



## Acknowledgements

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Stock photos. Posed by models.



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## **Purpose of This Toolkit**

This toolkit will provide insight into overcoming common challenges to sustainability of working with RIM communities, such as long-term integration into existing programming, partnership misalignment, and funding. Examples and a case study illustrating material covered in the toolkit will also be included.

#### **Who Should Use This Toolkit**

This toolkit is intended for local health department (LHD) and nonprofit organization (NPO) administrators, program managers, and staff delivering direct services to RIM communities interested in learning about and identifying tools and resources to support the facilitation of health and wraparound services supporting RIM populations.



## Background

Sustainable <u>partnerships and programs</u> between local health departments (LHDs) and nonprofit organizations (NPOs), and <u>refugee, immigrant, and migrant (RIM) communities</u> begin with mutually beneficial engagements that improve health and well-being long-term in RIM communities. Promoting sustainability involves more than providing health services, which requires trust for <u>RIM communities</u>, many of whom have arrived in the U.S. due to <u>conflict, climate change, and economic downturns in their home country,</u> particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1,2</sup>

Sustainable programs in RIM communities are designed and implemented in partnership with community members, with the best guided by <u>community-based participatory research methods</u>, which ensures that communities are involved at all levels in developing and implementing programs intended for them.<sup>3</sup> Sustainable programs, therefore, leverage long-term, culturally appropriate strategies that successfully address <u>systemic</u>, <u>environmental</u>, <u>and socioeconomic determinants in RIM communities</u>.<sup>4</sup> These engagements ultimately can engender trust and break down barriers to services, facilitating better health education and services, and promoting preventive health measures that speak to the needs of RIM communities.



# Key Principles of Sustainable Practices in RIM Communities Partnerships

Programs serving RIM communities must develop strong partnerships with leaders, organizations, service providers, businesses, and civic and social organizations in RIM communities. These partners should be grounded in the tenets of community-based engagement, such as community-based participatory action research,<sup>3</sup> which ensures that communities are involved at all levels of a program intended for them. Community representatives can serve on community advisory boards<sup>5</sup> and other bodies that make decisions in designing, implementing, facilitating, and evaluating programs geared to their communities. These efforts can create strong, mutually beneficial partnerships that support sustainability of the program, and ensure that it responds to the emerging and evolving needs of the RIM community it serves.

### **Health Equity and Access**

Sustainability programs must ensure that all intended RIM clients have consistent and equitable access to the program being developed. They may hire community health workers, individuals with close cultural, linguistic, and experiential ties with the community, to serve as programmatic navigators. <u>Empowering community voices</u> in the design, delivery, and engagement of health services can create trust between the community and the program that seeks to serve them, encouraging uptake of services and improving health literacy.<sup>6</sup>

### **Linguistic and Cultural Humility**

Sustainable engagements require organizations to acknowledge cultural and linguistic differences between staff and the RIM communities they wish to serve. Organizations can engender trust with appropriate training and iterative programmatic input from RIM communities. This approach helps promote services that disseminate information in a respectful, culturally aligned manner that breaks down barriers to treatment and care. For example, organizations seeking to serve RIM communities with diverse linguistic needs can better ensure the sustainability of their programs by ensuring the appropriate translation of their materials and hiring multilingual staff who reflect and/or understand the culturally needs of their clients. In addition to training staff on cultural humility, organizations can practice it as well, inviting RIM leaders, religious institutions, cultural entities, and others to inform the design and help promote programs intended for the community.<sup>7</sup>

## Assessing and Addressing Systemic, Environmental, and Socioeconomic Determinants

Organizations serving RIM communities must understand the determinants that may be driving the health outcomes they wish to address. Be sure to conduct background research, conducting <u>wellness fairs</u> in the RIM communities of focus, as well as literature reviews, record reviews, as well as surveys, <u>focus groups</u>, and interviews with RIM community members and organizational staff.<sup>8</sup> You can then tailor your program based on your understanding of the RIM communities you wish to serve to perceive your organization (levels of trust) and how they access (or do not access) technology, housing, transportation, clinical and behavioral health care information and services, and so on. For instance, organizations can adopt a <u>Red Carpet Care program approach that uses tools tailored to the community to identify unmet needs</u>, and then provide a warm handoff to case managers who connect them with community resources, such as transportation providers, food banks, and so on.<sup>9</sup>



### **Community Capacity Building**

Sustainable health and social services empower RIM communities by providing them with the tools and knowledge to manage their health, which enhances the capacity of communities to support existing programs and develop their own. Examples of capacity building approaches to ensure sustainability include mentorship programs, which pair experienced organizational and/or community leaders with new and emerging community organizations, building their leadership capacity. These may be coupled with the creation of culturally-relevant health education programs developed in partnerships by organizations and community members that reflect the cultural and information needs of the RIM communities being served. In return, community members can serve as mentors for organizational leaders, clinical providers, and others who wish to serve the community.<sup>10</sup>

#### **Resource Optimization**

Integrating sustainability and resource optimization can encourage RIM communities' trust in and engagement of health and social services. This is particularly important in settings that serve large numbers of RIM individuals, where resources can be strained. Sustainable practices such as digital health technologies or community health workers can extend reach and effectiveness without requiring additional resources. For instance, organizations might invest in disseminating Smartphones and tablets to community centers and families in remote areas to facilitate uptake of telemedicine, as well as leveraging medical home approaches, where RIM community members can access clinical and behavioral health care, as well as wraparound services, like clothing support and transportation tokes, in one location.<sup>11</sup>

## **Long-term Cost Savings**

Implementing <u>sustainable</u> health <u>services</u> can <u>lead to significant long-term savings</u> by reducing the need for acute care services through better management of chronic diseases and increased emphasis on preventive care. For instance, clinics serving RIM communities might establish early intervention programs, such as wellness fairs featuring cancer screenings and vaccination clinics to encourage regular health checks and facilitate early identification of diseases. These can translate to reduced suffering, as well as saved lives and reduced health costs in RIM communities, while increasing trust in health providers. Reductions in the incidence of chronic diseases and emergency care visits can lead to substantial cost savings over time.<sup>12</sup>

### **Policy Influence**

Effective, <u>sustainable practices</u> can also inform and influence public health policy, advocating for changes that better address the needs of diverse populations. Health care organizations can educate elected officials on the success of early intervention and mobile health programs, increasing funding to maintain and further scale such initiatives. This approach to <u>ensuring sustainability can have wider policy implications</u>, with funding increasing their capacity to serve more RIM community members.<sup>13</sup>



# Steps to Building Sustainable Programs: A Checklist

Building a sustainable program involves working directly with the RIM community you wish to serve, and enacting the following steps:

I.	Pro	gram	matic	<b>Found</b>	lation
		<b>~</b>			

	<b>Develop a mission or vision statement for the organization or project</b> . The mission or vision statement is the long-term objective of the organization or project.
	<b>Develop a set of guiding principles that is agreed upon by all partnership members</b> . Guiding principles help align the priorities of project collaborators.
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☐ Develop project goals that are community-inspired and community-driven.

- Community members are involved in the development of goals (e.g., as a community advisory board)
- Goals must fit with overall community priorities.

☐ Define what long-term sustainable success means for your project and organization.

- Discuss and define what "long-term sustainability" and "successful collaboration" for your project.
  - What does it mean to "finish" the specific project that was started?
  - Will it mean continuing the work and the collaboration after the grant ends?
  - Will the collaboration create a new group or organization that will continue the work or seek to institutionalize a new function in an existing organization to continue the work?

## II. Building and Sustaining the Partnership

success is having a <u>shared community vision</u> that will drive the process for the long term.
Develop short-term gains or milestones that are steps in your long-term plan. Breaking long-term planning into short-term goals can prevent overwhelming partners. At each meeting and engagement, celebrate the completion of all goals.

☐ Enlist and develop leaders from all sectors of your partnership. Projects need collaborative leaders who are interested in promoting leadership skills in everyone.

☐ Develop a long-term plan for continuing your work after current/original funding ends. The key to continued

- Create and implement a plan to develop RIM community and organizational leadership of the program.
- Recognize and value diversity (e.g., age, ethnic, economic, social, RIM community membership) in your leadership team.
- Ensure you have a shared succession plan for managing the program.



П	Develop	a plan	for engaging	organizations and	l community	v members.
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- Seek organizations that help you reach and engage community members, such as churches, clubs, business associations, PTAs, trade and agricultural unions, neighborhood associations, or local government representatives. In determining your plan for reaching out, consider, "Who is currently not represented from this community?"
- Bring government agencies, universities, nonprofit organizations, business groups, and other stakeholders
  into your partnership, as needed. Diversifying community engagement can help you tap into additional
  resources and support.
- Ensure that the RIM community is fully represented beyond the community advisory board. Their insights and participation will be crucial to the partnership's success.
- Engage under-represented and marginalized RIM individuals and groups, including youth, elders, and women. How will you get youth and elders involved in the work?
- Engage persons with unique skills sets for your program, such as communications personnel, social media experts, and others who can bolster the program's offering, reach, and engagement.

Develop a governance structure for your project that helps build a strong partnership and organization.
All stakeholders should be included in the process. Indeed, creating a governance structure in a vacuum creates
barriers to involvement and can alienate the community you wish to serve.

- Develop standard operating procedures that are agreed upon by all members of the partnership.
- Ensure that it reflects the needs and input of stakeholders.

## III. Develop a Program Workplan

Develop a work plan based on the short and long-term goals of the project. Using your goals as a guide, develop a work plan consisting of individual activities. Assign leads for each activity and time frames for accomplishing them.
Lay out strategies for accomplishing the activities in your work plan.
Establish measures of success for your work.
• What will success look like? How will you know you are achieving it? These are questions that are critical

- What will success look like? How will you know you are achieving it? These are questions that are critical to project planning and management.
- Choose behavioral measures touching on each key work area (e.g., building and maintaining a solid collaboration, achieving environmental and public health benefits, developing community capabilities) and use them to inform your partnership.

<b>Prepare an evaluation plan</b> . Your program's success metrics should be created in cooperation with the RIM
community you are serving and other stakeholders. Evaluation plans often include three forms of evaluation

- Formative Evaluation, conducted before or in the early stages of a project, which guides the development of materials and techniques that would appeal to the RIM community of focus.
- Process Evaluation, which assesses whether a project is being implemented as described (also known as fidelity).



• Outcome or Summative Evaluation, which refers to whether a program achieved the short-term and long-term changes anticipated with the implementation of a program or activity.<sup>14</sup>

I۱	V. Conducting the Work, Celebrating Success and Learning from the Process
	Conduct activities as laid out in your work plan.
	Foster a supportive atmosphere for RIM community partners and stakeholders that continued engagement is fulfilling and worthwhile. Facilitate regular meetings and retreats that report and honor successes and celebrate. Include elements like food, awards, and learning opportunities.
	Evaluate progress and revise activities as needed.
	Celebrate success and acknowledge steady progress that is real and tangible, so that people are encouraged to continue the long-term effort.
	Regularly report progress to funders and the community.
V	. Obtaining Sustainable Resources
	Determine your core funding and resource needs and develop a plan for how to obtain them
	Carefully consider where to use your grant funds and your partnership resources to make your work both successful and sustainable
	Explore a full range of funding and resource options, diversify your income, and reduce reliance on a single revenue source.



## Sustainability Assessment Tool<sup>15</sup>

Have individuals fill in the following <u>tool</u> to help you assess your sustainability capacity. Each item is scored on a Likert scale, from 1 (highly disagree) to 4 (highly agree).

## **Formative Planning and Partnerships**

The following items are intended to help you assess your formative planning for the program.

	Highly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Highly Agree 4	N/A O
1. You have conducted formative research, such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews with community members and leaders, to understand the needs of the RIM community you currently or intend to serve.					
2. You have internal organizational champions who strongly support the program.					
3. The program has strong champions within the RIM community you intend to serve who can help you connect with partners and resources.					
4. The program has strong public support.					
5. You have developed a community advisory group or panel of leaders, advocates, and community members representing your intended program recipients.					
6. All stakeholders were informed and understood of the program's goals.					
7. You have designed standard operating procedures and other infrastructure supports in cooperation with RIM community members and internal champions.					
<b>Total Section Score</b> – Add up the items scores in this section and enter the total here:					

## **Funding**

The following items help you consider assessing the financial base of your program.

	Highly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Highly Agree 4	N/A O
You have obtained sustained funding streams for this program.					
2. The program is funded through diverse funding streams.					
3. The program has a combination of stable and flexible funding.					
<b>Total Section Score</b> – Add up the items scores in this section and enter the total here:					

## **Organizational Capacity**

The following items are intended to help you assess the organizational capacity to facilitate a sustainable program.

	Highly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Highly Agree	N/A
	1	2	3	4	0
1. Your organization has an established track record of working with RIM communities, as indicated by your mission, programming, service area, and clients.					
The program is well integrated into the operations of the organization.					
Organizational systems are in place to support the various program needs.					
3. Leadership works with the community advisory board to articulate the program's vision to external partners.					
4. Leadership efficiently manages staff and other resources.					
5. The program has adequate staff to complete the program's goals.					
6. Your staff includes members of the RIM community you intend to serve.					

7. Your leadership includes members of the RIM community you intend to serve.			
<b>Total Section Score</b> – Add up the items scores in this section and enter the total here:			

## **Program Adaptation**

The following items are intended to help you plan to document and assess results.

	Highly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Highly Agree 4	N/A 0
The program evaluation metrics and approaches were designed with RIM community members (e.g., community advisory board input).					
2. The program has the capacity for quality program evaluation.					
3. The program reports short-term and intermediate outcomes.					
4. Evaluation results inform program planning and implementation.					
5. Program evaluation results are used to demonstrate successes to funders and other key stakeholders.					
6. The program provides strong evidence to the public that the program works.					
7. The program can be readily expanded/adapted to the emerging needs of RIM communities. (For example, expand COVID-19 services to address health emergencies overall.)					
<b>Total Section Score</b> – Add up the items scores in this section and enter the total here:					

## **Partnerships**

The following items are intended to help you assess how you cultivate connections with and among stakeholders

	Highly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Highly Agree 4	N/A O
1. You have established procedures to establish memoranda of understanding with RIM partners.					
2. The program has communication strategies to secure and maintain public support.					
3. Communications strategies are designed with significant input from the RIM community (e.g., community advisory support).					
4. Program staff communicate the need for the program to the public.					
5. RIM representatives (e.g., community advisory board members) help communicate the need for your organization's program(s) to their community.					
6. Your organization/program is marketed in a way that successfully engages the intended RIM community.					
7. Your organization/program increases community awareness of the issues it addresses.					
8. The program demonstrates its value to the RIM community it serves.					
<b>Total Section Score</b> – Add up the items scores in this section and enter the total here:					

## **Strategic Planning**

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

	Highly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Highly Agree 4	N/A O
The program plans for future resource needs.					
The program has a long-term financial plan.					
The program has a sustainability plan.					

All stakeholders understand the program's goals.			
The program clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders.			
<b>Total Section Score</b> – Add up the items scores in this section and enter the total here:			

## **Sustainability Rating**

Once you have completed the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool, enter the total score from each section below. From there, follow the instructions to calculate the average score for each domain and your overall average sustainability assessment score.

	Formative Planning	Funding	Organizational Capacity	Program Adaptation	Partnerships	Strategic Planning
<b>Domain Total</b> Total Score for Each Section						
Average Section Score Divide each section score by the total number of items in that section. (Exclude those answered with N/A)						
Overall Sustainability Score Add the Average Section Scores and divide by 6.						

Use these results to guide <u>sustainability action</u> planning for your program. Domains with average scores less than 3 suggest room for improvement. An overall average sustainability score of less than 3 indicates that your organization has multiple sustainability-related areas to be addressed.

## **Brief Case Study**

The Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) ensured the sustainability of its programs by integrating its COVID-19 activities into programs and services that ensure RIM populations are prioritized in all health-related emergencies. Part of these efforts includes ongoing engagement with the local RIM Steering Committee. Initially created by two partner organizations, the Sherwood Foundation and the Omaha Community Foundation, the RIM Steering Committee initially convened to coordinate efforts to meet the needs of RIM populations during COVID-19.

With the end of the pandemic crisis, the focus on the steering committee has pivoted, focusing on the evolving needs of RIM communities overall. These efforts include assessing the assets and deficits of their current health emergency plans, and what impact can be anticipated and addressed for people in RIM communities.

DCHD has additionally secured the sustainability of these partnerships, activities, and emergency plans by disseminating funds secured through its funding from NACCHO and a five-year public health infrastructure grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. DCHD has also leveraged its year-end meetings and engagements with RIM organizations and philanthropic leaders to assess partner activities and coordinate grant-seeking efforts.



## Resources

#### **RIM Overview Resources**

Office of Refugee Resettlement. Refugee Health Overview.

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/programs/refugees/refugee-health

Social Support Services for RIM Communities: A Checklist for Health Departments.

https://nrcrim.umn.edu/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-01/social\_support\_services\_to\_support\_rim\_communities-\_a\_checklist\_for\_health\_departments.pdf

Vanek J, Wrigley HS, Jacobson E, Isserlis J. All Together Now: Supporting Immigrants and Refugees through Collaboration. Adult Literacy Education. 2020;2(1):41-7.

https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1249007

#### **Sustainability: Background**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sustainability of Health Impact Assessment Programs Among CDC-Funded State Health Departments.

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/docs/Sustainability\_of\_HIA\_Programs-508.pdf

Department of Health and Human Services. Office of Adolescent Health. Building Sustainable Programs: The Resource Guide.

https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/sustainability-resource-guide.pdf

Matlin SA, Depoux A, Schütte S, Flahault A, Saso L. Migrants' and refugees' health: towards an agenda of solutions. Public Health Reviews. 2018 Dec;39:1-55.

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40985-018-0104-9

National Immigration Law Center. Advancing Community Health and Well-Being.

https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/NILC-Advocacy\_WITSReport\_011422.pdf

Rutgers Center for Security, Race, and Rights. Report: Toward Empowerment and Sustainability – Reforming America's Syrian Refugee Policy. 2019.

https://csrr.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/syrian-refugee-report-final-version.pdf

United Nations. Promising Practices in the Provision of Essential Services to Migrants. January 2022.

https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/g/files/tmzbdl416/files/docs/provision\_of\_essential\_services\_- good\_practices.pdf

Zickgraf C, Jolivet D, Fry C, Boyd E, Fábos A. Bridging and breaking silos: Transformational governance of the migration–sustainability nexus. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. 2024 Jan 16;121(3):e2206184120. https://www.pnas.org/doi/abs/10.1073/pnas.2206184120



#### **Sustainability: Tools**

National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare. Sustainability Toolkit.

https://ncsacw.acf.hhs.gov/files/sustainability-toolkit-508.pdf

Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT) for Evidence-Based Programs.

https://www.ncoa.org/article/guide-to-using-the-program-sustainability-assessment-tool-psat-for-evidence-based-programs

Sustainability: A Self-Reflection Tool.

https://wscadv.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Trauma-informed-self-assessment.pdf

World Health Organization. Refugee and Migrant Health Toolkit. https://www.who.int/tools/refugee-and-migrant-health-toolkit

# Developing Sustainability with RIM Communities through Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

Applying Principles of Community-Based Participatory Research to Your Program:

https://outreach-partners.org/2011/10/applying-principles-of-community-based-participatory-research-to-your-program/

Filler T, Benipal PK, Torabi N, Minhas RS. A chair at the table: a scoping review of the participation of refugees in community-based participatory research in healthcare. Globalization and Health. 2021 Dec;17:1-0. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12992-021-00756-7

Guide: Conducting Focus Groups with RIM Communities.

https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-12/Conducting-Focus-Groups-with-RIM-Communities-A-Guide-for-Health-Departments-12142021.pdf

Guide: Identifying Community Partners: Tips for Health Departments:

https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2023-08/IdentifyingCommunityPartnerships\_08212023.pdf

Guide: Co-Creating Public Health Guidance with RIM Community Partners: A Checklist for Health Departments: <a href="https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2023-08/CoCreatingPHGuidanceChecklist\_08222023.pdf">https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2023-08/CoCreatingPHGuidanceChecklist\_08222023.pdf</a>

Guide: Outreach to Faith-Based Organizations:

https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2023-08/FaithBasedOrganizationOutreachTips\_08182023.pdf

Short Guide to Community Based Participatory Action Research:

https://www.labor.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/A-Short-Guide-to-Community-Based-Participatory-Action-Research.pdf

Using Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR):

https://nrcrim.org/using-community-based-participatory-research-cbpr



### **Creating and Engaging Community Advisory Boards**

Guide: Supporting and Co-Creating Meaningful Community Advisory Boards

https://nrcrim.umn.edu/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-02/Supporting%20and%20Co-Creating%20 Meaningful%20Community%20Advisory%20Boards%20\_01292021.pdf

Promising Practice: The Benefits of Community Advisory Boards (CABs):

https://nrcrim.org/benefits-community-advisory-boards

#### **Tools:**

- Sample: CAB Ground Rules: <a href="https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-06/MN%20Malaria%20CAB%20Ground%20">https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-06/MN%20Malaria%20CAB%20Ground%20</a>
   <a href="https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-06/MN%20Malaria%20CAB%20Ground%20">Rules 6 2016.pdf</a>
- Sample: CAB Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):
   <a href="https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-06/MN%20Malaria%20CAB%20Ground%20">https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2021-06/MN%20Malaria%20CAB%20Ground%20</a>
   Rules 6 2016.pdf

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- <sup>2</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Trends*. Accessed December 1, 2023. <a href="https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/globaltrends.html">https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/globaltrends.html</a>
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