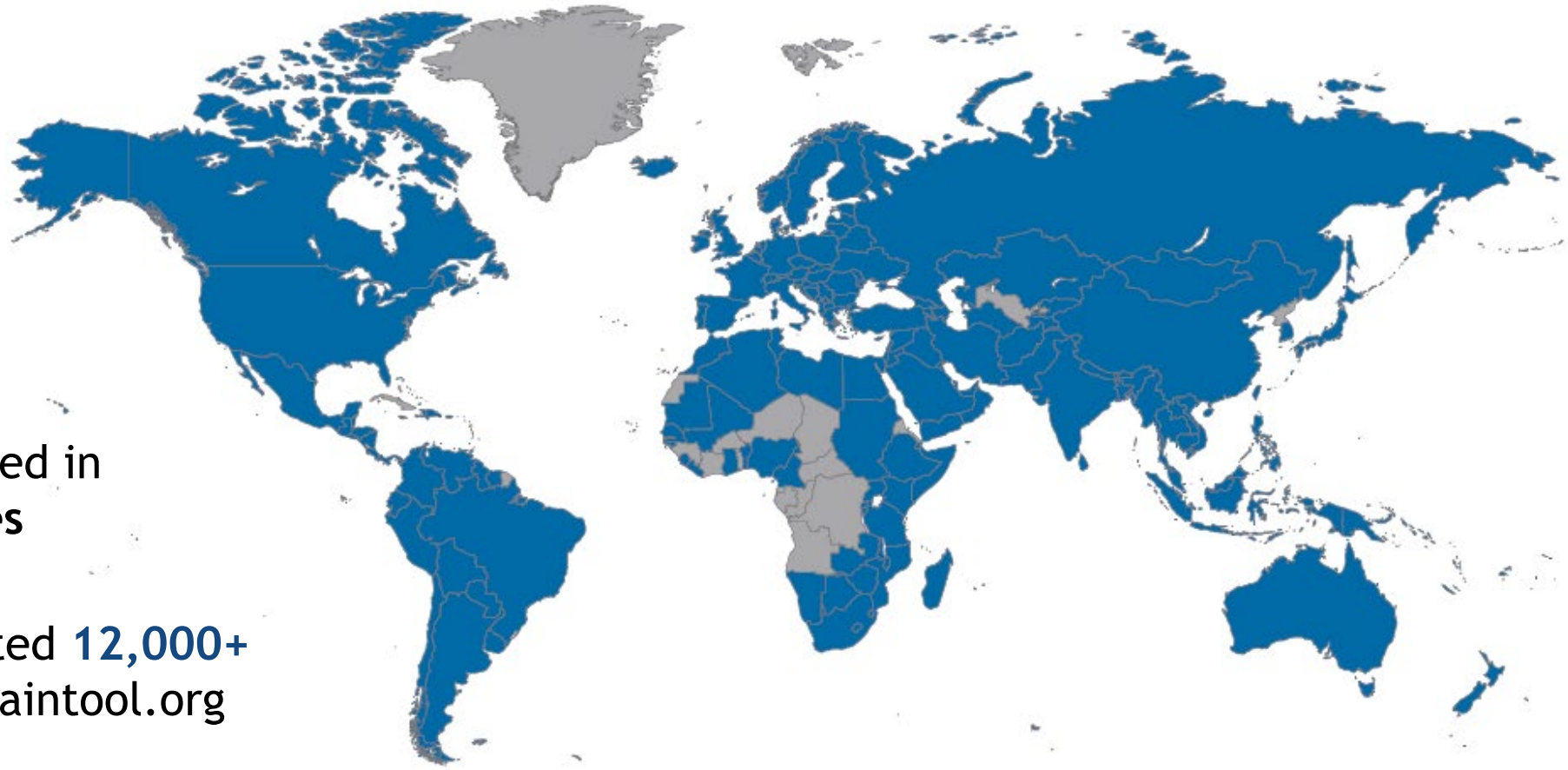
Program Sustainability Framework

Schell, SF, Luke, DA, Schooley, MW, Elliott, MB, Herbers, SH, Mueller, NB, and Bunger, AC. (2013). Public health program capacity for sustainability: A new framework. *Implementation Science, 8(15)*.



Sustain Tool website

Sustain Tool by the numbers



Website viewed in
175 countries

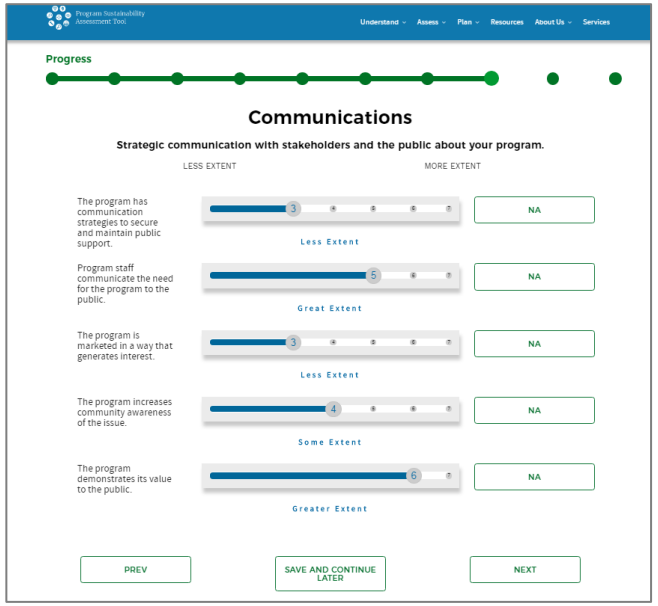
PSAT completed **12,000+**
times on sustaintool.org

The sustainability planning process

Understand →

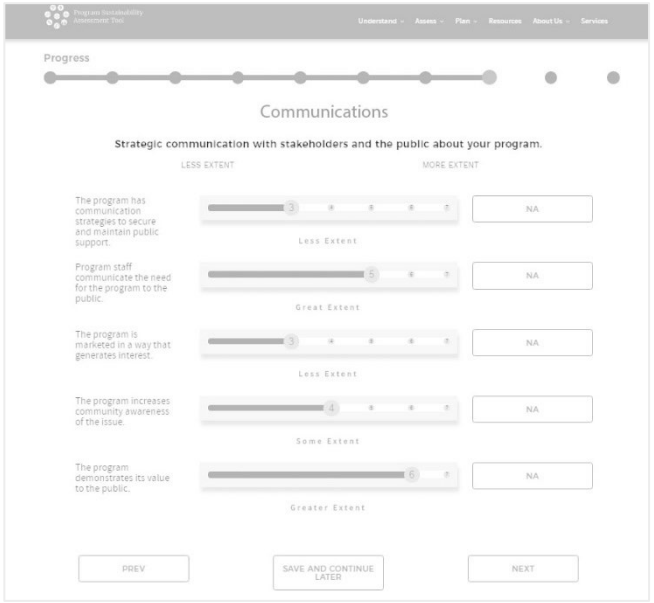
The sustainability planning process

Understand → **Assess** →



The sustainability planning process

Understand → Assess → **Plan**



Partnerships: Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders							
Sustainability SMART Objective: By October 2019, form three new strategic partnerships with staff and/or key resources to dedicate to program intervention.							
Steps to achieve objective: [Be very specific and include important sub-steps. Anyone should be able to pick up this document and understand what needs to happen in order to reach your objective.]	**Who will do the work?** [Who will ultimately ensure the work gets finished?]	**What does success look like?** [What metrics will you use to track progress on the completion of each step? How will you know it's time to move on to the next step?]	**What non-financial resources are needed for this step? Where will they come from?**	**Due date** [In the appropriate quarter, enter a specific date by which the activity must be completed.]			
				Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**
1. Identify potential partners • Determine what is needed in terms of resources/knowledge/skills • Independently research by looking at organizations' websites and other available resources • Schedule internal meeting for brainstorming and discussion • Consider existing connections and reach out to partners for insight	Leadership, input from partners and staff	List of potential partners	Partner contact information, access to potential partner websites/other resources	Feb. 28, 2019			
2. Develop profiles of potential partners • Research partners more extensively • Circulate profiles to partners and staff for input • Prioritize partners based on information compiled	Research staff, input from partners	Profiles of potential partners outlining the following: • Benefits to them • Their contributions • Focus areas, mission, and current activities • Any existing connections with them • Priority level	Partner contact information, access to potential partner websites/other resources		May 15, 2019		

Sustainability Framework

Environmental Support

Having a supportive internal and external climate

Funding Stability

Establishing a consistent financial base for your program

Partnerships

Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders

Organizational Capacity

Internal support and resources needed to effectively manage your program

Program Evaluation

Assessing your program to inform planning and documenting results

Program Adaptation

Taking action to adapt your efforts to ensure ongoing effectiveness

Communications

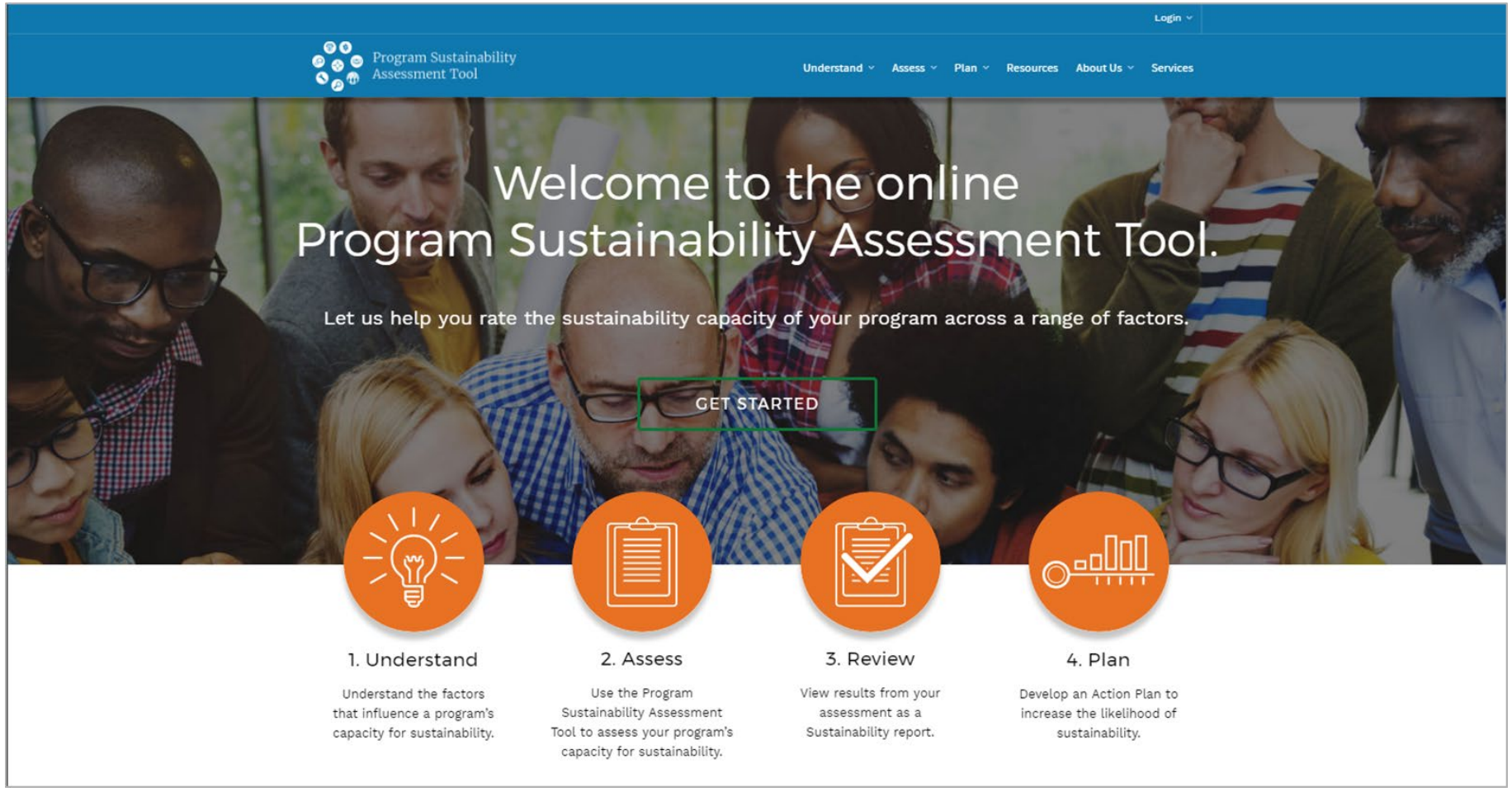
Strategically communicating with stakeholders and the public about your program

Strategic Planning

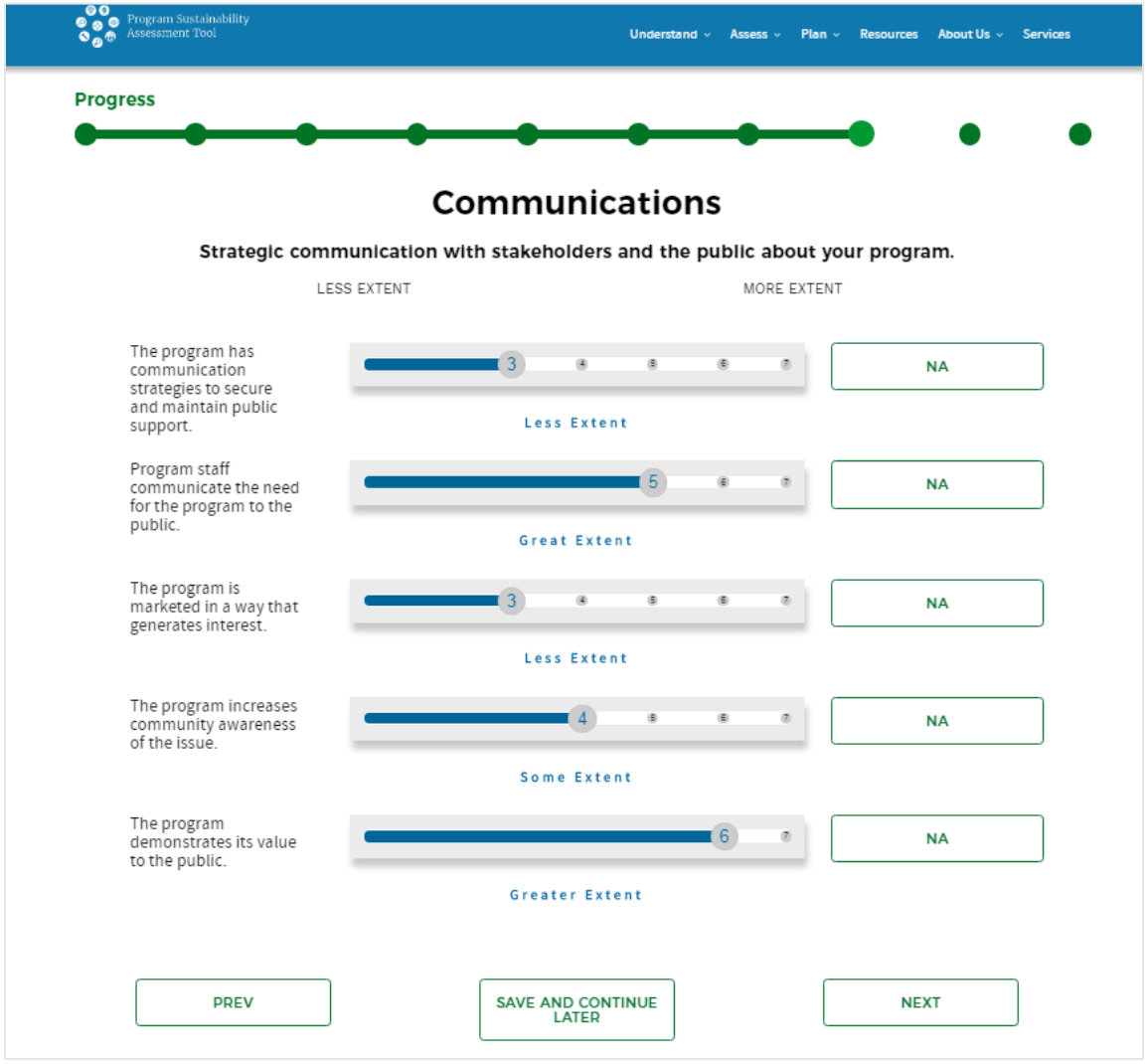
Using processes that guide your program's directions, goals, and strategies

Domain Connectivity

Sustainability Assessment Tool

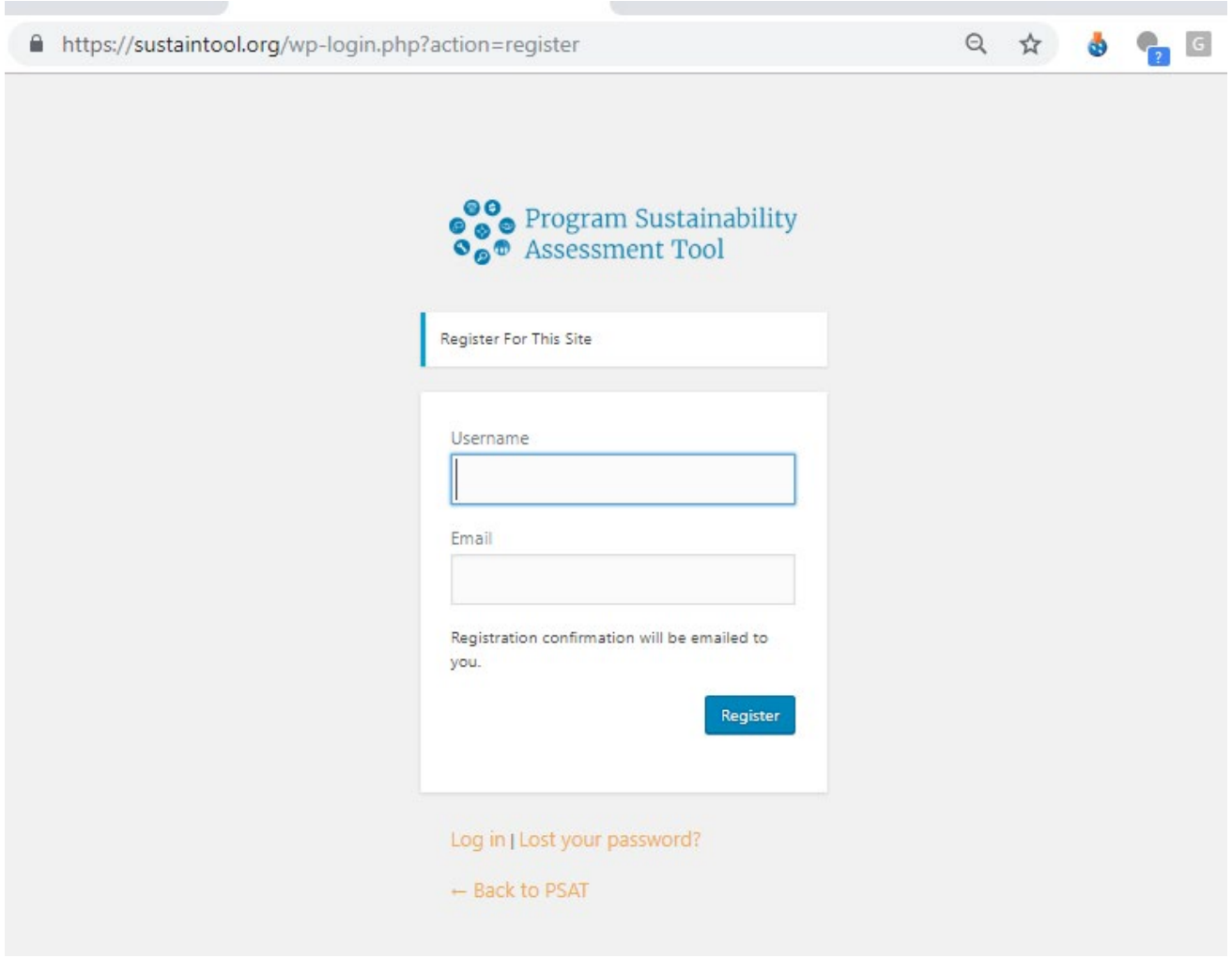


Assessing Sustainability

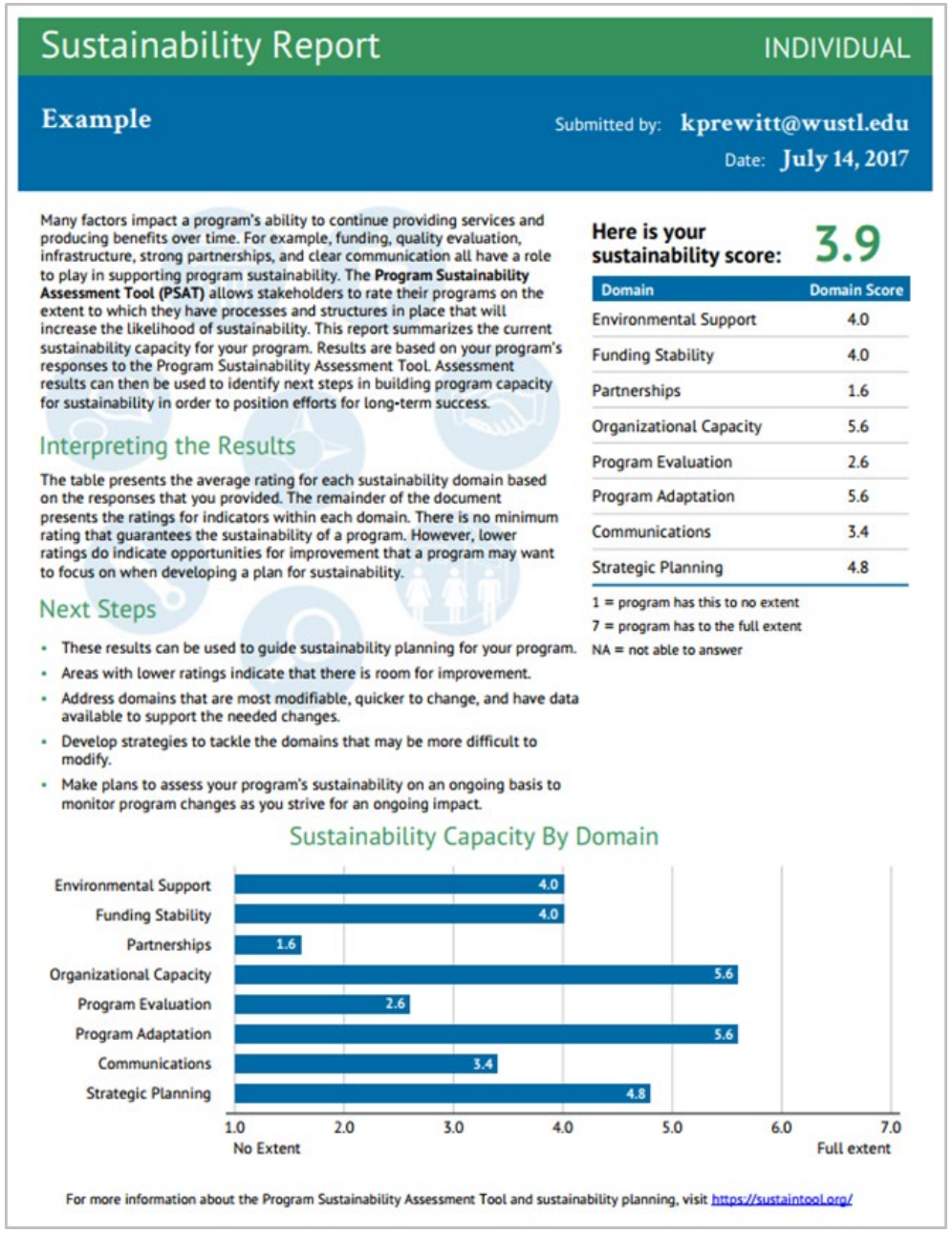


Program Sustainability Assessment Tool

PSAT: Register



- Username
- Email address



Sustainability Report INDIVIDUAL

Example

Submitted by: kprewitt@wustl.edu

Date: July 14, 2017

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.

Here is your sustainability score: 3.9

Domain	Domain Score
Environmental Support	4.0
Funding Stability	4.0
Partnerships	1.6
Organizational Capacity	5.6
Program Evaluation	2.6
Program Adaptation	5.6
Communications	3.4
Strategic Planning	4.8

1 = program has this to no extent
7 = program has to the full extent
NA = not able to answer

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.

Sustainability Capacity By Domain

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

Sustaintool.org: Results PDF

Sustainability Report

GROUP

Your example program

Submitted by: kprewitt@wustl.edu

Date: June 23, 2020

Many factors can affect sustainability, such as financial and political climates, organizational characteristics, and elements of evaluation and communication. 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. 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 provided by 5 participants. The remainder of the document presents the average 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

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Here is your sustainability score: 4.3

Domain	Domain Score
Environmental Support	4.7
Funding Stability	3.9
Partnerships	3.9
Organizational Capacity	4.2
Program Evaluation	4.1
Program Adaptation	4.7
Communications	4.4
Strategic Planning	4.4

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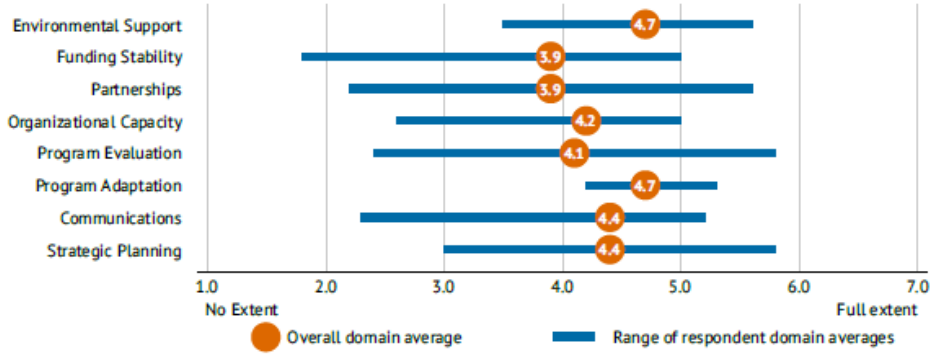
Average Sustainability Capacity By Domain



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Sustaintool.org: Results PDF

Planning for Sustainability

Key sustainability plan components

- Sustainability domain/area of focus
- SMART objective
- Action steps
  - Responsible individuals
  - Resources needed (e.g., meeting space, software)
  - Outcomes (i.e., what does success for each step look like?)
  - Timeline (i.e., due dates)

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Questions?

Contact Us

www.sustaintool.org

Kim Prewitt
kprewitt@wustl.edu

Rachel hackett
rhackett@wustl.edu