

The ‘What’ and ‘Why’ of Environmental Scans

In order to take effective action on an issue, you need to get a “lay of the land”. What does your coalition already know about the issue? Who has already taken action on the issue and what did they learn? Where are there gaps that no one is addressing? Answers to these questions then inform how your coalition will approach the issue. Environmental scans provide an opportunity to investigate issues by 1) **reviewing existing data**, 2) **collecting new information**, and 3) **engaging key partners**. They support decision making and inform project and/or policy work.

Using This Document

On page one of this resource, you will find the three phases of an environmental scan process and their corresponding steps. Pages 2-3 contain a worksheet to support your planning, implementation, and analysis/reporting efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN PHASES AND STEPS

PHASE

1

PLANNING



- 1 Identify the purpose/why
- 2 Identify a project leader and champions
- 3 Develop your timeline and incremental goals

PHASE

2

IMPLEMENTATION



- 4 Determine what data you need to collect
- 5 Identify and engage partners
- 6 Gather information

PHASE

3

ANALYSIS & RESULTS



- 7 Analyze data
- 8 Summarize results
- 9 Present and share results

As a training and technical assistance provider for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP), the American Cancer Society (ACS) Comprehensive Cancer Control Initiatives team is pleased to share this coalition resource.

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PHASE 2: IMPLEMENTATION

5 Identify the partners you need to engage/engagement plan:

Partner Name: <i>(e.g., The ACS)</i>	Contact Name: <i>(e.g., Dr. Knudsen)</i>	Contact Email: <i>(e.g., First.Last@cancer.org)</i>	Engagement Purpose: <i>(e.g., Identify breast cancer screening priority areas)</i>

PHASE 3: ANALYSIS & REPORTING

7 8 Analysis/Reporting Considerations

- Remember your research questions, what did you want to know?
- Keep it actionable.
- Based on how you plan to use the information, determine how to group your findings.
- In many cases you can plan on using descriptive statistics to summarize your data.
- Keep it visual, use graphs and tables to display your data.

Need support thinking through your analysis? Here are two resources from the CDC that give more information:



[Quantitative Analysis Resource](#) | [Qualitative Analysis Resource](#)

9 Presenting Findings

Frame your presentation around your key takeaways:

Our audience needs to know...

Consider your audience:

- What do they already know?
- What will they need explained to understand your key takeaway?
- Why does this information matter to them?
- What do you want them to do with this information?