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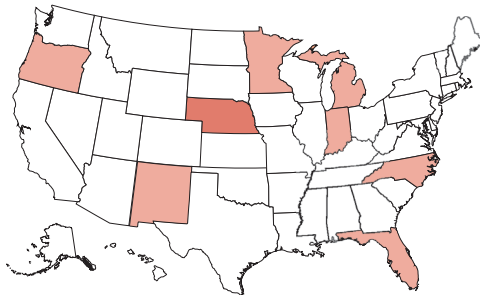
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INTRODUCTION

Nebraska

IN 2004, THE CENTER FOR TOBACCO Policy Research (CTPR) partnered with Nebraska and seven other states to evaluate how unstable state financial climates were affecting state tobacco control programs and to identify strategies to help states deal with tobacco control funding reductions. Using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, information was collected from the eight state tobacco control programs on topics such as state financial and political climates, partner relationships, program capacity, and the effects of funding reductions on program implementation.

Project LEaP States



Methods

Information about the Nebraska tobacco control program was acquired in the following ways: 1) a program background survey completed by Tobacco Free Nebraska (TFN); and 2) key informant interviews with 15 key tobacco control partners. To identify these partners, TFN named the agencies that played a critical role in the tobacco control program.

Though the partners listed are not considered a complete register of the tobacco control constituency in the state, they are representative of the types of agencies involved in the tobacco control program. On average, one individual from each partner agency participated in a single interview

(in-person or telephone), which lasted approximately 64 minutes. The following table presents the partner agencies interviewed in April and May 2004.

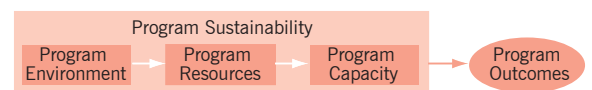
Participating Partners in Nebraska

- Tobacco Free Nebraska
- Golin Harris International
- Wellplace
- University of Nebraska - Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research
- White Mountain Research
- Health Education Incorporated
- Metro Omaha Tobacco Awareness Coalition
- Tobacco Free Lincoln Coalition
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
- NE State Patrol
- NE State Legislature
- CDC Office on Smoking and Health

The Report Series

Previously, the CTPR disseminated preliminary evaluation findings in the report, *Tobacco Control in Nebraska: Climbing the Mountain Again*, to tobacco control partners. The final evaluation findings are being presented in this series of four reports. The reports are organized around the project conceptual model that identifies the critical components of tobacco control programs.

Project LEaP Conceptual Model



This report series has been organized to reflect each of the areas identified by the model: tobacco control program environment, resources, capacity, and sustainability. Throughout the series, we have included Nebraska specific results and comparisons from the other seven states. Quotes from participants (offset in color) were chosen as representative

THIS REPORT PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF PROJECT LEaP AND SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SERIES OF FOUR REPORTS PRESENTING NEBRASKA EVALUATION RESULTS.

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RESEARCH
AT
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
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examples of the broader findings and to provide the reader with additional detail. To protect participants' confidentiality, all identifying phrases or remarks have been removed. It is important to remember the findings represent the major themes or ideas from many partners and do not reflect the thoughts of any one individual or agency.

A brief summary of the major highlights from each of the four Nebraska reports is presented below. Please refer to the individual reports for more detail.

Program Environment

- A huge budget deficit, the national economy, and an impending lawsuit negatively impacted Nebraska's economy, resulting in a large cut in tobacco control funding.
- The Nebraska tobacco control program benefited from numerous champions. However, a strong tobacco industry presence was a challenge to partners' efforts.
- Although the economic climate was poor, partners were optimistic about Nebraska's economic future and the political support for tobacco control.

Program Resources

- The reduction in tobacco control funding resulted in the elimination or modification of many program components, including the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline.
- After drastically reducing state funding for tobacco control to \$405K, the Nebraska Legislature passed a statute to allocate over \$2M in additional annual funds to the program beginning in FY04.
- Partners viewed their agency's staffing levels as less than adequate due to the limited time staff were able to spend on tobacco control.
- The level of program evaluation was described as inadequate. However, surveillance activities were seen as being neither adequate nor inadequate.
- Partners' surveillance of tobacco industry activities included advertising, lobbying, promotions, and event sponsorships.

Program Capacity

- Even in light of unstable funding, partners maintained a strategic plan accounting for various funding scenarios.

- Planning efforts were modified to focus on tobacco control policy, such as smoke-free air.
- The TFN staff and their leadership were recognized as major strengths of the program. However, partners viewed the small size of the TFN staff as impeding the program.
- Partners thought the overall tobacco control network was effective, citing TFN as a major strength within the network. However, there were mixed opinions about the effectiveness of the grassroots network.
- The Nebraska partners had a somewhat efficient contact network. Information was likely to be communicated from one side of the network to the other fairly quickly.

Program Sustainability

- Nebraska had the highest level of sustainability of all Project LEaP states in three of the five sustainability domains.
- The Nebraska program had conducted a significant amount of planning to combat the loss of program funding.
- Program partners had pooled resources to increase efforts and capacity despite reduced funding.
- Overall, the Project LEaP tobacco control programs' level of sustainability was most affected by limited program and fiscal planning.
- For the *Community Awareness and Capacity* domain, most Project LEaP states experienced a fair amount of local level participation and had a strong grassroots base.
- Across Project LEaP states, the amount of political and public support was generally low, independent of the states' overall fiscal health.

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The American Legacy Foundation (Legacy) and the Association of State and Territorial Chronic Disease Program Directors (CDD) provided financial support for this project. The information presented in these reports do not necessarily represent the views of Legacy or CDD, their staff, or Boards of Directors.



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ENVIRONMENT

Nebraska

Report Content

Economic Climate 1

Political Environment 2

Political Support 2

Tobacco Industry 4

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS, such as a state’s financial and political climates, have a significant role in state tobacco prevention and control programs. The state environment can affect the amount of resources allocated for a program, how those resources are used, and the ability of a program to function effectively and efficiently. This report presents the findings about Nebraska’s tobacco control program environment.

Prevalence of tobacco use is an important indicator of the tobacco control environment. By considering the amount of use and other related demographics in the state, we can better understand the setting in which the tobacco control program operates. At the time of the Project LEaP evaluation, the prevalence of smoking among adults in Nebraska was approximately 21% of the population, slightly lower than the national average of 21.7% (BRFSS, 2003). As of 2003, approximately 24% of all high school students were current smokers (YRBSS, 2003). In fact, it is estimated that 6.3M packs of cigarettes are illegally bought and smoked by youth in Nebraska each year (TFK, 2002).

The state climate can also be affected by high economic costs associated with smoking. In Nebraska, smoking costs about \$419M annually in healthcare expenses (Snapshot of TFN, 2003). This represents 7% of Nebraska’s overall healthcare expenditures and 12% of Nebraska’s Medicaid costs. In addition to healthcare costs, smoking also costs Nebraska an estimated \$469M per year in lost productivity (SAMMEC, 2001).

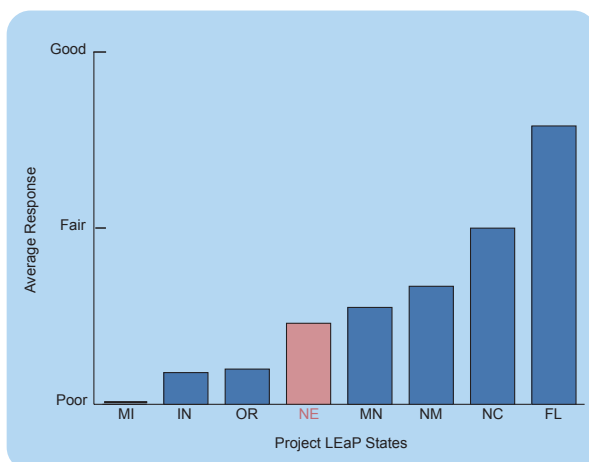
Another factor contributing to the state environment for tobacco control is the existence of smoke-free air policies. Recently these policies have been gaining ground in homes and workplaces in Nebraska. In 2003 it was reported that 77% of Nebraska employees were protected by non-smoking policies in the worksite compared to 65% just three years earlier. In addition, 76% of residents reported they had a rule that smoking was not allowed in their home compared to 71% in 2000 (Snapshot of TFN, 2003).

State Economic Climate

One of the most important environmental aspects associated with tobacco control is the state economic climate. The majority of partners (53.8%) indicated the economic climate in Nebraska was poor. The remaining partners viewed it as fair. Reasons given for the poor economic climate included:

- A \$146M budget deficit
- A struggling national economy
- A \$150M lawsuit against the state regarding the building of a nuclear waste site

Perceived State Financial Climates: State Comparison



Project LEaP
Linking Evaluation and Practice

THIS IS THE FIRST REPORT IN A SERIES OF FOUR PRESENTING EVALUATION FINDINGS FROM PROJECT LEaP.

June 2005

Most partners thought the duration of Nebraska's current economic state would be one to three years. Regardless of how they viewed the current climate, many thought the economy was improving and were optimistic about the future.

It's [state economic climate] improving at the moment. As far as the state budgets have gone, we've had a couple of years of fiscal crisis. But I know that over the last few months, tax receipts have gone up, so there's better news on the horizon right now in regard to the fiscal climate.

NE Tobacco Control Activities Effected by 2003 & 2004 Budget Cuts

Reduced

- Statewide media campaign
- No Limits movement
- TFN support for community, school, and minority outreach

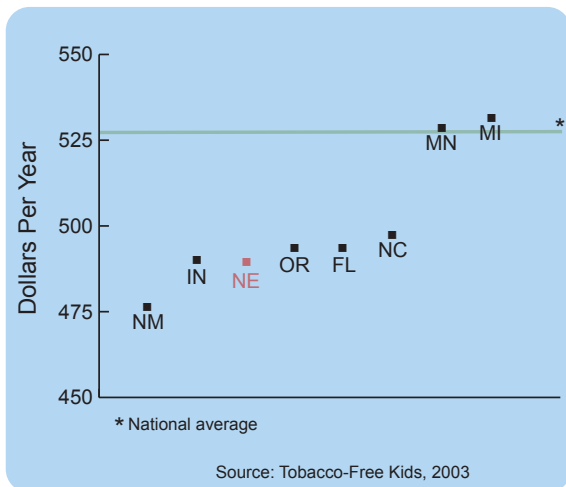
Eliminated

- Nebraska Tobacco Quitline
- Clean indoor air enforcement
- Independent evaluation of TFN

Nebraska's poor economic climate impacted tobacco control program funding. In 2003, MSA funds for Nebraska totaled over \$40M and revenue from the cigarette excise taxes brought in nearly \$61M. Despite these resources, the overall budget for the program was reduced from \$7.0M in FY03 to \$4.4M in FY04. Of the \$7.6M allocated in FY03, \$6M came from state funds, including MSA and General Fund dollars. In spring 2003, state funding was cut to \$405K for FY04 and FY05. Due to this 93% reduction in state funding, the comprehensive tobacco control program that had been in development since 2000 was partially dismantled.

We don't have the reach and the scope that we did in the past. We don't have a comprehensive program anymore. The bottom line is we're trying to pretend to be a comprehensive program, and we're not.

Average Annual Taxes to Cover Tobacco-related Costs (By Household)



In April 2004, the Legislature increased TFN's annual funding by \$2.5M from the MSA funds. As a result of this increase, programs that had expected to be cut (e.g., No Limits) will receive some funding. No Limits planned to refocus its efforts from youth empowerment to youth advocacy training.

State Political Environment

Another significant aspect of program environment is the political climate in the state. At the time of the evaluation, Governor Mike Johanns, a Republican, had been in office over a year. The unicameral state legislative branch consisted of 49 non-partisan legislators.

The overall political climate in Nebraska was described as positive and supportive. The raising of the tobacco tax and an increase in support for smoke-free policies contributed to the positive view of the political climate. Still, many partners felt tobacco control faced some political challenges, including:

- A strong and well-connected tobacco industry presence in Nebraska;
- The public view of tobacco use as a personal rights issue; and
- The self-interest environment of some agencies.

Political Support

The majority of partners (72.2%) reported receiving at least a little support for tobacco control activities from Governor Johanns. For many partners, this stemmed from his support of the tobacco excise tax increase. However, after reporting he was at least somewhat supportive, several described him as being noncommittal or more supportive in the past. Partners felt tobacco control was not a high priority for the Governor and that he would only support it when it was politically beneficial.

It's been off and on with the current Governor; we've worked with him when he sees political advantage to it, but we fall off the radar screen rather quickly.

The graphic at the top right depicts how partners perceived the Governor's prioritization of tobacco control in relation to other public health issues. Tobacco control was ranked considerably lower than many other issues in public health. Partners believed the Governor gave tobacco control equal priority to environmental health and viewed obesity and physical activity as lower priorities compared to tobacco control.

Ninety percent of the partners reported receiving at least a little support from the State Legislature regarding tobacco control activities. The Legislature was described as having some extreme supporters and some extreme opposition, but that most senators were somewhere in the middle.

There are probably ten senators that would die on the sword for us and ten that would kill us and the other 30 are somewhere in between.

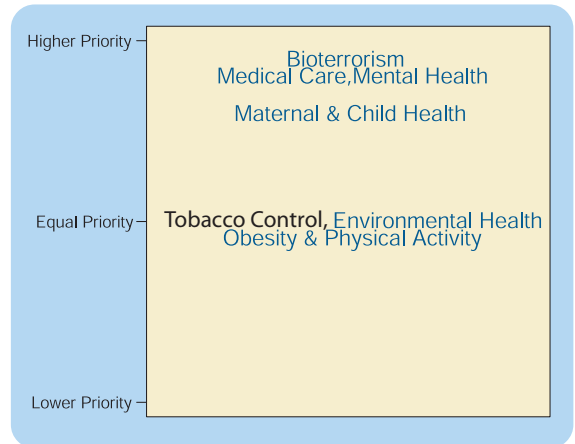
The Legislature showed some support for tobacco control because it had a good understanding of the effectiveness of the program and its impact. However, some partners, identified competing priorities for funding and the influence of the tobacco industry as reasons why the Legislature was not more supportive of tobacco control.

The Legislature is very understanding of what we do and they understand the progress we're making.

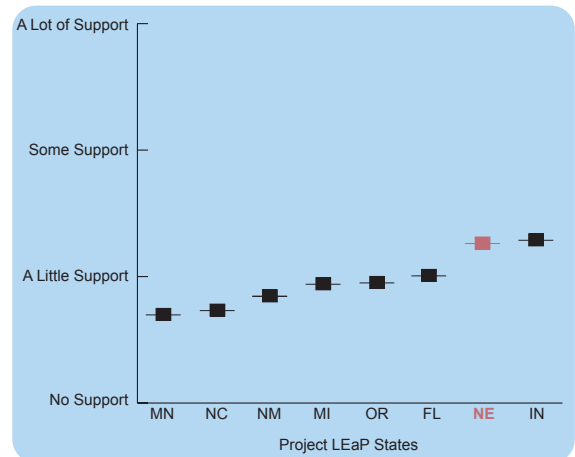
When you have 49 senators it's awfully hard to get 25 of them to say TC is more important than Medicaid, health insurance for pregnant women, or support for public schools.

Partners identified many champions of tobacco control, including advocacy groups, legislators, and tobacco control professionals. Many senators were listed as champions, such as Senators Jensen and Byars. These two were credited with getting the program a portion of the MSA funding and were described as "primo champions." Furthermore, Senator Jensen was seen as the main

Perceptions of Governor Johanns' Prioritization of Tobacco Control



Perceived Political Support for Tobacco Control: State Comparison



NE Tobacco Control Champions

Partners identified the following as champions of tobacco control:

- Senators
 - Jim Jensen
 - Dennis Byars
 - Don Preister
 - Nancy Thompson
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- Health Education Inc
- Tobacco-Free Nebraska
- MOTAC

**Where Does Nebraska Rank?
2004 State Cigarette Excise Tax Rates**

State	Excise Tax
NJ	\$2.050
RI	\$1.710
CT	\$1.510
MA	\$1.510
NY	\$1.500
WA	\$1.425
HI	\$1.300
OR	\$1.280
MI	\$1.250
VT	\$1.190
AZ	\$1.180
AK	\$1.000
ME	\$1.000
MD	\$1.000
PA	\$1.000
DC	\$1.000
IL	\$0.980
NM	\$0.910
CA	\$0.870
NV	\$0.800
KS	\$0.790
WI	\$0.770
MT	\$0.700
UT	\$0.695
NE	\$0.640
WY	\$0.600
AR	\$0.590
ID	\$0.570
IN	\$0.555
DE	\$0.550
OH	\$0.550
WV	\$0.550
SD	\$0.530
NH	\$0.520
MN	\$0.480
ND	\$0.440
TX	\$0.410
GA	\$0.370
IA	\$0.360
LA	\$0.360
FL	\$0.339
OK	\$0.230
CO	\$0.200
TN	\$0.200
MS	\$0.180
MO	\$0.170
AL	\$0.165
SC	\$0.070
NC	\$0.050
KY	\$0.030
VA	\$0.025

Source: <http://taxpolicycenter.org>

To learn more about program resources, read the next report, *The Tobacco Control Program Resources: Nebraska*.

Have questions or comments?
Email Angela Recktenwald at ctpr@slu.edu

This report was produced by the Center for Tobacco Policy Research at Saint Louis University.



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champion in the Legislature and was viewed as instrumental in getting the program funded.

The three main voluntary organizations, ALA, AHA, and ACS, were described as champions by many of the partners because they were not only visible in the community but also in the Legislature. More specifically, some partners mentioned Dave Holmquist as a champion “with the media and as a lobbyist at the Capital.”

Other advocacy groups listed as champions included Health Education Inc., MOTAC, and TFN. Judy Martin and the TFN staff were described as champions who were “committed to Best Practices, collaboration, and cooperation.”

The Tobacco Industry

The majority of partners felt the tobacco industry had a strong presence in the state. One partner described the presence as “too strong.” The industry had influence with some legislators and often worked behind the scenes.

You don't ever hear from them [tobacco industry] until you propose something that they do not like, such as the Lincoln ordinance.

The tobacco industry was described as having an impact on policy and legislation by maintaining a presence in the following areas:

- Lobbying
- Working with front groups such as the Convenience Store and Restaurant Associations
- Sponsorships
- Campaign contributions
- Advertising

Report Highlights

- A huge budget deficit, the national economy, and an impending lawsuit negatively impacted Nebraska’s economy, resulting in a large cut in tobacco control funding.
- As a result of the budget cut many elements of the program were eliminated, such as the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline.
- The program benefited from numerous champions; however, a strong tobacco industry presence presented a challenge.
- Although the economic climate was poor, partners were optimistic about Nebraska’s economic future and political support for tobacco control.

RESOURCES

Nebraska

Report Content

Monetary Resources 1

Human Resources 2

Information Resources 3

THERE ARE MANY resources to draw on for tobacco control programs. Specifically a program may utilize: (1) monetary resources, (2) human resources, and (3) information resources. Monetary resources are important to tobacco control programs because they are needed to fund activities, contracts, and grants. However, it is also important to examine the human and information resources that programs possess and have access to. Without qualified and adequate staffing, programs can find it difficult to function effectively and to expand their efforts, even when adequate funding is present. Likewise, information resources, such as guidelines and proven methods, can significantly influence program success. The following report presents Project LEaP evaluation results regarding the three types of resources in Nebraska's tobacco control program.

receiving \$4.4M in total funding. This included \$2.6M in state support from the MSA and General Fund and an additional \$1.8M from other sources, including:

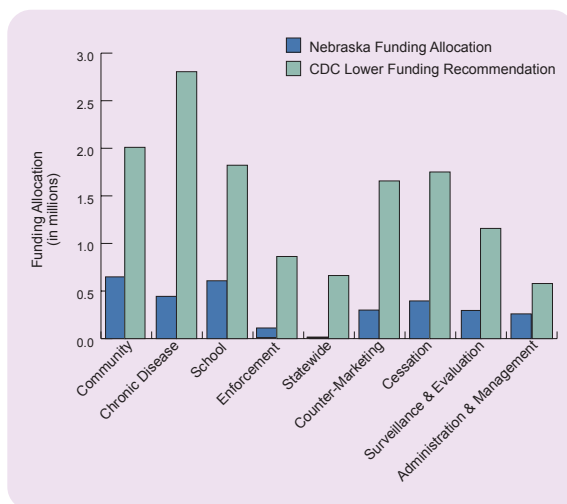
- \$1.2M from the CDC Office on Smoking and Health;
- \$380K from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; and
- \$200K from a block grant.

Total funding for the program was \$7.6M in FY02 and \$7M in FY03. Over the course of FY03, the State Legislature cut state funding for the program down to \$405K for FY04. This cut was a 93% reduction from the \$5.4M received in state funding in the previous year. However, this reduced level of funding did not last long. The Legislature allocated an additional \$2.5M from the MSA to be allocated to the program each year. This additional allocation brought state funding back up to the \$2.6M reported for FY04. Most partners felt the \$2.6M in state funds would allow the program to be maintained at its current level, particularly with respect to community programs.

Monetary Resources

At the time of the evaluation during FY04, Nebraska's tobacco control program was

Funding by BP Category:
State Allocation & CDC Recommendation



Well, it [funding increase] is certainly going to help; it's never enough. I think it will allow us to continue a program. The funds, by the way it was set up, should come in annually, so we don't have to appropriate it each year - that will help.

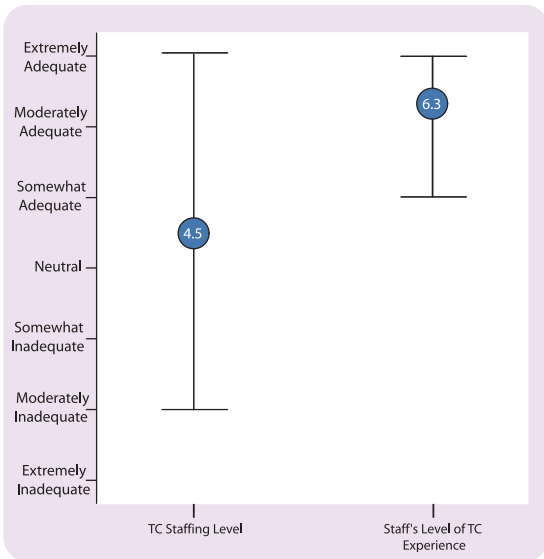
Even though some of the state funding had been reinstated, the \$4.4M in total FY04 funding was not enough for Nebraska to adequately fund all nine of the categories recommended by the CDC *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs (BP)*. The majority of program funds were allocated to community programs (\$650K) and school programs (\$610K). Statewide programs

Project **LEaP**
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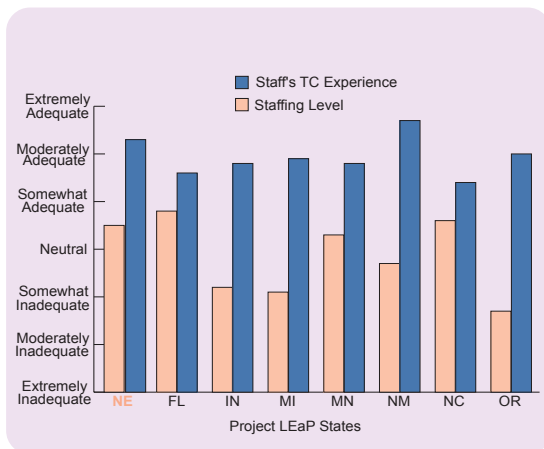
June 2005

Adequacy of Staffing Level and Experience Within NE Partners' Agencies

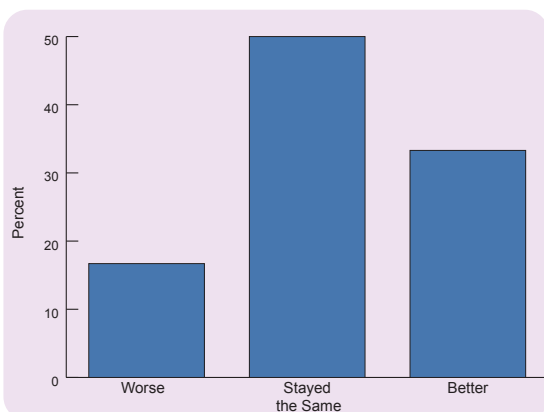


Note: The blue dot indicates the average score of partners' responses and the extending lines represent the range of their responses.

Adequacy of Staffing Level and Experience: State Comparison



Change in Staff Morale from Previous FY



did not receive any funding at the time of the evaluation. All of BP categories were funded far below the lower limit of CDC BP funding recommendations (see graphic on previous page).

Overall, between FY02 and FY04, total program funding was reduced by 42%. A number of program components were negatively affected by the budget cuts, including:

- No Limits, the youth empowerment program, was refocused towards youth advocacy training;
- The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline was eliminated;
- Evaluation contracts were not renewed;
- The statewide media campaign was reduced; and
- Community programs were reduced.

We had a community program pot; an outreach to minority populations pot; and an enforcement pot. All these different budget things had a separate line item. Well, since each of these got trimmed back, we rolled out those dollars together and gave them out to communities in a lump sum.

Human Resources

In addition to monetary resources, an adequate number of experienced staff are important to program implementation. The top left figure illustrates the adequacy of staffing levels and staff's level of tobacco control experience within *all* partners' agencies. The blue dot indicates the average score of partners' responses and the extending lines represent the range of their responses. Of those who indicated that their staffing levels were less than adequate, most had staff that only worked a portion of their time on tobacco control issues. However, despite the wide range of responses regarding adequacy of staffing levels, all partners agreed that staff tobacco control experience was highly regarded. This pattern was observed in all of the Project LEaP states (graphic to left). Partners identified increasing staffing levels as the single most important change that would facilitate their tobacco control efforts.

I think additional staff. We've tried to maintain...We have actually right at the moment less staff than before we had seven million dollars. I think a greater commitment to having staff and having us be able to hire staff [is important].

Staff Turnover and Morale

More than half of the partners (57.9%) reported that staff turnover increased from the previous fiscal year. Considering staff morale, most mentioned that morale had either stayed the same (50%) or increased (33.3%) compared to the previous fiscal year (see graphic on previous page). TFN reported their staff morale had declined due to the budget reduction and an audit

they were experiencing during the time of the evaluation.

I would say right now the morale level is very low...The audit has displayed some weaknesses within the program, and it's a program that's very proud of what they've done.

Information Resources

Information resources that can be utilized by a program include surveillance data, case studies, and evidence-based guidelines. One example of evidence-based guidelines is the CDC's *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs (BP)*.

BP Priority

TFN was asked to rank the BP categories according to the order of importance for Nebraska. Administration and Management was the highest priority, despite the fact that Nebraska was currently spending very little in this area. The inadequate funding for Administration and Management made the implementation of comprehensive fiscal management and grantee oversight a challenge for the program.

Out of the settlement money, there's zero for administration, but I still think that's a top priority. When we first got the settlement money, we asked for five new staff to help with administration, and we got none. Now they are finding we're not doing enough fiscal management and there's not enough oversight of grantees and I'm not surprised.

Statewide Programs received the lowest priority, which was reflected in the lack of funding for this category. TFN viewed statewide efforts as focusing heavily on training and capacity building. Both of these strategies were also considered to be important pieces of administration and management.

Surveillance & Evaluation

TFN indicated that Nebraska was dedicating approximately 6.7% of their total budget towards surveillance and evaluation activities. Both surveillance and evaluation had slightly decreased compared to the previous fiscal year. While evaluation activities were occurring in most of the BP categories, the current level of program evaluation was described as moderately inadequate. The enforcement category was the only BP category not being evaluated. It was also uncertain whether or not a comprehensive evaluation would be conducted over the next 12-24 months for the state.

TFN considered the current level of tobacco surveillance activities as neither inadequate nor adequate. Several surveillance systems were being implemented, including the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the

What are the Best Practices?

The CDC introduced the *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs* in August of 1999. Best Practices is an evidence-based guide to help states plan and establish effective tobacco control programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use. The guide identifies nine key areas for effective state tobacco control programs.

- Community
- Counter-Marketing
- Cessation
- Chronic Disease
- Surveillance & Evaluation
- Statewide
- School
- Enforcement
- Administration & Management

The guide also includes tobacco control program funding models for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/bestprac.htm>

TFN's BP Ranking



Which Surveillance Systems Has Nebraska Used?

- BRFSS
- YRBSS
- Adult Tobacco Survey (ATS)
- Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)
- Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)
- School Health Education Profiles (SHEP)

**Evaluation Activity by CDC BP Categories:
State Comparison**

	Community	Counter-Marketing	School	Cessation	Statewide	Chronic Disease	Enforcement
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Indiana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Michigan	✓	✓		✓	✓		
North Carolina	✓				✓	✓	✓
Florida				✓			
Minnesota				✓			

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). However, some systems (*i.e.*, media evaluation surveys) had been eliminated due to budget constraints. Surveillance of the tobacco industry was also occurring among partners. Over half (57.1%) of the partners were monitoring some tobacco industry activities, including advertising, lobbying, promotions, and event sponsorships.

Sharing Information

In the past year, the Nebraska program shared tobacco control information with at least 27 other states (see map). Nebraska had also identified six other tobacco control programs (California, Florida, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, and Oregon) that were useful models for its own program planning.

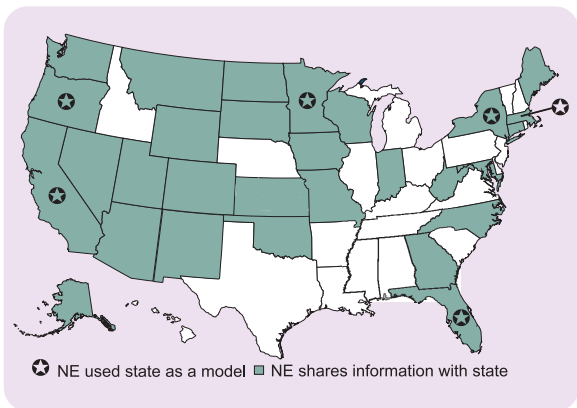
Report Highlights

- The reduction in tobacco control funding resulted in the modification or elimination of many program components, including the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline.
- After drastically reducing state funding for tobacco control to \$405K, the Nebraska Legislature passed a statute to allocate over \$2M in additional annual funds to the program beginning in FY04.
- Partners viewed their agency’s staffing levels as less than adequate due to the limited time staff were able to spend on tobacco control.
- The experience of the tobacco control staff throughout the state was seen as a strength.
- The level of program evaluation was described as inadequate. However, surveillance activities were seen being neither adequate nor inadequate.
- Partners’ surveillance of tobacco industry activities, included advertising, lobbying, promotions, and event sponsorships.

**What Tobacco Industry Activities
Does Your Agency Monitor?**

Activity	Number of agencies monitoring
Advertising	6
Event Sponsorships	6
Lobbying	6
Promotions	6
Other	1

**Information Sharing Between Nebraska
and Other State Programs**



To learn more about program capacity, read the next report, *The Tobacco Control Program Capacity: Nebraska.*

Have questions or comments?
Email Angela Recktenwald at ctpr@slu.edu

This report was produced by the Center for Tobacco Policy Research at Saint Louis University.



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CAPACITY

Nebraska

Report Content

Partner Roles 1

Strategic Planning 2

Perceptions of TFN 3

NE Partner Networks 3

Strengths & Challenges 7

NO MATTER HOW ideal the funding or environmental situations, a tobacco control program must have the capacity to utilize their resources and support. One important aspect of capacity is the system of relationships between program partners. The ability to achieve program goals is often dependent on the ability of partners to establish collaborative relationships, effective communication, and efficient resource distribution. In this report, we will evaluate the capacity of Nebraska’s tobacco control program by reviewing the:

- Roles of the program partners;
- Strategic planning for the program;
- Partner relationships; and
- Program strengths and challenges.

Partner Roles

At the time of our interviews, the Nebraska tobacco prevention and control program was comprised of a variety of

agencies that had different roles. The program was led by Tobacco Free Nebraska (TFN), housed within the Nebraska Health and Human Services System. TFN was responsible for program planning, implementation, and surveillance and evaluation related to tobacco control within the state. The agency was comprised of six full-time and one part-time staff. TFN focused on a variety of activities to prevent and reduce tobacco use including outreach, youth empowerment, media, and community programs. TFN funded efforts in eight out of nine *Best Practices* components recommended by the CDC. The only BP category not funded was statewide programs.

For the purpose of this evaluation, TFN was asked to identify agencies that played a significant role in Nebraska’s tobacco prevention and control program. The list of agencies did not represent all of the tobacco control agencies within the state, only a representative sample. These agencies are listed in the adjacent graphic and described below.

Aside from TFN, there were two other state level groups involved in the evaluation:

- Nebraska State Patrol
- Nebraska State Legislature

The Nebraska State Patrol was involved in the enforcement component of the program. They conducted both SYNAR and non-SYNAR checks to monitor the compliance of vendors on tobacco sales to minors laws. The State Patrol also provided merchant education to vendors and tobacco outlets in the state. As described in the first report in this series, *The Tobacco Control Program Environment*, the Nebraska State Legislature had a significant role in the program. They were involved in

Participating Partners in Nebraska's Network

- Tobacco Free Nebraska
- Golin Harris International
- Wellplace
- University of Nebraska - Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research
- White Mountain Research
- Health Education Incorporated
- Metro Omaha Tobacco Awareness Coalition
- Tobacco Free Lincoln Coalition
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
- NE State Patrol
- NE State Legislature
- CDC Office on Smoking and Health

determining the funding appropriations for the program as well as development of tobacco related policies on a statewide level.

The voluntary and advocacy groups at work in Nebraska included:

- American Heart Association
- American Cancer Society
- American Lung Association
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids

These groups had various roles within the program including providing support and technical assistance for the statewide and regional coalitions, advocating for state funding, supporting smoke-free air and tobacco prevention issues, and collaborative efforts with other partners in the state.

Other education and advocacy groups included Health Education Inc., which coordinated the statewide coalition Smokeless Nebraska. They focused on support for tobacco-related policies such as excise tax increases as well as securing and maintaining funding for the tobacco prevention and control program. In addition, regional coalitions were represented by the Metro Omaha Tobacco Awareness Coalition (MOTAC) and the Tobacco Free Lincoln Coalition. These coalitions were involved in coordinating local policy and programmatic activities within their communities.

Agencies that contracted with TFN to provide specific tobacco prevention and control services were:

- University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Bureau of Sociological Research
- White Mountain Research
- Wellplace
- Golin Harris International

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in collaboration with White Mountain Research, was involved in evaluation activities within the state. Wellplace provided 24-hour telephone tobacco cessation services. Golin Harris International was involved in the development and implementation of Nebraska's youth empowerment and advocacy efforts.

At the national level, the CDC Office on Smoking and

Types of Agencies in All Project LEaP States

Agency Type	NM	FL	NC	MI	NE	IN	OR	MN
Lead agency	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
Contractors & grantees	3	2	1	4	4	5	1	6
Coalitions	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
Voluntary/Advocacy agencies	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	4
State agencies	3	2	3	0	2	2	6	1
Advisory agencies	0	1	0	2	1	1	2	1
Total Project LEaP Agencies	11	12	12	13	15	15	16	16

Summary of Partners' Organizational Change, FY03-04: State Comparison

Compared to the previous fiscal year, how have the following characteristics of your agency changed?

Characteristics	NE	FL	IN	MI	MN	NM	NC	OR
Size of agency	▲	▼	=	=	=	=	=	▲
Training opportunities	=	=	=	=	▼	=	▲	▼
Reporting requirements	▲	=	=	=	=	▲	▲	=
Staff turnover	=	▲	=	=	▲	=	=	▲
Physical resources	▲	=	=	=	=	=	=	=
Internal decision-making	=	=	▲	=	=	=	▲	=
Organization of agency	=	=	▲	=	=	=	▲	=
Staff morale	=	=	=	=	=	=	▲	▼
Internal communication	=	=	▲	=	=	=	▲	=

▼ Decreased/Worse; = Stayed the same; ▲ Increased/Better

Health provided core financial funding for the program via the Capacity Building for Tobacco Prevention grant funds. They also provided technical assistance and guidance on various topics including allocation of funding.

Strategic Planning

Long-term planning for program activities was difficult for partners due to changes in program funding and the uncertainty of future funding. However, some planning activities were conducted. Partners reported developing different funding scenarios to help them determine what to keep if future funding cuts occurred. Others also described an increase in efforts that focused on policy change. These activities were thought to ensure that the efforts of the program would be long lasting even if critical program components had to be eliminated.

It's pretty clear that the tobacco control folks are moving toward as much policy as they possibly can with regard to smoke-free environments everywhere. That's what we're all doing.

TFN also reported that the program was making an effort to train contractors and other local organizations to conduct evaluation for their programs and activities. They were also encouraged to disseminate the results to the public and political decision-makers to gain support for the program.

It [changes in program budget] certainly affected us in our efforts to make sure that strategic planning was done for the next legislative session to get that program refunded. We certainly discussed what they should do to make sure that they sustain their success and talk about the successes they have all year through, not just during the legislative session.

Perceptions of TFN

Partners identified the TFN staff and their leadership as a major facilitator for the tobacco control program. They described the staff as highly committed and passionate.

Tobacco-Free Nebraska and its leadership has led the way... They have always been available for training and technical assistance. They're always pushing local coalitions to use the Best Practices and not to be complacent as far as their programming.

While partners recognized the good work of the TFN staff, many felt that the size of the staff was inadequate and impeded the efforts of the program. In addition, a few partners felt the tobacco control network needed to expand, especially at the community level.

Modifications to TFN's Strategic Plan in Previous Year

Changes were made to the following plan components:

- Distribution of resources
- Prioritization of program outcomes
- Identification of other funding resources
- Staffing
- Efforts to change policy
- Building external partnerships

BP Categories Funded: State Comparison

	Community	Chronic Disease	School	Enforcement	Statewide	Counter-Marketing	Cessation	Surveillance & Evaluation	Administration & Management
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Minnesota	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Mexico	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indiana*	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Michigan	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Florida					✓		✓		✓

*Indiana combines funding for several categories into one lump sum

Impeding the program would be the fact that it's located or more concentrated in the Lincoln area, and it needs to be more statewide; it needs to be able to bring in the rural communities more.

The Tobacco Control Network

Fifteen tobacco control partners were identified as core members of Nebraska's program. Partners considered the overall tobacco control network in Nebraska to be effective. Reasons for this perception included:

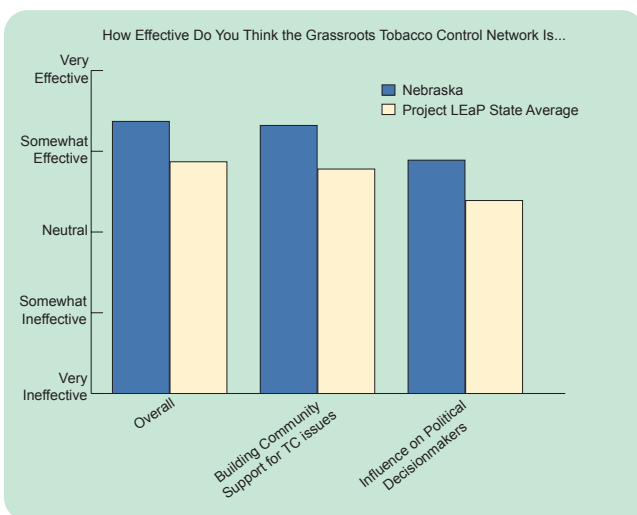
- Good collaboration among agencies;
- The ability of TFN to provide leadership and resources; and
- Effective communication from TFN.

They [TFN] really know what they're doing. The wealth of information at their fingertips is amazing; so much so that it's hard to keep track of it all. I've seen some really wonderful things happen in the network in terms of educating the public, their policymakers, and their legislators.

There's very little duplication, which makes for a very efficient, and effective, and seamless process that they [the network] go through to accomplish their goals. That's one of the strongest things they have going for them, because they're not spinning wheels and duplicating.

Increased funding was seen as an important way to improve the network. Partners thought more funding would allow the network to compete with big tobacco advertising and hire more local coordinators to reach out to the grassroots. They also stated that the network could be improved through coalition building among partners and even better communication.

Effectiveness of Grassroots Network



State and Grassroots Relationship

Most partners viewed the relationship between the state and the local grassroots partners as quite effective. A few noted that the T-FAN email system which alerts partners about statewide activities was evidence of this effectiveness. A couple of partners also credited the grassroots network for their effective work with youth.

All I have to do is look at ABT and their survey results, and I see the number of kids that are not smoking now, the drops, and the number that were smoking before. I have to give most of that credit to the local grassroots network.

We were successfully refunded at this level, and it was basically through grassroots, through reaching out to our advocates and having them contact their legislators or state senators.

However, a few partners felt that the grassroots network faced several challenges, including:

- Everything was done in committees, yielding an ineffective coalition structure;
- Limited communication among grassroots partners;
- Turf issues between organizations; and
- Limited success with legislators.

Though opinions on its effectiveness varied, partners thought that the relationship between state and grassroots could be improved. Specifically training grassroots partners in advocacy and giving grassroots organizations more financial and programmatic support were ideas for strengthening the network.

There are people that are just too shy and are scared of senators. So a lot of it is confidence building practice. I'd love it if we could have kind of like a mentoring program where a seasoned coalition member takes the shy coalition member with them to meetings

Network Relations

In order to learn more about relationships among Nebraska partners, four areas of the overall tobacco control network were examined:

- Contact – Frequency of contact between agencies
- Money – How money flows between agencies
- Importance – Perceived importance of agencies in Nebraska's tobacco control efforts
- Integration – Extent to which agencies work together to achieve tobacco control goals

From the information provided by the partners, graphical representations and descriptive measures of different networks within the state were developed. For more technical details regarding the development and interpretation of the networks, please contact CTPR at ctpr@slu.edu.

Contact

The contact network shows how often participating partners communicated with each other. A line connects

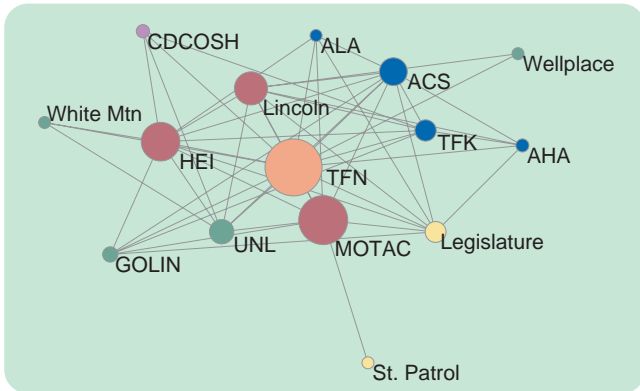
Nebraska Partner Agency Abbreviations

Agency	Abbreviation
Tobacco Free Nebraska	● TFN
Golin Harris International	● GOLIN
Wellplace	● Wellplace
University of Nebraska - Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research	● UNL
White Mountain Research	● White Mtn
Health Education Incorporated	● HEI
Metro Omaha Tobacco Awareness Coalition	● MOTAC
Tobacco Free Lincoln Coalition	● Lincoln
American Cancer Society	● ACS
American Heart Association	● AHA
American Lung Association	● ALA
Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids	● TFK
NE State Patrol	● St. Patrol
NE State Legislature	● Legislature
CDC Office on Smoking and Health	● CDCOSH

Agency Type Key

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ● Lead Agency | ● Voluntary/Advocacy |
| ● Contractor/Grantee | ● Other State Agency |
| ● Coalition | ● Advisory/Consulting |

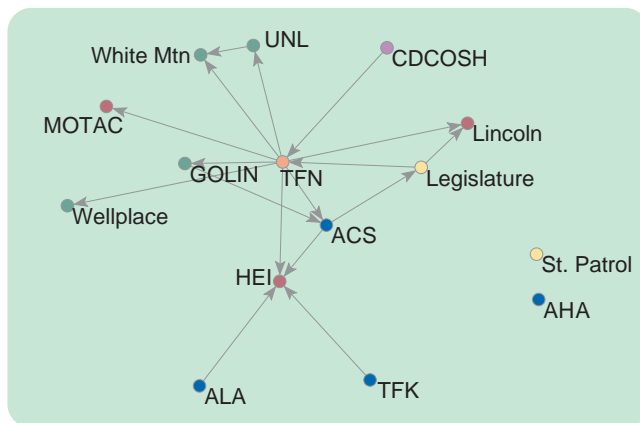
Quarterly Contact Among NE Partners (More than Quarterly)



What Does the Nebraska Contact Network Show?

- Nebraska partners had moderately efficient communication (i.e., information is likely to move from one side of the network to the other fairly quickly)
- Communication among partners was less centralized; there were several agencies that exerted influence within the network.

Exchange of Money Between NE Partners



What Does the Nebraska Money Network Show?

- Many agencies received money from more than one source within the network.
- More agencies in the Nebraska money network were sources of funding than in other Project LEaP states.

two partners if they had contact with each other on *more than a quarterly basis*. The size of the node (dot representing each agency) indicates the amount of influence a partner has over contact in the network. An example of having more influence, or a larger node, was seen between TFK and the Legislature. TFK did not have a direct connection with the Legislature, but both had contact with TFN. As a result, TFN acted as a bridge between the two and had more influence, and a larger node, within the network.

The Nebraska network had a moderate level of contact between agencies. This means that about half of the agencies in the network had more than quarterly communication with each other. There were several agencies with large or medium sized nodes. Because many agencies were influential, no one or two agencies controlled all of the influence or were most central to the network. Overall, the network was less centralized than the average Project LEaP state contact network.

The contact network was also somewhat efficient (i.e., information was likely to be communicated from one side of the network to the other fairly quickly). Efficiency has to do with how many steps (e.g., agencies) it takes to get from one side of the network to the other. Things like information or money travel faster through the network if there are fewer agencies to travel through. The level of efficiency in this network was similar to the other Project LEaP contact networks.

Money

In the money exchange network, an arrow between two agencies indicates the direction of money flow between partners. Overall, TFN provided the most funding to other partners, which was consistent with its role as the lead agency. By providing the most funding to other partners, TFN had the highest level of influence over funding in the network.

Unlike most other Project LEaP states, many agencies in the Nebraska money flow network had more than one funding source within the network. Compared to money flow networks in other participating states, the Nebraska money flow network had an average level of connectivity. In other words, there was about the same amount of exchanging of funds in Nebraska as in other states. There were more funding sources within the Nebraska money network than in other Project LEaP states, making the network more complex.

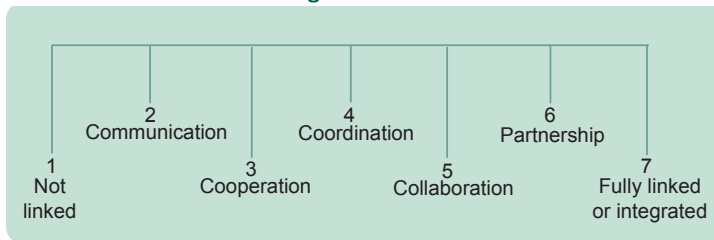
Importance

The importance network shows how important partners thought other agencies were to the tobacco control program. An arrow connects two partners when the originating partner feels that the receiving partner is *extremely* important to the program. As indicated by the fairly uniform node size, most agencies were viewed as equally important to the network. TFN was selected by the most agencies as extremely important in the network, followed by the Legislature, CDCOSH, ACS, Lincoln, and MOTAC. Most agencies were selected by at least one other agency as being an extremely important part of the program. When compared to other participating states, the Nebraska importance network was more connected than average.

Integration

The integration network shows the extent of the relationship between partners. A line between two partners means that the partners *at least coordinated* with each other to achieve program goals (see integration scale below). The Nebraska integration network shows that, of the participating partners, TFN worked with the most agencies. MOTAC and the Legislature were also highly connected, indicating that they worked closely with many of the agencies.

Integration Scale



As with contact, this network was moderately connected and moderately efficient. Compared to other Project LEaP states, Nebraska's integration network also showed an average level of centralization. From the graphic you can see that there were several larger nodes, meaning that there was no single agency that was central in the network.

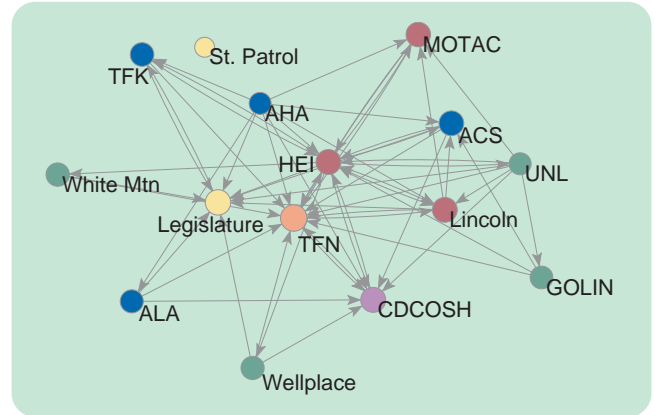
Strengths and Challenges

Partners stated the commitment and dedication of people involved in tobacco control were a major strength of the program. Among these people, Judy Martin and the staff at TFN stood out because of their strong leadership.

Agency Type Key

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ● Lead Agency | ● Voluntary/Advocacy |
| ● Contractor/Grantee | ● Other State Agency |
| ● Coalition | ● Advisory/Consulting |

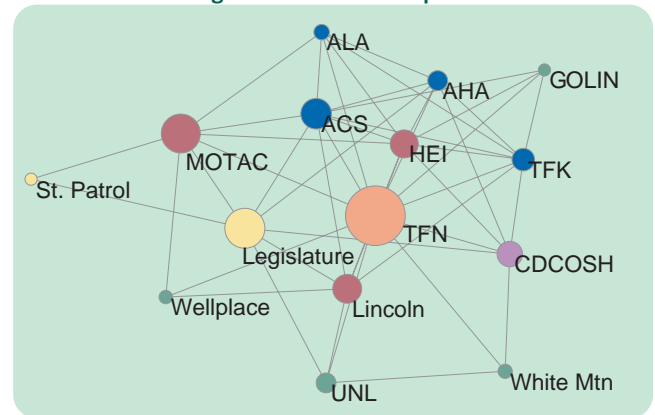
Perceived Importance of NE Partners to the Program



What Does the Nebraska Importance Network Show?

- Most agencies were seen as equally important within the network.
- The Nebraska importance network was more connected than the average Project LEaP state.

Integration between NE partners



What Does the Nebraska Integration Network Show?

- Many agencies within the network worked with several other agencies; the integration network was less centralized than the average Project LEaP state.
- Like the contact network, the integration network was moderately efficient.

How Does Nebraska's Networks Compare to the Average Project LEaP State?

Network	Connectivity ¹	Centralization ²
Contact	=	=
Money	=	N/A
Importance	▲	▲
Integration	=	▼

▼ Less than other LEaP states
 = The same as other LEaP states
 ▲ More than other LEaP states

¹How connected the overall network is; shown by the number of links between agencies
²How influence is distributed in the network; shown by the size of agency nodes

I would say our leadership and commitment; the leadership from TFN and the commitment from them and also the commitment from the coalitions.

Collaboration and the ability to bring in many agencies were seen as strengths. Partners reported that the program was effective at bringing in many community organizations and local coalitions. They felt that good relationships between many agencies facilitated getting a lot done even when faced with a lack of resources.

We have a very collaborative atmosphere. We play well with one another for the most part, and I see that as an enormous strength. People have been very creative about how to get things done whether they have a budget or not.

Challenges for the program included the uncertainty and lack of human and financial resources. Some partners also felt that the lack of coordination and communication was a major challenge to the program.

The insecurity of the funding. The last couple of years have caused a lot of anxieties and fear of contracts not being extended. People were afraid to venture out and do too much for fear they'd be cut off.

Report Highlights

- Even in light of unstable funding, partners maintained strategic planning for various funding scenarios.
- Planning efforts were modified to focus on tobacco control policy, such as smoke-free air.
- The TFN staff and their leadership were recognized as major strengths of the program. However, partners viewed the small size of the TFN staff as impeding the program.
- The Nebraska partners had a somewhat efficient contact network. Information was likely to be communicated from one side of the network to the other fairly quickly.
- Partners thought the overall tobacco control network was effective, citing TFN as a major strength within the network. However, there were mixed opinions about the effectiveness of the grassroots network.

To learn more about program sustainability, read the next report, *The Tobacco Control Program Sustainability: Nebraska*.

Have questions or comments?
 Email Angela Recktenwald at ctpr@slu.edu

This report was produced by the Center for Tobacco Policy Research at Saint Louis University.



<http://ctpr.slu.edu>

SUSTAINABILITY

Nebraska

Report Content

The Framework 1

Nebraska 3

Project LEaP States 7

Report Highlights 8

IN RECENT YEARS, sustainability has become a growing concern as state tobacco control programs are faced with increasingly limited resources. There are many definitions for sustainability, including the longevity of a program after its inception. From the available public health literature, sustainability includes:

- Maintaining service coverage at a level that will provide continuing control of a health problem;
- Continuing to deliver its intended benefits over a long period of time;
- Becoming institutionalized within an organization; and
- Continuing to respond to community issues.

Often organizations spend considerable time and energy focused on program funding. While important, this alone will not sustain a program. When funding loss is experienced, programs are faced with significant challenges. Furthermore, those

that have failed to build sustainability in other areas are more susceptible to capacity loss, diminished activities, or even program closure. Mounting state deficits and financial difficulties have placed many state tobacco control programs in precisely this situation. As a result it is critical that programs integrate the concept of sustainability into their planning activities. Assessing current levels of sustainability allows programs to evaluate their strengths and challenges, and begin to address them in the future. Programs will be better equipped to plan and make decisions that will help increase their staying power and shorten the rebuilding time should funding return.

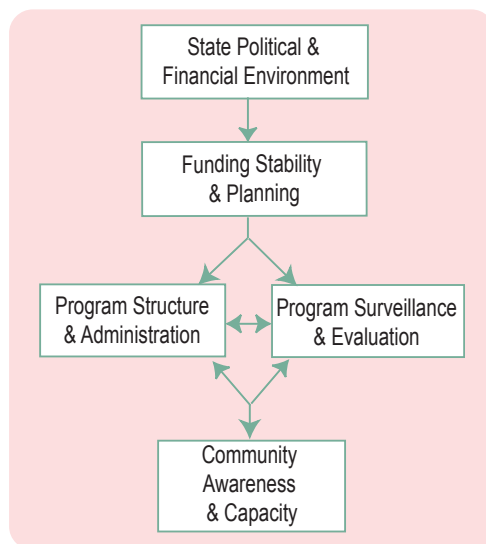
The Sustainability Framework

Because little work has been done to aid tobacco control programs in assessing their sustainability, the Center for Tobacco Policy Research (CTPR) has developed a framework for this purpose. Based on a thorough review of the scientific and business literature, discussions with experts, and our own research, the framework consists of five major elements or domains:

- 1) State Political & Financial Environment
- 2) Community Awareness & Capacity
- 3) Program Structure & Administration
- 4) Funding Stability & Planning
- 5) Program Surveillance & Evaluation

The main purpose of the framework is to help states in their strategic planning

Domains of Tobacco Control Program Sustainability



The Sustainability Framework

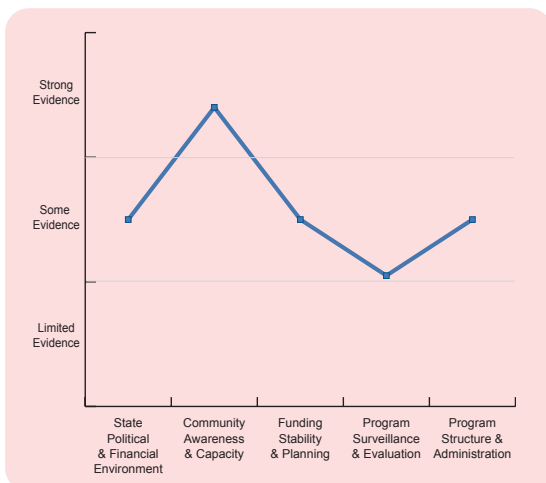


Example of Scoring Table

Indicator	Example Data Obtained	Amount of Evidence
Planning for Surveillance & Evaluation	No plans to conduct program evaluation or surveillance	
Implementation of Surveillance & Evaluation	Previous use of a variety surveillance systems <i>and</i> conducted outcome evaluation	
Use of Surveillance & Evaluation	No use of data to inform the programs' efforts, the public, or policy-makers	

Limited Evidence
 Some Evidence
 Strong Evidence

Overall Nebraska Sustainability



activities. By assessing sustainability, programs can obtain a better understanding of where they are, how they can capitalize on their strengths, and address their challenges. A secondary use for the tool is to examine programs across states, allowing for greater information-sharing among programs.

It is important to note that all five domains are interrelated. For example, a state's environment regarding tobacco control often influences program funding stability and planning. In turn, a program's ability to successfully implement their program, assessed through surveillance and evaluation, can often have an impact on state-level support. For that reason, it is critical that one domain not be weighed without consideration of the others. This collective approach results in a more comprehensive and accurate picture. To assess each domain, a set of measurable indicators has been identified (see graphic to left).

Scoring Method

Using the framework, CTPR has assessed sustainability for each of its Project LEaP states. Relevant qualitative and quantitative data collected during Project LEaP was used for this assessment as well as archival information (e.g. current strategic plans). For most indicators multiple data items were used in the assessment. Based on the compiled data, each indicator was assigned to one of three categories (see scoring example):

- Limited evidence
- Some evidence
- Strong evidence

Once assigned, an average of the total indicator scores was calculated and used to place each domain in the appropriate category. The highest possible average score was 3, while the lowest was 1. At the time of this publication, sustainability data were available for analysis for only six of the eight Project LEaP states. Sustainability information for all eight states will be made available on the CTPR website (<http://ctpr.slu.edu>) in the near future.

Nebraska Sustainability Profile

Nebraska's sustainability profile showed a moderate level of sustainability (2.0). Its profile is similar to the other Project LEaP states. Overall, the state had the highest level of sustainability of all evaluated states in three of the five

domains. *Community Awareness & Capacity* was the highest scoring domain for the state while *Program Surveillance & Evaluation* was the lowest. Each of the five domains are described in more detail below.

State Political & Financial Environment

Nebraska’s *State Political & Financial Environment* showed *some evidence* (2.0) of sustainability. Specifically, partners felt that the public was positive and supportive of tobacco control as a whole. Nearly all partners agreed that Governor Johanns had been somewhat to moderately supportive of the program in the past. However, some thought he had been noncommittal as of late.

He [the Governor] was very supportive. He said that he did support us, and he has supported us in the past. But just when you look at . . . and this is going back to the overall financial situation within the state of Nebraska, like any other Governor or policymaker, he also has to weigh in other factors, such as the recession.

The Legislature showed some support of tobacco control. Partners noted that while there were extreme supporters on both sides of the issue, the majority of legislators were in the middle. When compared to other partner states, Nebraska’s experience was somewhat uncommon. While some states reported minimal Governor support, Legislative support was most often considered negligible at best.

We have had [legislative] champions that have supported tobacco prevention and control during the bad economy and even the good economy...We certainly have our people that oppose, but usually that’s political reasons or they have a pet project.

The state was also experiencing a significant financial shortfall of about \$146M. Moreover, it was also dealing with a \$150M nuclear waste lawsuit that would worsen its economy. With the exception of one state, all those evaluated had also experienced a budget deficit either currently or in the previous year. Also, most states felt their economies were very poor and declining.

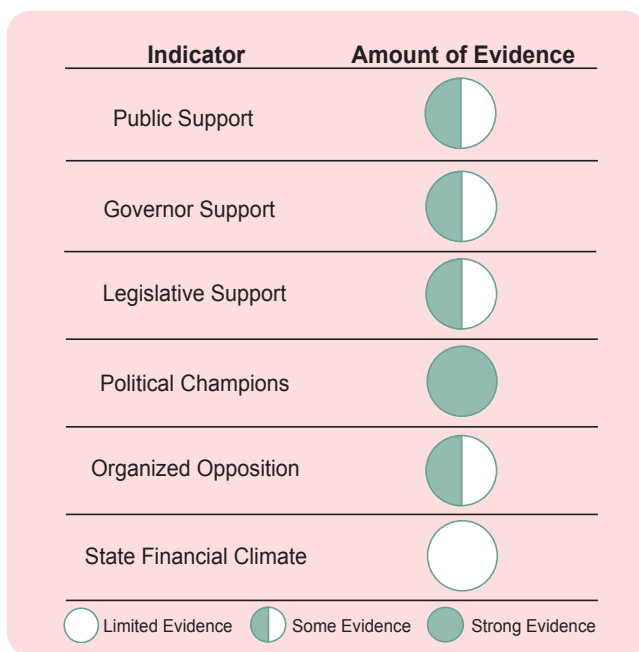
[We’re] struggling to come out of an economic downturn. We’ve had budget shortfalls for the last three years, and have had to have three special sessions of the Legislature to deal with them. There’s a possibility of having to have another special session this year, not so much dealing with the budget shortfall as dealing with a legal issue that might have to be paid. This does obviously affect other funding streams.

What is State Political & Financial Environment?

The environment within a state influences program funding, initiatives, and acceptance. Strong state environments include:

- Favorable public opinion;
- Support from the Governor and Legislature;
- Influential champions;
- Favorable state fiscal climate; and
- Lack of organized opposition.

Nebraska State Political & Financial Environment

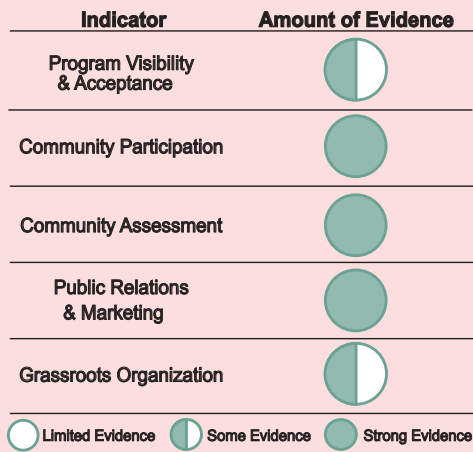


What is *Community Awareness & Capacity*?

Involvement of the community influences the success of program initiatives. A strong community environment includes having:

- Participation of community stakeholders;
- A publicly visible program; and
- An understanding of the community.

Nebraska *Community Awareness & Capacity*



Summary of Counter-Marketing/Media Strategies: State Comparison

Strategies	IN	NE	NM	MI	NC	OR	MN	FL
Newspapers/Magazines	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Billboards	✓	✓	✓					
Radio	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Television	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Transit advertising	✓							
The Internet	✓			✓				
Other*	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓

*Other media strategies used: NE - Movie theater slides; IN - Events; MI - Posters and Fliers; MN - Mobile marketing; NM - Media literacy

Community Awareness & Capacity

Based on a variety of aspects the *Community Awareness & Capacity* domain had *strong evidence* (2.6) of sustainability. In particular, partners conveyed that the program had a lot of community participation. Though the grassroots network was only somewhat effective at building community support and influencing political decision-makers, the relationship between the state and grassroots partners as considered extremely effective. This experience was frequently reported among Project LEaP states. A good relationship between the state and grassroots network was reported by all states and most felt their grassroots network was somewhat to very effective.

We have always had a real commitment to collaboration and communication amongst partners, both funded and unfunded at the state level. Having that in place when you have tough times as well as good times, that's so important. Both in a strategic sense as far as being able to come back and get dollars, but also in a personal sense; to feel like boy, there's someone I can turn to for support when there's really some nasty stuff coming down.

The Nebraska program was also thought to have a lot of activity in public relations and marketing. It had used several media outlets to market itself to both the public and political decision-makers, including:

- Newspapers/magazines
- Billboards
- Radio
- Television
- Movie theater slides

The program had also participated in a variety of general surveillance activities including the BRFSS, YRBSS, ATS and YTS. In addition, it had attempted to obtain information about populations with tobacco-related disparities in many ways. These activities indicated a concentrated effort by the program to understand the communities in which it works and to use that information to better reach community members.

Nebraska for the most part is a pretty homogenous state. But there are pockets [of people with tobacco-related disparities] here and there. Where we know there are pockets, we certainly make an effort to have everybody involved in planning to help us reach those communities.

Nebraska’s marketing efforts were slightly better than other evaluated states, as the majority of Project LEaP states reporting the use of four or fewer modes of media. In relation to tobacco-related disparities, Nebraska was also above average, as only two other states used four strategies. The remaining states used between one and three strategies to solicit information about disparities.

Program Structure & Administration

For *Program Structure & Administration*, Nebraska showed *some evidence* (2.0) of sustainability. The program had a part-time fiscal manager. Also, partners had prior knowledge of program goals and overall agreed with them. However, there was no evidence of collective planning to achieve these goals.

The program had developed a formal strategic plan in 2000, which it was continuing to use to shape its efforts. From 2003 to 2004 the plan had been modified to reflect changes in funding distribution and prioritization of goals. Plans for implementing the program at different funding levels were also created. As evidenced above the plan was flexible, however it did not mirror the long-range goals of the program.

We’ve had so much uncertainty that it makes it very difficult for planning. We’ve been in a holding pattern in a lot of ways for the past couple of months, and that is going to continue until we have more certainty. I see that as a lost opportunity. It’s detracted from our efforts, and it’s unfortunate that we couldn’t have had more certainty sooner, because it makes us less effective.

In most of the other Project LEaP states, partners tended to agree with the lead agency’s program goals. In contrast to Nebraska, many had made plans to achieve the goals as a group. Finally, all but two states had a strategic plan in place at the time of the evaluations. Like Nebraska’s, most of these plans were flexible. However, other states included both short and long-term goals in their plans.

Funding Stability & Planning

Funding Stability & Planning for Nebraska was considered to have *some evidence* (2.0) of sustainability. Though expected to increase the following year, actual funding had decreased over the previous three years for the tobacco control program. This indicated intense funding instability and affected the overall efforts of the program, including staffing and the loss of the Quitline. Other results of this instability included:

Summary of Tobacco-Related Disparities Information Strategies: State Comparison

Strategies	NE	MI	NC	OR	IN	MN	NM	FL
Interaction with population representatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Meetings with multi-cultural agencies	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Other partner agency feedback	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Internal agency review	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Other*								✓
No input solicited								✓

* New Mexico has contract specifically for addressing disparities

What is Program Structure & Administration?

The way a program is administered and structured influences its ability to function and expand. Strong program structure and administration includes:

- Internal fiscal management;
- Flexible strategic planning; and
- An adequate number of experienced staff.

Nebraska Program Structure & Administration

Indicator	Amount of Evidence
Fiscal Monitoring	
Fiscal Policies	No Data Available
Partner Involvement	
Strategic Planning	
Support & Expertise	

Limited Evidence
 Some Evidence
 Strong Evidence

- Increasing of lobbying efforts by partners;
- Reprioritization of program efforts to identify reduction areas; and
- Pooling of partner resources.

The provision of technical assistance for finding varied funding sources and pooling of resources increased the fiscal independence of the program. Like Nebraska, most states encountered significant reductions in funding and at the least a serious threat of funding loss. The majority had also made efforts to plan for the funding reductions. Specifically, these states had attempted to diversify funding sources, refocus efforts, reprioritize, and increase program marketing.





I would say that there were individual components that were hurt dramatically from that cut. What we made a commitment to when we took the cut was keeping an infrastructure together, keeping people on board as much as we could. We knew that as we took away program components, by keeping that infrastructure and those people we would be able to build on that...We kind of held out hope and knew that we'd be doing some things to get additional dollars.




What is Funding Stability & Planning?

For a program to consider long-term provision of services, it must first have some financial stability. Funding stability and planning includes:

- Level funding available on a long-term basis;
- Strategies to deal with funding changes;
- Identification of various funding streams; and
- Funding to implement the program.

Nebraska Funding Stability & Planning

Indicator	Amount of Evidence
Funding Stability	
Planning	
Fiscal Independence	
Capacity	

 Limited Evidence
  Some Evidence
  Strong Evidence

Regarding program capacity, there was some evidence that the program had the ability to sustain itself. This was supported by the reinstatement of previously cut funds and increasing youth advocacy efforts. Still, the program had undergone substantial loss to its components, including the reduction of its community programs, staffing, training, media, evaluation, and minority outreach efforts. Except one, all other Project LEaP states had also experienced large changes in their program as a result of funding reductions or the threat of reductions. Consistent with Nebraska, these states reported reducing staff, refocusing the program towards policy and the reduction or elimination of many of their core programs (e.g., statewide programs, community efforts).

Well, it [the funding reduction] affected the program dramatically. We did have to terminate some individuals and what we really managed to do was just to keep the office open in a status quo mode until there was additional funding. Now we had a lot of our partners, the communities out there, that still continued work, some without funds. And so in that respect, we did not fall off the map entirely, but we did suffer.

Program Surveillance & Evaluation

Nebraska's program had *some evidence* (1.7) of sustainability in regard to *Program Surveillance & Evaluation*. This was based on many aspects including

the lack of a plan to complete a comprehensive program evaluation in the following 24 months. However the program did participate in six key surveillance efforts. These included the BRFSS, YRBSS, ATS, YTS, SHEP, and PRAMS. Still, surveillance was considered neither adequate nor inadequate in the state.

The program also participated in six key evaluation activities and considered its evaluation efforts to be moderately adequate. However, partners reported that evaluation of the program had changed in focus and delivery as a result of funding reductions. They also stated that the information provided from these efforts was utilized by the program to inform both the public and political decision makers about program outcomes. Most of the other Project LEaP states had reported a plan to conduct a comprehensive program evaluation. Like Nebraska, many also participated in a high number of surveillance and evaluation activities.

There are still some surveillance pieces that exist, but given the sort of roller coaster atmosphere with the budget, it's actually making the evaluation activities more complicated in terms of trying to come up with a successful impact of the program. It's hard to control for factors like that in analysis. But I would say overall, it's [the funding reduction] probably had a chilling effect, not only on the program, but also the evaluation.

Sustainability Across Project LEaP States

Nebraska's level of sustainability is similar to that seen in the other Project LEaP states. For most domains, sustainability varied across states (see graphic to the right). Nearly all states fell within the some evidence of sustainability range for most domains. The only domain in which strong evidence was found for any state was *Community Awareness & Capacity*. The differences in the scores for this domain were minimal and indicated that most Project LEaP states had experienced strong community participation and support. Of those differences seen, most could be found in the amount and use of the community assessment indicator.

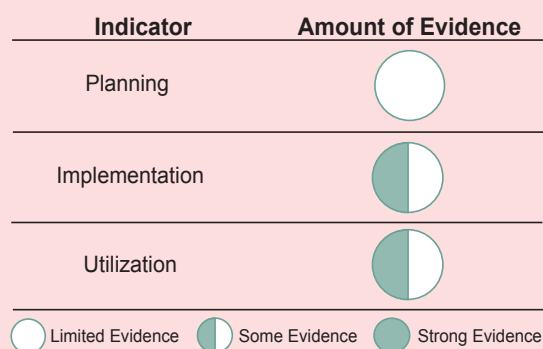
In contrast, the *Program Structure & Administration* domain showed a significant amount of variability in scores. While most states had some evidence, two states were on the high end while two were on the low end of the scoring range. Planning set many states apart in this area. Not only did some states lack a strategic plan, but some had no evidence of informal planning between program

What is Program Surveillance & Evaluation?

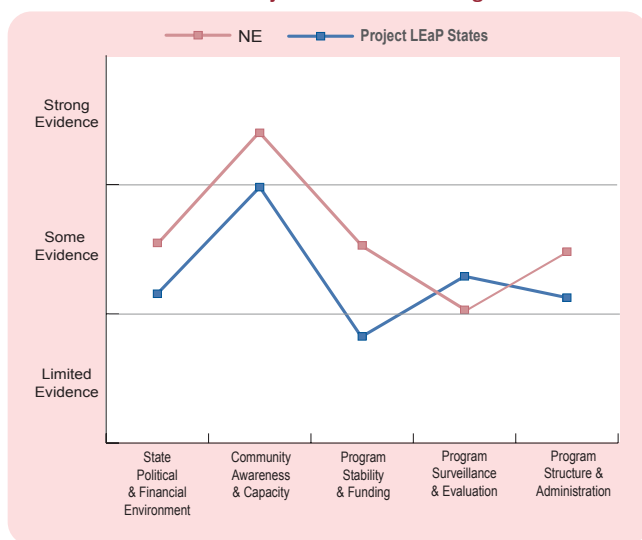
The dissemination of successful program results influences program continuation and support. Strong program surveillance and evaluation includes:

- Planning for surveillance and evaluation activities;
- Implementing these activities on a regular basis; and
- Using the information obtained to educate others.

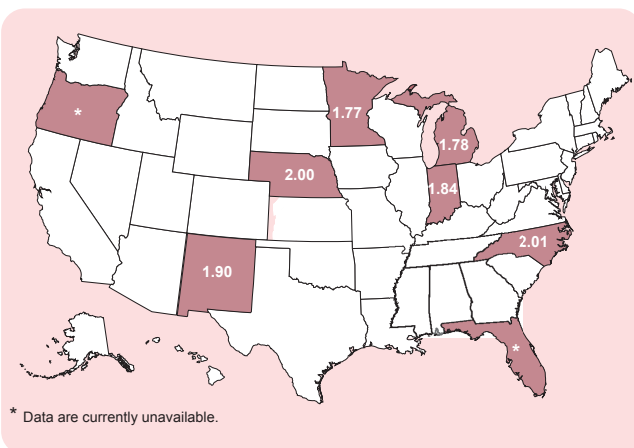
Nebraska Program Surveillance & Evaluation



Evidence of Sustainability: Nebraska Compared to Project LEaP State Average



Overall Sustainability Scores for Project LEaP States



partners. The same variance was seen in the *Program Surveillance & Evaluation* domain. Reasons for this included minimal surveillance and evaluation activities as a result of funding difficulties and not disseminating evaluation results as a program marketing strategy.

The *Funding Stability & Planning* domain also showed differences between states. Funding was inadequate, according to CDC guidelines, for all Project LEaP states. However, stability (*i.e.*, developing strategies to address funding changes and actively seeking varied funding sources) set some states apart from the rest.

Report Highlights

- Nebraska's had the highest level of sustainability of all Project LEaP states in three of the five sustainability domains.
- The program had conducted a significant amount of planning to combat the loss of program funding.
- Program partners had pooled resources to increase efforts and capacity despite reduced funding.
- Overall, the Project LEaP tobacco control programs' level of sustainability was most affected by limited program and fiscal planning.
- For the *Community Awareness and Capacity* domain, most Project LEaP states experienced a fair amount of local level participation and had a strong grassroots base.
- Across Project LEaP states, the amount of political and public support was generally low, independent of the states' overall fiscal health.

Check out the complete Project LEaP Nebraska Reports Series:

- ***Project LEaP Introduction & Series Highlights***
- ***The Tobacco Control Program Environment***
- ***The Tobacco Control Program Resources***
- ***The Tobacco Control Program Capacity***
- ***The Tobacco Control Program Sustainability***

Have questions or comments?
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