

# CERC STRATEGIC PLAN: FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT

*Increasing Health Equity and Improving Health Outcomes  
through Sustainable Translational Research, Community  
Engagement, Collaboration, and Capacity Building*

**FOCUS ON  
SUSTAINABILITY  
AND SOCIAL IMPACT**



## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	iii
Message from the Provost .....	iv
Message from the School of Nursing Dean.....	v
Message from the CERC Director (Interim) .....	vi
Abbreviations/Acronyms .....	vii
Context for CERC’s Strategic Plan Development .....	1
CERC’s Foundation .....	1
Research Studies and Research Support .....	1
Research Dissemination .....	1
Community Engagement.....	2
Capacity Building, Mentoring, and Training .....	2
CERC’s Current Status and Possibilities.....	2
The Strategic Planning Process .....	3
Stakeholder Engagement.....	3
CERC’s Vision.....	4
CERC’s Mission.....	4
Core Values .....	5
Core Beliefs .....	6
SWOT Analysis.....	7
Strengths .....	7
Weaknesses .....	7
Opportunities.....	7
Threats .....	8
Strategic Priorities.....	9
Strategic Priorities and Related Strategic Goals .....	10
Structure of Plan.....	11
Action Plan for Strategic Priority 1: Sustainability .....	12
Action Plan for Strategic Priority 2: Community Engagement .....	17
Action Plan for Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building .....	21
Action Plan for Strategic Priority 4: Collaboration and Partnerships.....	28
Action Plan for Strategic Priority 5: Translational Research .....	32

Resource Needs .....36

    Financial Resources.....36

    Staffing Resources .....36

    Operating Resources .....36

Communication Plan for Implementation .....37

Approach to Strategic Plan Evaluation .....38

Closing Statement.....39

References .....40

## Acknowledgements

The successful completion of this strategic plan is a result of the collaboration of primary, secondary, and key stakeholders who served on CERC’s Core Strategic Planning Group (CSPG). These individuals attended meetings, engaged in robust discussions, and participated in work sessions. Throughout the development of the strategic plan, eight (8) CSPG meetings were convened, and additional work sessions were held to review elements of the plan with a smaller working group. Though the schedule was aggressive, CSPG members were committed to the process. Without their active engagement, the plan could not have been completed and would not reflect the quality output that the plan epitomizes. Special acknowledgement is given to CERC Research Assistant Ariana Athanase for her contributions.

Additionally, at various stages as the plan took shape, efforts were made to engage a broad cross-section of stakeholders to solicit feedback on drafts of the document. The feedback received also helped to improve aspects of the drafts that were unclear, thus strengthening the final document. For all who took time out of their busy schedules to review one or more drafts of the strategic plan, we say “Thank you”.

Finally, the support and guidance of Institutional Research and Planning and the feedback provided to further improve the strategic plan are acknowledged.

### Members of the Core Strategic Planning Group

Name	Agency	Role
Ariana Athanase	UVI - CLASS	Psychology major – OEK campus; CERC Student Research Assistant (MARC/RISE Program)
Allison Callwood	CERC	Administrative Specialist/Recorder
Gloria B. Callwood	UVI SON; CERC	Adjunct faculty; Senior Research Associate
Alexanne Carr	UVI - CLASS	Psychology major – AAS campus; former CERC Student Research Assistant (MARC/RISE Program)
E. Aracelis Francis	Member, Virgin Islands Board of Social Work Licensure (2021-2024)	Former CERC Research Associate (Retired UVI Associate Professor of Social Work)
M. Beverley Lansiquot	UVI SON	Dean, SON
Suzette Lettsome	UVI SON	Assistant Professor, SON
Noreen Michael	UVI-CERC	Research Director/Research Associate Professor/Interim Center Director
LaVerne E. Ragster	UVI CERC	Senior Research Associate; President Emerita, UVI
Janis Valmond	VIDOH	Deputy Commissioner, Health Promotion; former Research Coordinator, CERC; current CERC client
Azriel Williams	UVI - CLASS	Psychology major – AAS campus; former CERC Student Research Assistant (RISE Program)

*\*Note: CERC acknowledges Mitchell Neaves (Institutional Advancement), Louis E. Petersen, Jr. (Cooperative Extension Service), and Janet Turnbull-Krigger (Virgin Islands EPSCoR) who were invited to serve on the CSPG. However, while they each expressed a desire to serve and their support of CERC and the process, they were unable to participate actively and fully due to other obligations.*

## Message from the Provost

*Forthcoming. Will be included once feedback has been received from the UVINext Committee and points made have been addressed.*

## Message from the School of Nursing Dean

In my role as Dean of the School of Nursing (SON), it is my pleasure to support the Caribbean Exploratory Research Center (CERC) in the launching of its first strategic plan, *2022-2026 Strategic Plan: Focus on Sustainability and Social Impact*. CERC's work over the past decade and a half has been supported primarily by grant awards from the National Institutes of Health, through the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. While that work was shaped, in part, on funding priorities and identified health priorities for the Territory at the time of the responses to the funding opportunities, CERC's current strategic plan offers a greater opportunity for the Center to be proactive in its work, engage stakeholders, and continue its focused efforts to inform healthcare policy and practice in the Territory.

The SON looks forward to engaging with CERC as it implements its strategic plan by participating in capacity building opportunities as well as community engagement and research efforts. I extend an invitation to you, as a stakeholder, to also engage with CERC as we move forward with the work of reducing health disparities, increasing health equity, and contributing to improved overall health outcomes for residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

I look forward to engaging with you as we support CERC on its journey of implementing this strategic plan.

Mary Beverley Anne Lansiquot, DNP, RN  
February 2022

## Message from the CERC Director (Interim)

CERC is pleased to share its first strategic plan with stakeholders within and outside the University of the Virgin Islands as well as with stakeholders within and outside the U.S. Virgin Islands. CERC's *2022-2026 Strategic Plan: Focus on Sustainability and Social Impact* centers on five strategic priorities: Sustainability, Community Engagement, Capacity Building, Collaboration and Partnerships, and Translational Research. This strategic plan sets forth a clear roadmap and blueprint to guide CERC's efforts over the next five years.

Importantly, CERC's strategic plan supports two of the three fundamental pillars of *UVI's Strategic Plan 2018-2023: Greatness Through Innovation*: research and community engagement. CERC's strategic plan provides a foundation to address these two pillars in an integrated fashion, particularly through the utilization of the Community-based Participatory Research approach to ensure engagement of the community in the translational research that CERC undertakes.

Further, CERC will meet its mission not only by a coalescing of UVI's fundamental pillars of research and community engagement, but also through expanded collaborations and partnerships and capacity building. The realization of these two strategic priorities will undergird the research and community engagement pillars.

Moreover, given the contributions that CERC has made in the past decade and a half, it is essential that the Center is sustained so that the research, community engagement, capacity building, and collaborations and partnerships can continue to yield outputs that impact health outcomes positively for all Virgin Islanders, but especially for vulnerable children and families. Ultimately, CERC hopes to be viewed as a beacon for residents, healthcare providers, human services providers, as well as policymakers. The transformational work that CERC intends to do will best be measured by the reduction in health disparities for members of the USVI community, improvement in health equity, and scholarly contributions that will tell the stories of members of the USVI community.

Finally, as we move forward with the implementation of this inaugural strategic plan, CERC invites primary, secondary, and key stakeholders to join us as we pursue our mission to *provide strategic, purposeful, responsible, and responsive translational research focused on the social determinants of health and will support capacity building for research among faculty, students, and community members* and, through our work and the impact and outcomes of our work, we realize our vision to *be an exceptional research center in the Caribbean advancing health equity through translational research*.

Noreen Michael, Ph.D.  
February 2022



## Abbreviations/Acronyms

ABBREVIATION/ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION	APPEARS FIRST ON PAGE NO.
BER	Bureau of Economic Research	3
BRFSS	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	21
CBPR	Community-based Participatory Research	2
CFVI	Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands	4
CGTC	Caribbean Green Technology Center	4
CHA	Community Health Assessment	12
CITI	Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative	22
Co-PI	Co-Principal Investigator	23
CSPG	Core Strategic Planning Group	iii
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services	1
DOI-OIA	Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs	1
DPNR	Department of Planning and Natural Resources	3
DPP	Department of Property and Procurement	12
DPW	Department of Public Works	3
ECC	Eastern Caribbean Center	3
ED	Department of Education	1
EPSCoR	Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research	4
FHC	Frederiksted Health Care, Inc.	3
GERS	Government Employees Retirement System	3
GVI	Government of the Virgin Islands	2
HR	Human Resources	15
HSRP	Human Services Research Partnership	19
IRB	Institutional Review Board	3
JFL	Juan F. Luis Hospital & Medical Center	3
LSS-VI	Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands	3
MOA/MOU	Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding	29
MPI	Multiple Principal Investigators	23
NHANES	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey	21
NHIS	National Health Information System	21
NIH	National Institutes of Health	20
NIMHD	National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities	1
NPR	National Public Radio	2
OSP	Office of Sponsored Programs	12
PDG B-5	Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five	21
PI	Principal Investigator	23
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Attainable, Realistic/Responsive, & Time-bound	11
SON	University of the Virgin Islands School of Nursing	1
SRMC	Schneider Regional Medical Center	3
STEEMCC	St. Thomas East End Medical Center Corporation	3
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	7
UVI	University of the Virgin Islands	1
UVICERC or CERC	University of the Virgin Islands Caribbean Exploratory Research Center	1
VIDE	V.I. Department of Education	3
VIDHS	Virgin Islands Department of Human Services	3
VIDOH	Virgin Islands Department of Health	3
VIHA	Virgin Islands Housing Authority	3
YRBS	Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System	21

## Context for CERC's Strategic Plan Development

### CERC's Foundation

The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) Caribbean Exploratory Research Center (UVICERC or CERC) is a research center within the UVI School of Nursing (UVI SON). UVICERC, established as a P20 research center under the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) in 2007, has compiled successful research and outreach experiences working with the public and private sectors in the USVI for over a decade. Through its various projects, CERC has demonstrated familiarity and competence with grant rules and procedures for the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), US Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs (DOI-OIA), and the US Department of Education (ED). CERC stopped receiving funding for operations when the NIMHD, under new leadership that began in 2016, discontinued funding smaller research programs (P20s).

The more than \$15 million in funding that has accrued to UVI related to CERC and its predecessor, the ExPORT Center, have provided opportunities for faculty, students, and community persons to actively engage in meaningful health-related research. This resulted in the direct employment of staff (research assistants, translators, students, and media artists) within the Center. CERC has demonstrated that at all stages of the projects undertaken to date, stakeholders were kept informed, constantly reminded of the value they bring to the project and provided with learning opportunities. CERC has been consistent about utilizing a process for project implementation that includes an emphasis on openness, fairness, and accountability directed at all participants.

CERC is a major and often the only local research entity focusing on research on health-related issues in the Territory. The focus of CERC's efforts over the past 14 years has been to seek and utilize opportunities, nationally, regionally, and locally to fulfill its mission to provide opportunities for research through a concerted focus on complex variables as well as the unique intersections of island history, context, culture, demographics, socioeconomic status, and other factors that might contribute to health disparities within the islands.

### Research Studies and Research Support

CERC has initiated and collaborated on a range of research studies as well as supporting pilot research projects over the past decade and a half. These studies have included: an Integrated Risk Reduction Intervention focused on victims of Intimate Partner Violence (clinical trial); women and adolescent abuse after a natural disaster; two other studies focused on intimate partner violence; studies that examined mental health, men's health, and women's health; multiple studies focused on diabetes, including *Understanding Transition to Insulin Resistance*; as well as studies that focused on cancer, adolescent obesity, and climate change and public health; and human services research focused, in part, on Head Start, Early Head Start, and preschool development.

### Research Dissemination

CERC has been strategic and effective with research dissemination activities, which span the convening of eight (8) Health Disparities Institutes that attracted nationally and internationally renowned scholars; the presentation of research (over 75 papers, posters, panels, or symposia) results at local, regional, national, and international conferences; and the publication of over 30 research articles (10 related directly to health and healthcare in the U.S.

Virgin Islands [USVI]) in 14 different refereed journals. CERC also received national coverage on National Public Radio (NPR) of the 2019 *Community Needs Assessment on the Impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on Vulnerable Children and Families in the USVI*.

### Community Engagement

CERC has been committed to community engagement from the inception of the Center. Examples of this commitment include the development of a Community Health Education Toolkit; the provision of Climate Change resources through: *MyHealth – What’s Climate Got to do with it?*; dissemination of health information at Agricultural Fairs on St. Croix and St. Thomas and Afternoon on the Green for over 10 years; and the facilitation of visits by Library of Medicine personnel to local secondary schools to discuss health disparities issues.

### Capacity Building, Mentoring, and Training

Another of CERC’s pillars has been capacity building, including mentoring and training. CERC was instrumental in having a Health Disparities course added to the UVI undergraduate curriculum. CERC also mentored emerging professionals (undergraduate and graduate); supported UVI student and faculty attendance and presentations at professional conferences; and facilitated students’ participation as contributing authors on scholarly manuscripts. Mentoring also included support for Region II Health Equity Council’s Emerging Scholars – five master’s level students supported by the Office of Minority Health who supported work that addressed health disparities issues in Region II, particularly related to the USVI and Puerto Rico. Four of the students received support to work on-site with CERC over several summers. Additionally, CERC provided training and experience in effective partnership and collaboration through consistent utilization of the Community-based Participatory Research approach (CBPR), transparency in interactions, and inclusion of partners and stakeholders in projects.

### CERC’s Current Status and Possibilities

Over the last six years, CERC has maintained its productivity by effectively utilizing project and contract funding. Despite a significant reduction in its full-time staff, CERC continues to demonstrate its adaptability. Though currently CERC is funded through local engagements with select agencies of Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) and other semi-autonomous entities and foundations, the Center’s reputation for outstanding, responsive, community-engaged research and projects has led to professionals both within and outside the Territory seeking to collaborate with CERC or have CERC collaborate with them on projects.

UVICERC has managed to guide, provide leadership where appropriate, and support the maturation of partnerships over time, while achieving project objectives under a wide range of conditions, including, but not limited to Territorial administration changes, understaffing of partners, hurricanes, and hurricane recovery periods, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Outputs have reflected a high level of attention to detail, rigorous communications with stakeholders and partners, and documentation of procedures and major interactions. The results have been positive feedback and responses to outputs and usage by a wide range of stakeholders within and outside of the Territory. Yet, given the ongoing climate issues, related disruptions, emergent public health crises, and CERC’s adaptability, there is more need for work around health disparities and issues linked to advancing health equity within the context of public health optimization in the Territory and the rest of the Caribbean, and CERC is well positioned to be a key contributor to meeting these needs.

## The Strategic Planning Process

CERC's strategic planning process has provided an opportunity for the Center to reflect on its history, take a critical look at its current status, and re-imagine its potential. In keeping with its commitment to stakeholder engagement, CERC invited several stakeholders to participate directly in the strategic planning process. Additionally, the process included identifying primary, secondary, and key stakeholders who will be engaged and impacted by the work of the Center.

### Stakeholder Engagement

Members of the CSPG held discussions to identify primary, secondary, and key stakeholders to be engaged during CERC's strategic planning process. Table 2, below, reflects stakeholders identified by CSPG members during initial brainstorming sessions as well as during the review process of the various drafts of the plan.

Representatives from all categories of stakeholders were requested to provide feedback on the penultimate version of the strategic plan. All feedback was positive in terms of the comprehensiveness and clarity of the strategic plan.

### CERC Stakeholders

Category	Stakeholders/Stakeholder Groups
<p><b>Primary Stakeholders</b></p> <p><i>Beneficiaries or targets of CERC services (especially linked to strategic plan activities)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UVI (faculty, staff, students, alumni)</li> <li>2. Virgin Islands Department of Health (VIDOH)</li> <li>3. Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (VIDHS)</li> <li>4. General public</li> <li>5. Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands (LSS-VI)</li> <li>6. St. Thomas East End Medical Center (STEEMCC)</li> <li>7. Frederiksted Health Care, Inc. (FHC)</li> <li>8. Juan F. Luis Hospital &amp; Medical Center (JFL)</li> <li>9. Schneider Regional Medical Center (SRMC)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Secondary Stakeholders</b></p> <p><i>Persons directly involved with or responsible for beneficiaries or targets of CERC services, activities, or outputs; persons whose jobs or lives might be affected by the strategic planning process or by CERC services and outputs</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deans and other UVI administrative personnel</li> <li>2. Healthcare providers</li> <li>3. V.I. Department of Education (VIDE)</li> <li>4. Virgin Islands Housing Authority (VIHA)</li> <li>5. Women's Coalition</li> <li>6. Family Resource Center</li> <li>7. Bureau of Economic Research (BER)</li> <li>8. VIDHS</li> <li>9. VIDOH</li> <li>10. UVI Eastern Caribbean Center (ECC)</li> <li>11. UVI Institutional Review Board (IRB)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Key Stakeholders</b></p> <p><i>Government officials &amp; policy makers; those who can influence others; those with an interest in the outcome of the strategic</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delegate to Congress</li> <li>2. Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR)</li> <li>3. Department of Public Works (DPW)</li> <li>4. The Eastern Caribbean Health Outcomes Network (ECHORN)</li> <li>5. Federal partners</li> </ol>

Category	Stakeholders/Stakeholder Groups
<i>planning process and CERC's services and outputs</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Funders</li> <li>7. Government Employees Retirement System (GERS)</li> <li>8. Legislature of the Virgin Islands</li> <li>9. Other GVI agencies (not previously identified)</li> <li>10. UVI Caribbean Green Technology Center (CGTC)</li> <li>11. UVI Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR)</li> <li>12. USVI Superior and Supreme Courts</li> <li>13. Community-based organization</li> <li>14. Foundations - to include Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands; St. Croix Foundation; St. John Foundation</li> </ol>

### CERC's Vision

CERC will be an exceptional research center in the Caribbean advancing health equity through translational research.

### CERC's Mission

CERC will provide strategic, purposeful, responsible, and responsive translational research focused on the social determinants of health and will support capacity building for research among faculty, students, and community members.

CERC will achieve this mission by:

- ✓ Establishing inter-disciplinary research teams.
- ✓ Collaborating with primary stakeholders in securing grant funds and conducting research studies.
- ✓ Engaging the community using the CBPR approach.
- ✓ Networking and collaborating with colleagues within and outside UVI and the Territory.
- ✓ Serving as an incubator for building research capacity for UVI faculty and students, and other emerging professionals.

## Core Values

**Accountability and Transparency:** We are accountable and open in administrative and operational activities and engage in the responsible conduct of research guided by established principles as we readily communicate research results.

**Collaboration and Teamwork:** We promote a cooperative working environment and value the contributions of all team members and partners to achieve optimal outputs.

**Cultural Competence:** We acknowledge and champion the awareness and acceptance of cultural differences and maintain a non-judgmental approach in relationships and interactions.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** We celebrate diversity and embrace inclusion in our endeavors.

**Excellence and Innovation:** We provide a premier resource for investigating and identifying relevant, creative solutions to issues important to the welfare of Virgin Islanders.

**Integrity:** We conduct ourselves in a principled, professional, ethical, and legal manner, with the highest degree of fairness, honesty, justice, and respect.

**Inquiry:** We value the exploration associated with building knowledge about phenomena of interest.

**Responsible Community Engagement:** We engage the community in research that is conducted to optimize the relevance, value, and benefits of research findings to them.

## Core Beliefs

We believe that ...



Cultural competence is a necessary element of responsive, responsible research.



Community-based participatory research produces grounded, relevant, critical data, and information.



Diversity and inclusion underpin quality research.



It is critical to engage in principled, best practices for information generation and dissemination.



USVI residents are entitled to quality research evidence that supports and increases equity in health care access.



Planning, communication, and evaluation support excellence in outputs.



Research provides strong training opportunities for students.



Research impacts the health and healthcare of people from diverse groups across the life span to support health equity.



## SWOT Analysis

Using key documents – to include annual reports, progress reports, and other administrative documents, the CSPG engaged in a situational analysis that addressed key questions and includes the completion of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that anchors the proposed strategic plan. The CSPG spent time discussing CERC’s historical underpinnings, much of which is captured, in summary form, in the Context section of the document. Discussions also revolved around current realities, including shifts in funding streams, recent disruptions, and current organizational and Territorial realities that have implications for the future of the Center.

The discussions yielded the list of strengths and weaknesses internal to CERC as well as the list of opportunities and threats, external to CERC, that must be considered, embraced, and/or addressed as the Center moves forward to achieve its mission and actualize its vision.

### Strengths

- Welcoming to student researchers, faculty, and other collaborators
- Competent, knowledgeable researchers
- Resilience
- Excellent work reputation
- Demonstrable evidence of a high level of community engagement
- Excellent track record in student engagement in human subjects research
- Success in securing funding from diverse sources
- Major source of research and research reports on determinants of health in USVI
- Consistent dissemination of research outputs on health-related issues through local, regional, national, and international conferences and publications in refereed journals.
- Significant experience with public and public-private partnerships and collaborations
- Championed the need to address health disparities and health disparities research to various stakeholder groups in the Territory.
- History of supporting cross-disciplinary faculty and student participation in research

### Weaknesses

- Insufficient and limited staff
- CERC continues to function with interim leadership (just three years).
- Lack of a sustainable/dependable funding source
- Lack of permanent space – CERC displaced since Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

### Opportunities

- To amplify the contributions, purpose, and value of CERC within and outside UVI
- To identify funding opportunities and diversify funding sources
- To build new alliances, collaborations, and partnerships and strengthen older alliances
- To expand the engagement of students in the research enterprise
- To establish a research training center for student researchers
- To provide and/or support internship (paid and unpaid) opportunities for students
- To influence and guide the development of and changes to USVI health policy
- To invite faculty engagement in health-related research projects



## Threats

- Watch list for UVI Next
- CERC leadership has not been formalized
- Limited funding and reduced Federal mechanisms through which to apply for funding
- Limitations of current office space and office equipment – furniture, equipment, and operating supplies lost because of Hurricanes Irma and/or Maria not yet replaced
- Insufficient recognition of the value of outputs and contributions to University and USVI community
- Lack of institutional support could significantly undermine efforts to rebuild and expand
- Interruptions of operations from natural hazards and other disruptions

## Strategic Priorities

Over the past several years, CERC has focused on three strategic priorities: translational research, community engagement, and capacity building. Through the strategic planning process, the Center has re-affirmed these three strategic priorities and added two others: sustainability and collaboration and partnerships.

### Sustainability

- Establish mechanisms to support the **sustainability** of CERC, the actualization of CERC's mission and the advancement of its vision.

### Community Engagement

- Establish formal and informal relationships with stakeholders, stakeholder groups, and the wider community in support of conducting responsive research that advances health equity and improves health outcomes.

### Capacity Building

- Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

### Collaboration and Partnerships

- Foster **collaboration, partnerships**, and cooperation among internal and external stakeholders which are critical to culturally competent research that advances health equity.

### Translational Research

- Establish mechanisms to support **translational research** that informs targeted interventions to increase health equity and improve health outcomes for USVI residents.

## Strategic Priorities and Related Strategic Goals

### Sustainability

- Annually, identify and respond to a minimum of two funding opportunities to support CERC's fiscal stability.
- Secure seed funding to support at least 33% CERC operations and staffing during Years 2, 3, and 4 of CERC's strategic plan.
- Identify and fill key positions needed to support CERC's viability and optimal operations.

### Community Engagement

- Establish CERC Community Advisory Council by the end of FY2021-2022.
- Develop at least one Community Toolbox annually over the life of the strategic plan.
- By FY2021-2022, establish a CERC Research Partnership.

### Capacity Building

- Annually, provide opportunities for student research assistants to develop and strengthen their research knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Annually, provide opportunities for interested faculty to participate in grant writing, research projects, and research dissemination.
- Annually, provide opportunities for CERC Research Partnership and Community Advisory Council members to receive CBPR training, participate in research projects, and engage in research dissemination.
- Bi-annually, host a health disparities/health equity institute in the USVI.

### Collaboration and Partnerships

- Develop an operational framework to foster and strengthen collaboration and strategic partnerships to support CERC's mission.
- Establish partnerships with key agencies and entities based on MOAs/MOUs to advance translational research opportunities.
- Establish networking relationships with research entities and other organizations to support and advance CERC's mission.

### Translational Research

- Establish a framework for engaging in translational research.
- Facilitate partners' and collaborators' understanding of the value of and need for translational research.
- Develop and implement translational research projects.

## Structure of Plan

Given that this is the first strategic plan that CERC has developed, it is also crucial that the plan is clearly rooted in CERC's history and that it conveys the current realities, while decisively articulating the Center's commitment to intentionally adding value to UVI's research enterprise while engaging in translational research to inform policy that expands health equity and contributes to improved health outcomes. Through the strategic plan development process, CERC has endeavored to ensure a strategic plan that is transformational and utilizes a structure that will facilitate and contribute to the focus, clarity, and viability of the strategic plan. CERC's strategic plan also seeks to enhance the "accessibility" of the plan to all who will be involved in its implementation.

CERC's strategic goals have been developed around strategic priorities, which have been established to move the Center towards actualizing its mission and realizing its vision. Strategic goals are further broken down into strategic objectives that will provide a time-bound framework within which to achieve delineated strategic goals. Strategic objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Attainable, Realistic/Responsive, and Time-bound (SMART).

For each strategic priority, goal statements are presented, followed by objectives that support the achievement of each goal. For each objective, there is then an enumeration of the action(s), data sources/system, baseline data (when available), responsible person(s), targets for quantitative indicators, and information on the frequency of monitoring to determine whether various objectives are achieved.

What follows are the Action Plans, as previously described. Action Plans are presented for each of the five strategic priorities. Immediately after each Action Plan, performance measures that would signal the achievement of the strategic goals associated with each strategic priority are presented. Performance measures are followed by a description of resource needs in support of achieving the delineated strategic goals.

Action Plan for Strategic Priority 1: Sustainability

**Strategic Priority 1: Sustainability** → Establish mechanisms to support the sustainability of CERC, the actualization of CERC's mission and the advancement of the vision.

**Goal 1.1.** Annually, identify and respond to a minimum of two funding opportunities to support CERC's fiscal stability.

**Objective 1.1.1.** Identify funding opportunities that align with CERC's vision and mission.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Review funding announcements from Federal and local governments as well as Foundations and non-profit entities; and review funded projects (federal government and foundations).	Grants.gov; NIH Reporter; key foundations; Virgin Islands Department of Property and Procurement website; local semi-autonomous agencies; nonprofit organizations' websites; UVI OSP	Research Director; Research Coordinator; Research Associates	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	At least three funding announcement sources reviewed at least twice weekly.	Currently Grants.gov is reviewed at least twice a month.
Identify potential funding opportunities to pursue.				At least two potential funding opportunities identified monthly.	Currently, at least one potential funding is identified every two months.
				Collaborators identified	CERC has developed prior grant applications with collaborators.
Arrive at agreement on opportunities to pursue.	Feedback from CERC Team members and targeted primary and secondary stakeholders.  Most recent USVI Community Health Assessment; current needs assessment reports	CERC Team and key collaborators and partners		At least one potential funding opportunity agreed upon quarterly.	No systematic data captured on agreed-upon funding opportunities.

**Objective 1.1.2.** Identify writing teams to develop grant applications and related required documents.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Establish writing team.	Document from Provost Component identifying faculty and faculty areas of expertise.  CERC Team	CERC Director Research Director	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	Writing team established within one week of agreement to pursue funding opportunity.	In the past, writing teams have not been established consistently.
Determine writing assignments.	Meetings with prospective writing team members.	Research Director Writing Team members		Writing assignments made.	

**Strategic Priority 1: Sustainability** → Establish mechanisms to support the sustainability of CERC, the actualization of CERC's mission and the advancement of the vision.

Develop Action Plan for completing grant applications.	Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) documents related to grant writing procedures and requirements Funding opportunity requirements and deadlines	Research Director with support from Research Associates and Administrative support staff		Action Plan completed and agreed upon by writing team. Action Plan implemented.	Action Plans have previously been developed and implemented.
--	---	--	--	--	--

**Objective 1.1.3.** During each fiscal year, complete and submit applications/required documents for at least two funding opportunities.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Implement Action Plan.	Funding opportunity documentation	Team Lead	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	One action plan completed per funding opportunity response. Review checklist developed and completed for each application completed.	Action Plans for developing responses to funding opportunities have not been consistently developed or implemented.
Review application elements against submission criteria.		CERC Director Research Director Team Lead		75% of applications (all elements) submitted within the two-day prior window.	
Submit all application elements to OSP Director two days prior to submission deadline.	OSP guidelines for responding to funding opportunities.	Research Director		Reviewer feedback from unsuccessful applications used to strengthen future applications submitted.	Over the past five years, the two-day timeline has not been met.

**Strategic Priority 1: Sustainability** → Establish mechanisms to support the sustainability of CERC, the actualization of CERC's mission and the advancement of the vision.

**Goal 1.2.** Secure seed funding to support at least 33% CERC operations and staffing during Years 2, 3, and 4 of CERC's strategic plan.

**Objective 1.2.1.** By Quarter 2, Year 1, develop draft seed money request proposal.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Develop proposal to request seed funding [Seed funding for staff @ \$150,000/year. Total \$450,000 (33% salary + fringe)].	CERC UVINext Reports	CERC Director CERC Research Director	Monthly, quarterly, and	Draft proposal completed by the end of Quarter 2, Year 1 (March 31, 2022).	Prior funding request documents in CERC files/archives.

**Strategic Priority 1: *Sustainability*** → Establish mechanisms to support the sustainability of CERC, the actualization of CERC's mission and the advancement of the vision.

Submit proposal for seed funding.	Prior funding request documents in CERC files/archives Salary information for former CERC personnel in various positions UVI pay schedules Information of cost of computers and related peripherals		annually (by fiscal year)		Salary information for former CERC personnel in various positions is available.
Provide additional information and/or clarification as requested by UVI Budget Committee, and Virgin Islands Legislative, and/or Executive branch(es).					

**Objective 1.2.2.** By Quarter 3, Year 1, submit seed money request proposal to UVI Budget Committee as well as Legislative and Executive branches of GVI.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Obtain support from SON Dean for submitting seed money proposals.	Prior requests for seed money to support CERC	CERC Interim Director	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	Seed money proposal submitted to SON Dean by	Information on key positions needed, salary levels, and other operating cost information is available from prior requests submitted for seed money to support CERC.
Upon approval, submit internal seed money proposal.				Dean's support received for seed money proposal.	
Follow appropriate procedures for submitting proposals to Legislative and Executive branches for funding consideration.				Proposal submitted to all entities by May 15, 2022.	

**Objective 1.2.3.** By Quarter 1, Year 2, develop and submit budget to Accounting Department based on seed money received UVI, Legislative, and/or Executive branches of GVI.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Develop a budget that reflects all sources of funding for CERC personnel and operations.	Current and prior year expenditure and reconciliation reports Current funding sources and levels Accounting Department guidelines	CERC Director Administrative Specialist	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	Budget, using required Accounting Department format, completed, and submitted within one week of receipt of seed funding.	N/A
Submit a budget that reflects full support for staff on hand as well as to cover operating supplies.				Budget reflects funding for key staff positions and submitted within required timeframe.	
Submit budget within timeframe specified by the Accounting Department.					

**Strategic Priority 1: *Sustainability*** → Establish mechanisms to support the sustainability of CERC, the actualization of CERC's mission and the advancement of the vision.

**Goal 1.3.** Identify and fill key positions needed to support CERC's viability and optimal operations.

**Objective 1.3.1.** By Quarter 2, Year 1, determine key positions needed to ensure viability of CERC to achieve strategic plan goals.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Prioritize key research positions to be supported by seed funding based on CERC Strategic Plan.	Prior CERC annual reports CERC current Strategic Plan	CERC Director Research Director Research Associates	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	Key technical and administrative positions identified.	CERC has previously had a Director & PI, Research Director, Research Coordinator, Research Associates, Program Administrator, and consultants who have supported the Center.
Identify technical support position(s) needed.					
Identify administrative support position needed.					

**Objective 1.3.2.** By Quarter 1, Year 2, use seed funding to fund identified positions.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Develop position descriptions in PeopleAdmin based on UVI Human Resources requirements.	Human Resources guidelines PeopleAdmin system	Research Director Administrative Specialist	Monthly & quarterly	Position descriptions developed as required, to include scope of responsibilities associated with each position.	CERC has on file position descriptions and key responsibilities for current and previously funded positions.
Determine scope of responsibilities to be supported by seed funds.	CERC Strategic Plan Existing CERC projects	CERC Director Research Director			

**Objective 1.3.3.** By Quarter 2, Year 2, hire staff for identified positions.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Post position announcements to PeopleAdmin.	Human Resources guidelines	CERC Director CERC Research Director	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (by fiscal year)	100% of identified positions posted within two weeks of securing seed monies.	CERC has extensive experience with using the PeopleAdmin system for posting positions and completing the selection and hiring process (based on UVI Human Resources requirements.)
Establish Selection Committee.	Available CERC personnel UVI Human Resources Department			At least 75% of committee members participate in the selection process.	
Complete hiring process.	Media outlets to advertise positions; PeopleAdmin – pool of candidates Human Resources guidelines			CERC Director; Human Resource Partner; SON Dean; Provost	



Performance Measures and Desired Outcomes for Goals in Support of Strategic Priority 1: Sustainability

<b>Goal Statement</b>	<b>Performance Measures <i>that will show that the goal has been achieved</i></b>	<b>Desired Outcomes <i>based on achievement of the goal</i></b>
<b>Goal 1.1. Annually, identify and respond to a minimum of two funding opportunities to support CERC’s fiscal stability.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A minimum of 25% of applications for Federal funding receive support.</li> <li>✓ At least two awards from Foundations or private entities over life of strategic plan.</li> <li>✓ At least five GVI funding awards over life of strategic plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Funding secured results in long-term sustainability of CERC.</li> <li>✓ Funding results in expansion of research endeavors and greater social impact of CERC research activities</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 1.2. Secure seed funding to support at least 33% CERC operations and staffing during Years 2, 3, and 4 of CERC’s strategic plan.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Seed funding secured for three-year period.</li> <li>✓ Short-term stabilization of CERC funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CERC’s value and contributions to UVI and the USVI community acknowledged through fiscal investment</li> <li>✓ CERC’s ability to continue addressing health disparities and support health equity through research remains possible</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 1.3. Identify and fill key positions needed to support CERC’s viability and optimal operations.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Critical research vacancies filled</li> <li>✓ Critical technical vacancies filled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CERC staffing at viable level to adequately address strategic goals and other ongoing Center maintenance activities.</li> <li>✓ Demonstrable evidence of value-added based on having viable staffing level within CERC</li> </ul>

## Action Plan for Strategic Priority 2: Community Engagement

**Strategic Priority 2: *Community Engagement*** → Establish formal and informal relationships with stakeholders and stakeholder groups across the districts in support of conducting research that advances health equity and improves health outcomes.

**Goal 2.1.** Establish CERC Community Advisory Council by the end of FY2021-2022.

**Objective 2.1.1.** By Quarter 3, Year 1, develop structure, inclusion criteria, and purpose statement document to guide CERC Community Advisory Council.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Review examples of community advisory council frameworks and policies.	Research centers and university centers	CERC senior staff; Communications Specialist	Quarterly and annually	List of appropriate examples of community advisory council frameworks and policies identified.	N/A
Produce draft written framework and guidelines for the CERC Advisory Council.				Draft written framework for advisory council completed.	N/A
Create a preliminary participants list from key community organizations and CERC collaborators and partners.	USVI community organization directories; list of CERC partners and collaborators			Preliminary list of participants for first CERC Community Advisory Council available for review and feedback.	Names of representatives of groups and organizations that would be potential members of the CERC Community Advisory Council.

**Objective 2.1.2.** By Quarter 2, Year 2, confirm members of the CERC Community Advisory Council.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Develop and implement communications strategy and an information package on CERC and the CERC Advisory Council for potential and new members.	CERC documents and draft Advisory Council Framework	CERC senior staff and Communications Specialist	Quarterly and annually	Communications Strategy developed Information packets produced.	N/A
Confirm members of inaugural Community Advisory Council.		CERC senior staff and Administrative Specialist		CERC Community Advisory Council members confirmed.	N/A

**Objective 2.1.3.** By Quarter 3, Year 2 and ongoing, convene CERC Community Advisory Council and commence activities.

**Strategic Priority 2: *Community Engagement*** → Establish formal and informal relationships with stakeholders and stakeholder groups across the districts in support of conducting research that advances health equity and improves health outcomes.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Plan and implement an inaugural CERC Community Advisory Council meeting.	CERC Advisory Council Framework	CERC senior staff and Communications and Public Relations Specialist	Quarterly and annually	Inaugural meeting convened.	N/A
Initiate review and formal approval of CERC Community Advisory Council framework and guidelines and development of initial and ongoing activities.	CERC Advisory Council Framework List of confirmed Council members	CERC Director and senior staff		Framework and guidelines document developed.	N/A
CERC Community Advisory Council meetings convened quarterly.	List of confirmed Council members	CERC Director; Administrative Specialist; Council Co-Chairs		Quarterly meetings convened.	N/A

**Strategic Priority 2: *Community Engagement*** → Establish formal and informal relationships with stakeholders and stakeholder groups across the districts in support of conducting research that advances health equity and improves health outcomes.

**Goal 2.2.** Develop at least one Community Toolbox annually over the life of the strategic plan.

**Objective 2.2.1.** Generate the guidelines and components to complete Community Toolboxes annually.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Identify list of possible topics and areas for Community Toolboxes and select one for initial effort.	Official data and information from local and federal sources including STEEMCC Needs Assessment; VIDOH Title V (MCH) and MIECHV Needs Assessments  Healthy VI 2030; Healthy People 2030  Current Federally Qualified Health Centers Uniform Data System (FQHC UDS) reports	CERC senior staff leader, CERC Communications Specialist, and Committee from CERC Community Advisory Council	Quarterly	Lists compiled.	CERC data outputs and activity reports FQHC UDS reports
Collect information and data as appropriate for specific topics and audiences.			Quarterly and annually	Information and data collected.	
Compile specific information and materials on selected topic and produce toolbox for effective use by stakeholders.				Materials compiled. Stakeholder feedback received on initial compilation.	
Develop and implement plan for dissemination and familiarization of content.				Dissemination Plan developed and implemented. Stakeholder feedback received on Toolbox.	

**Strategic Priority 2: *Community Engagement*** → Establish formal and informal relationships with stakeholders and stakeholder groups across the districts in support of conducting research that advances health equity and improves health outcomes.

**Goal 2.3.** By FY2022, establish a CERC Research Partnership.

**Objective 2.3.1.** By Quarter 4, Year 1 and ongoing, develop structure, inclusion criteria, and purpose statement document to guide CERC Research Partnership.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Review examples of research partnership frameworks and policies.	University research centers; HSRP-VI which was established within CERC in 2014	CERC Director and Senior staff	Quarterly and annually	Appropriate examples of research partnership frameworks and policies completed.	Human Services Research Partnership – Virgin Islands (HSRP-VI) established in fall 2014.
Produce draft written framework and guidelines for the CERC Research Partnership.				Draft written framework and guidelines completed.	Guiding principles developed for HSRP-VI.
Create a preliminary participants list from UVI faculty and CERC collaborators and partners.				UVI directories and participants lists from past and current collaborations and partnerships.	CERC senior staff and student Research Assistant

**Objective 2.3.2.** By Quarter 2, Year 2, confirm members of the CERC Research Partnership.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Generate a link to the CERC communications strategy to include the CERC Research Partnership as part of outreach to potential and new members.	CERC information and briefing on CERC Research Partnership HSRP-VI Quarterly Progress Reports; Annual Reports; Close-out Report	CERC Communications Specialist	Quarterly and annually	Integration of communication approaches and needs for research partnership made with CERC communications strategy.	
Invite university and community members to become members of the CERC Research Partnership.	Background materials; list of potential research partners	Director, Communications Specialist		Written invitations issued to selected university and community professionals and researchers to participate in Research Partnership.	

**Objective 2.3.3.** By Quarter 3, Year 2, and ongoing, convene CERC Research Partnership and initiate activities.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Plan and implement a foundational CERC Research Partnership meeting.	HSRP-VI documentation and sample correspondence; HSRP-VI meeting agendas	CERC Director and senior staff	Quarterly and annually	Plans completed for initial CERC Research Partnership meeting.	N/A

<b>Strategic Priority 2: <i>Community Engagement</i></b> → Establish formal and informal relationships with stakeholders and stakeholder groups across the districts in support of conducting research that advances health equity and improves health outcomes.					
Initiate review of goals and responsibilities of the partnership and the development of initial and ongoing activities.	Partnership Guidelines, CERC background information	Director, Office of Sponsored Programs		Goals and responsibilities of partnership reviewed, and initial activities developed and agreed on.	
CERC Research Partnership meetings convened quarterly.	List of confirmed Partnership members	CERC Director; Administrative Specialist; Partnership Co-Chairs		Quarterly meetings convened.	

Performance Measures and Desired Outcomes for Goals in Support of Strategic Priority 2: Community Engagement

<b>Goal Statement</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b> <i>that will show that the goal has been achieved</i>	<b>Desired Outcomes</b> <i>based on achievement of the goal</i>
<b>Goal 2.1. Establish CERC Community Advisory Council by the end of FY2021-2022.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Two-thirds of the invitees agree to be part of the CERC Community Advisory Council</li> <li>✓ 60% of CERC Community Advisory Council participate in the first and ongoing meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CERC demonstrates an effective and engaged Community Advisory Council.</li> <li>✓ The Community Advisory Council facilitates the effectiveness of CERC CBRP and translational projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 2.2. Develop at least one Community Toolbox annually over the life of the strategic plan.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Community members and targeted groups regularly access online Community Toolboxes, as measured by tabulated “hits”.</li> <li>✓ At least one Community Toolbox produced annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Community Toolboxes are used by other organizations and groups in the USVI.</li> <li>✓ Government agencies and private sector community programs request, use, and recommend CERC Community Toolboxes.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 2.3. By FY2022, establish a CERC Research Partnership.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Research Partnership includes a diverse group of engaged primary, secondary, and key stakeholders.</li> <li>✓ The Research Partnership results in at least four discussions annually regarding a joint project or proposal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The CERC Research Partnership is an example of community and university and community stakeholders working successfully together.</li> <li>✓ The Research Partnership facilitates and supports joint research projects in the Territory.</li> </ul>

## Action Plan for Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building

<b>Strategic Priority 3: <i>Capacity Building</i></b> → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.					
<b>Goal 3.1.</b> Annually, provide opportunities for student research assistants and mentees to develop and strengthen their research knowledge, skills, and abilities.					
<b>Objective 3.1.1.</b> By Quarter 3, Year 1, develop summer research training program for undergraduate students.					
<b>Action</b>	<b>Data Sources/System</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Frequency of Monitoring</b>	<b>Indicator(s) of Progress</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>
Develop a summer training program for student research assistants.	<a href="#">Entering Research: A Curriculum to Support Undergraduate and Graduate Research Trainees</a>	Research Director Faculty collaborators (CLASS; NUR; CSM)	Quarterly and annually (by fiscal year)	Training program developed.	No previous structured training program has been developed or implemented, though CERC personnel have mentored <u>over 20</u> graduate and undergraduate students over the years.
In partnership with the UVI Emerging Caribbean Scientists program, recruit/invite student research assistants to participate in summer training program.	NIH Data Science Training Resources ( <a href="#">Data Science Training Resources</a>   <a href="#">Data Science at NIH</a> ) Emerging Caribbean Scientists program participants interested in social science and biomedical research			Student recruitment completed. Student research assistants hired.	
Implement training program.	Training Program materials			Training program implemented. Program evaluated. Student research activities continue beyond the training program and after graduation from UVI.	
<b>Objective 3.1.2.</b> By Quarter 4, Year 1 and ongoing, provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research activities.					
<b>Action</b>	<b>Data Sources/System</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Frequency of Monitoring</b>	<b>Indicator(s) of Progress</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>
Support student research assistants' completion of CITI Human Subjects Research certification.	UVI Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)	Research Director Assistant Director, OSP	Quarterly & annually	Student Research Assistants' CITI certificates on file	All CERC student researchers have received human subjects' certification.
Provide opportunities for student research assistants to participate in research projects utilizing secondary data.	DHHS publicly available data sets ( <i>i.e.</i> , BRFSS, NHIS, NHANES, YRBS)*; CERC data sets: YRBS; HSRP; PDG B-5; CFVI Needs Assessment	Research Director Research Project Teams		Student Research Assistants engaged in research projects Students share research activities	At least 50% of CERC student researchers have used CERC secondary data for research studies.

**Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building** → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

Provide opportunities for student research assistants to participate in human subjects' research.	CERC funded research projects Emerging Caribbean Scientists program student researchers			Students' role in human subjects research clearly delineated	Student researchers have participated in human subjects' research.
---	--	--	--	--	--

**Objective 3.1.3.** By Quarter 2, Year 2 and ongoing, provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research dissemination activities.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Support student research assistants' development of posters for presentation at UVI student symposia and UVI Research Day.	UVI MARC/RISE/HBCU-UP training materials for faculty mentors <u>Entering Research: A Curriculum to Support Undergraduate and Graduate Research Trainees</u> Other resources for mentors available electronically (particularly from institutions that focus on supporting research mentors)	CERC Research Director and faculty involved in the training program.	Quarterly and annually	Students present research (poster or podium presentations) at local (UVI Research Day) and national meetings (such as ABRCMS).	CERC has historically provided this support; CERC student research assistants and mentees have won awards for posters presented at national meetings.
Support student research assistants' development of posters for presentation at national student meetings.				Students have specifically assigned roles for contributing to manuscript development and are included as authors on manuscripts submitted for publication consideration.	Some former CERC student research assistants have been included as authors on manuscripts published based on CERC research findings.
Include student research assistants as authors on manuscripts developed to disseminate research findings.					

**Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building** → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

**Goal 3.2.** Annually, provide opportunities for interested faculty to participate in grant writing, research projects, and research dissemination.

**Objective 3.2.1.** By Quarter 3, Year 1, and ongoing, send communication to academic deans and other key individuals in the Academy inviting faculty to participate in grant writing teams with CERC members.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Identify possible funding opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration.	Funding opportunities published by Federal agencies, Foundations, GVI* agencies and other entities	Research Director; Research Associates;	Monthly, quarterly, and	Listing of identified funding opportunities E-copies of funding announcement guidelines	Information on possible funding opportunities routinely shared.



<b>Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building</b> → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.					
		student Research Assistants	annually (fiscal year reporting)		
Each semester, invite teaching and research faculty members to serve on grant writing teams.	Contact information for Academic deans and heads of units with research faculty members	Research Director Administrative Specialist		E-mails to Deans and Provost Emails to MARC/RISE faculty mentors	E-invitations have been shared with Academic Deans and sometimes faculty members.
Establish writing teams and develop application(s) in response to funding opportunities.	Provost database of faculty and faculty specializations List of collaborating institutions and organizations	Research Director; Research Associates		List of team members Writing team roles and responsibilities defined.	Minimal, systematic use of writing teams outside CERC personnel

**Objective 3.2.2.** By Quarter 2, Year 1, and ongoing, invite faculty to participate in CERC’s Summer Student Research Training Program.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Invite faculty members to serve as mentors in CERC Summer Student Research Training Program.	Provost database of faculty and faculty specializations MARC/RISE/HBCU-UP* listing of faculty mentors	CERC Research Director	Quarterly, annually	Invitations transmitted Invitation accepted by at least two faculty members annually	N/A
Invite faculty to serve on team to develop student research training program.					

**Objective 3.2.3.** By Quarter 2, Year 2, and annually thereafter, invite faculty to serve in key role(s) on translational research projects.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Invite faculty to serve in research role on funded projects (for example, PI, Co-PI, MPI, Investigator).	Funding opportunities published by Federal agencies, Foundations, GVI agencies and other entities Identified viable funding opportunities	CERC Director Research Director Administrative specialist	Monthly, quarterly, annually	Documentation of E-invitations and E-acceptances	CERC has historically and consistently issued E-invitations to faculty. Most have declined due to teach load, other research responsibilities, and/or service responsibilities.
Provide opportunities for faculty to serve on research teams to participate in research dissemination activities.	List and support documents for agreed-upon funding opportunities	CERC Director Research Director		Documentation of faculty roles in research projects and dissemination activities	

*\*Note: Please note that abbreviations used in the "Data Sources/System" columns on p. 21 and pp. 23-24 are spelled out in the table that captures Abbreviations/Acronyms on p. vii.*



**Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building** → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

**Goal 3.3.** Annually, provide opportunities for CERC Research Partnership and Community Advisory Council members to receive CBPR training, opportunities to participate in research projects, and opportunities for research dissemination.

**Objective 3.3.1.** By Quarter 4, Year 1, and ongoing, implement CBPR training cycle for CERC Research Partnership and CERC Community Advisory Council members.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Hire consultant to provide CBPR training.	Recommendation from Federal partners	CERC Director Research Director	Quarterly and annually (fiscal year)	CBPR Consultant engaged	CBPR previously engaged to support Federally funded project; training sessions scheduled; and training provided
Develop calendar of CBPR training sessions.	Professional services agreement with consultant	Research Director Council and Partnership Co-Chairs		Training calendar developed and agreed-on.	
Implement CBPR training.	Based on training calendar	CBPR consultant		CBPR training launched. CBPR training completed.	

**Objective 3.3.2.** By Quarter 2, Year 2 and ongoing host listening sessions, focus group discussions, and/or community forums/townhall meetings to solicit feedback from the community regarding critical/emergent issues related to health disparities and health outcomes for USVI residents.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Host one session quarterly to solicit feedback from stakeholders – primary, secondary, and key stakeholders.	VIDOH CHA; STEEMCC Needs Assessment; VIDOH Title V (MCH)* and MIECHV Needs Assessments Healthy VI 2030; Healthy People 2030 Gray literature and published data about USVI health concerns	Research Director and senior CERC personnel	Quarterly and annually	75 – 100% of sessions convened.	Previously, CERC has held targeted sessions with the two Federally Qualified Health Centers and two hospitals.
At each quarterly Research Partnership and Community Advisory Council meeting, include an agenda item that focuses on issues related to health disparities and health outcomes.	Meeting agenda	Research Director and Co-Chairs of CERC Research Partnership and CERC Community Advisory Council.		Agenda item included on 100% of agendas.	N/A
Utilize feedback from listening sessions, focus group discussions, community forums/town hall meetings and quarterly meetings to prioritize funding opportunities based on local issues related to health	Transcripts from sessions with stakeholders Minutes from Partnership and Council quarterly meetings			60%+ alignment between funding opportunities pursued and priority disparities and health issues identified by the USVI community.	

**Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building** → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

disparities and health outcomes of USVI residents.					
<b>Objective 3.3.3.</b> By Quarter 1, Year 3 and ongoing, engage CERC Research Partnership and Community Advisory Council members in translational research projects.					
Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
During quarterly meetings or through special meetings, as needed, provide Partnership and Council members with opportunities to engage in research projects.	Funding opportunity information Meeting materials – research project information	CERC Director Research Director Council and Partnership Co-Chairs Research team members	Quarterly and annually (fiscal year)	Research Opportunities included on meeting agendas Meeting minutes capture discussion of research opportunities and possible roles for community members	Previous Research Partnership members have received updates on research projects and have been invited to be actively involved in research projects.
Coordinate with OSP for CITI certification access for community members.	Links to CITI certification materials	OSP Assistant Director		Council and Partnership members have CITI Human Subjects Research certificates.	While previously offered, no community members received Human Subjects certification.

**Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building** → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

**Goal 3.4.** Bi-annually, host a health disparities/health equity institute in the USVI.

**Objective 3.4.1.** By Quarter 3, Year 2, and bi-annually, thereafter, determine focus and scope of proposed health disparities/health equity institute.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Identify possible funding opportunities to support conferences/institutes related to health equity/health disparities.	Funding opportunities published by Federal agencies, Foundations, GVI agencies and other entities	Research Director; Research Associates; student Research Assistants	Monthly, quarterly, and annually (fiscal year reporting)	Listing of identified funding opportunities E-copies of funding announcement guidelines	Information on possible funding opportunities routinely shared.
Establish grant writing team to respond to funding opportunity/opportunities.	Contact information for Academic deans	Research Director Administrative Specialist		E-mails to Deans and Provost	E-invitations have been shared with Academic Deans and sometimes faculty members.

**Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building** → Establish mechanisms to support developing and strengthening the research knowledge, skills, and abilities of UVI students, faculty, and the USVI community.

Develop application(s) and related documents (appendices) and submit to OSP for processing/submission.	Provost database of faculty and faculty specializations	Research Director; Research Associates		List of team members Schedule of meeting times and meeting notes. Writing team roles and responsibilities defined. Grant applications completed timely.	Minimal, systematic use of writing teams outside CERC personnel
--	---	---	--	--	---

**Objective 3.4.2.** By Quarter 2, Year 3, and ongoing secure funding to host health disparities/health equity institutes.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Submit funding request for a conference planning grant to support the proposed institute.	Feedback from collaborators and partners	Grant writing team	Annually	Funding mechanism identified. Grant application completed and submitted. Funding secured.	CERC has successfully convened 8 Health Disparities Institutes.
Establish and launch institute planning committee.		Planning Committee		Themes developed and agreed-upon.	CERC has successfully conference planning grant funds.
Establish institute themes.				Invitations sent; confirmations received; Call for Abstracts sent; submissions received.	
Invitations sent to proposed keynote speakers and “Call for Abstracts” disseminated electronically.	Planning committee program materials				

**Objective 3.4.3.** By Quarter 4, Year 3, and bi-annually thereafter, host a health disparities/health equity institute.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Program committee formed and institute program developed.	Funding opportunities published by Federal agencies, Foundations, GVI agencies and other entities Identified viable funding opportunities	CERC Director Research Director Administrative specialist	Monthly, quarterly, annually	Program developed. Registration completed. Keynote speakers confirmed.	CERC has historically and consistently issued E-invitations to faculty. Most have declined due to teaching load, other research responsibilities, and/or service responsibilities.
Institute convened.	List and support documents for agreed-upon funding opportunities	CERC Director Research Director		Venue secured. Sessions noted. Key roles assigned.	
Primary, secondary, and key stakeholders, as well as external collaborators actively engaged in institute.	Various databases of primary, secondary, and key stakeholders Database of collaborators	Program Committee		Institute evaluation Registration information	

Performance Measures and Desired Outcomes for Goals in Support of Strategic Priority 3: Capacity Building

<b>Goal Statement</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b> <i>that will show that the goal has been achieved</i>	<b>Desired Outcomes</b> <i>based on achievement of the goal</i>
<b>Goal 3.1. Annually, provide opportunities for student research assistants to develop and strengthen their research knowledge, skills, and abilities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Students' research knowledge, skills, and abilities strengthened.</li> <li>✓ Increased number of students participate in the CERC Summer Student Research Training Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Students are more comfortable and confident engaging in the research enterprise.</li> <li>✓ Students' interest and desire to engage in health disparities research increases.</li> <li>✓ Increased number of students going to graduate school and pursuing degrees in biomedical research fields.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 3.2. Annually, provide opportunities for interested faculty to participate in grant writing, research projects, and research dissemination.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cross-disciplinary grant writing teams are in place</li> <li>✓ Cross disciplinary research projects being implemented</li> <li>✓ Cross-disciplinary scholarly outputs being completed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increased number of UVI faculty engaged in the grant writing enterprise.</li> <li>✓ Increased number of UVI faculty engaged in translational research.</li> <li>✓ Increased number of UVI faculty engaged in research dissemination activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 3.3. Annually, provide opportunities for CERC Research Partnership and Community Advisory Council members to receive CBPR training, opportunities to participate in research projects, and opportunities for research dissemination.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Stakeholders outside of the UVI setting receive CBPR training</li> <li>✓ Stakeholders outside of UVI participate in research project</li> <li>✓ Stakeholders outside UVI participate in dissemination of research findings at professional meetings and through publications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Research capacity of USVI community members increased.</li> <li>✓ Increase in the number USVI community members who understand the principles of CBPR.</li> <li>✓ Increased use of research findings by providers to inform healthcare policy and practice.</li> <li>✓ Increase in the number of USVI community members who consider research findings when addressing health disparities and improving health outcomes for USVI residents.</li> <li>✓ Increase in the number of USVI community members who look to CERC for guidance in understanding the implications of research findings for increasing health equity and overall health outcomes for the USVI resident.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 3.4. Bi-annually, host a health disparities/health equity institute in the USVI.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Funding received to host institute.</li> <li>✓ Keynote speaker secured.</li> <li>✓ Abstracts received in support of institute theme.</li> <li>✓ Institute convened.</li> <li>✓ Attendees include stakeholders from all stakeholder groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Research capacity and understanding of USVI community members increased.</li> <li>✓ Expansion of research collaboration through university-community partnerships.</li> <li>✓ UVI students and faculty showcase research related to USVI residents</li> <li>✓ Translational research findings highlighted.</li> </ul>

## Action Plan for Strategic Priority 4: Collaboration and Partnerships

<b>Strategic Priority 4: <i>Collaboration and Partnerships</i> → Foster collaboration, partnerships, and cooperation among internal and external stakeholders which are critical to culturally competent research that advances health equity.</b>					
<b>Goal 4.1.</b> Develop an operational framework to foster and strengthen collaboration and strategic partnerships to support CERC's mission.					
<b>Objective 4.1.1.</b> By Quarter 2, Year 1, institute written guidelines for formal and informal collaborations and partnerships.					
<b>Action</b>	<b>Data Sources/System</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Frequency of Monitoring</b>	<b>Indicator(s) of Progress</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>
Review examples of frameworks for collaborative agreements.	Digitally accessible examples of collaborative frameworks, agreements, and funding.	CERC Director and senior staff	Quarterly and annually	Examples of frameworks for collaborative Draft framework reviewed and ranked for usefulness.	Current CERC and other UVI center agreements and examples from other organizations that include reports and evaluations
Develop a draft framework, including guidelines for a risk assessment, for review with key stakeholders.				Draft framework reviewed by stakeholders.	N/A
Generate a plan for stakeholder involvement addressing monitoring of agreements and dissemination of outputs.				Plan for stakeholder involvement and communications generated.	N/A
<b>Objective 4.1.2.</b> By Quarter 2, Year 1, produce and implement a written, transparent communication strategy for the development and utilization of the collaboration/partnership framework.					
<b>Action</b>	<b>Data Sources/System</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Frequency of Monitoring</b>	<b>Indicator(s) of Progress</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>
Create agreed-on guidelines to effectively communicate with stakeholders and prospective partners.	Sample communication strategies,	CERC Director; Communications Specialist	Quarterly and annually	Guidelines for effective communications with stakeholders	Usage data for various communication modes and costs
Determine best sites and modes for making a collaboration framework available or accessible to stakeholders.				Best sites and modes to support stakeholder accessibility determined.  Tracking of website metrics to include: Pageviews; New vs Returning visitors; and Time on Site	Availability and costs of various communications instruments and approaches

**Strategic Priority 4: *Collaboration and Partnerships*** → Foster collaboration, partnerships, and cooperation among internal and external stakeholders which are critical to culturally competent research that advances health equity.

**Goal 4.2.** Establish partnerships with key agencies and entities based on MOAs/MOUs to advance translational research opportunities.

**Objective 4.2.1.** By Quarter 2, Year 2, convene a foundational meeting to orient and explore specific partnership goals with selected stakeholders.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Identify and contact list of all appropriate stakeholders.	Lists of CERC current and historic collaborators and partners	CERC senior staff	Quarterly and annually	Stakeholder list created.	Information on funding and other requirements utilized in past relationships
Share the CERC Collaboration and Partnership Framework with key stakeholders.				CERC Collaboration and Partnership Framework shared with stakeholders.	
Plan and complete facilitated inaugural meetings with invited stakeholders to identify areas of collaboration and possible partnerships.	CERC Collaboration and Partnership Framework; list of identified stakeholders	Facilitator CERC senior staff		Facilitated inaugural meeting, with invited stakeholders organized and implemented.	Numbers of stakeholders invited and participation levels

**Objective 4.2.2.** By Quarter 4, Year 2, generate an agreement of understanding for approval by key stakeholders to address mutual goals.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Draft proposal of areas of importance to all parties, including level of commitment by partners, evaluation and monitoring plans, and appropriate training.	CERC Collaboration and Partnership Framework, proposals from CERC and invited stakeholders. CERC Communications Strategy	CERC senior staff; Director, OSP; UVI Legal Counsel	Quarterly and annually	Proposal of areas of importance to Parties drafted.	Outputs of CERC's Collaboration and Partnership inaugural meeting
Share draft proposal for MOAs/MOUs with identified partners for feedback, finalization, and approval by appropriate Parties.	Draft Collaboration and Partnership proposals			Draft proposal for MOA/MOU with partners shared for feedback, finalized, and approved.	
Monitor and evaluate the collaboration or partnerships as outlined in the MOA/MOU in accordance with the budget, monitoring and evaluation plan guidelines in the Collaboration and Partnership Framework.	Finalized Collaboration and Partnership Agreement (MOA/MOU), CERC Collaboration and Partnership Framework	CERC senior staff		Evaluation plan for MOA/MOU developed and initiated.	Outputs and data generated by the Collaboration and Partnership agreement

**Strategic Priority 4: *Collaboration and Partnerships*** → Foster collaboration, partnerships, and cooperation among internal and external stakeholders which are critical to culturally competent research that advances health equity.

**Goal 4.3.** Establish networking relationships with research entities and other organizations to support and advance CERC's mission.

**Objective 4.3.1.** By Quarter 4, Year 2, Objective statement produce and implement a written, transparent communication strategy for the development and maintenance of a network with appropriate research organizations and researchers.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Review examples of research networks and their guidelines as background information for outreach approach.	Samples of research network guidelines	CERC senior staff and Student Researchers		Background information on research networks reviewed.	N/A
Develop a list of potential research organizations and researchers for the initial outreach effort.	List of research organizations; list of researcher associations in Caribbean Region, researchers with ties to UVI and CERC	CERC senior staff and Student Researchers	Annually	List of potential participants in network developed.	N/A

**Objective 4.3.2.** By Quarter 1, Year 3 and ongoing, invite participants and initiate the CERC Research Network.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Invite selected organizations and researchers to participate in a CERC Research Network.	List of organizations and researchers that have areas of study and missions overlapping with CERC	CERC senior staff and Administrative Specialist	Quarterly and annually	Invitations sent and acceptances received.	N/A
Convene a virtual orientation meeting.		CERC Director and Administrative Specialist		Orientation meeting convened.	N/A
Produce a quarterly newsletter to the CERC Research Network reporting on opportunities and news.	CERC and partner reports	CERC senior staff CERC Communications Specialist		Newsletter produced and disseminated quarterly beginning in Quarter 2, Year 3.	N/A



## Performance Measures and Desired Outcomes for Goals in Support of Strategic Priority 4: Collaboration and Partnerships

<b>Goal Statement</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b> <i>that will show that the goal has been achieved</i>	<b>Desired Outcomes</b> <i>based on achievement of the goal</i>
<b>Goal 4.1. Develop an operational framework to foster and strengthen collaboration and strategic partnerships to support CERC's mission.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CERC Collaboration and Partnership Framework received feedback from 40% of stakeholders in review process.</li> <li>✓ The diversity of the communications outreach provided multiple avenues for feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Members of the Research Partnership speak of the benefits of their involvement publicly.</li> <li>✓ The Research Partnership facilitates the effectiveness of translational research projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 4.2. Establish partnerships with key agencies and entities based on MOAs/MOUs to advance translational research opportunities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 60% of invited stakeholders attended the initial meeting to advance the CERC Collaboration and Partnership initiative.</li> <li>✓ At least 2 MOA/MOUs resulted from the initial meeting of stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CERC improves access and success with projects under agreements of collaboration and partnership with government and community agencies.</li> <li>✓ Government agencies and community groups seek to formalize agreements with CERC.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 4.3. Establish networking relationships with research entities and other organizations to support and advance CERC's mission.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 50% of invited stakeholders participate in the foundational meeting of the CERC Research Network.</li> <li>✓ 60% of the attendees at the CERC Research Network inaugural meeting become members of the network.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The CERC Research Network is seen as a space of transparency and tangible benefit to participants.</li> <li>✓ Network participants publicly speak of benefits to belonging to the group.</li> </ul>



## Action Plan for Strategic Priority 5: Translational Research

**Strategic Priority 5: *Translational Research*** → Establish mechanisms to support translational research that informs targeted interventions to increase health equity and improve health outcomes for USVI residents.

**Goal 5.1.** Establish a framework for engaging in translational research.

**Objective 5.1.1.** By the end of Quarter 3, Year 1, determine the elements of translational research that are most relevant to CERC's mission.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Review previous CERC research and projects to inform future research decision making and deeper understanding of VI health disparities.	CERC research outputs Other resources: Publications and web sites <a href="https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/translational/framework-details/index.cfm">https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/translational/framework-details/index.cfm</a>	Research Director, (Consultant and additional staff depending on funding)	Quarterly	Relevant CERC research projects are identified.	CERC data
Prioritize areas of research foci.	Based on researched information			Research focus areas identified	N/A
Identify possible grants to support engagement in Translational Research.	Federal, Foundation, and other funding opportunity announcements		Monthly, quarterly, and annually	Documentation of grant opportunity searches	N/A

**Objective 5.1.2.** By the end of Quarter 4, Year 1, develop a translational research framework document.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Use CERC research and project information to create framework document.	Previous research	Research Director, (Consultant and additional staff depending on funding)	Quarterly	Draft framework document developed.	No previous Translational Research framework developed
Secure consensus on framework content.				Agreement on content of framework document	N/A

**Strategic Priority 5: *Translational Research*** → Establish mechanisms to support translational research that informs targeted interventions to increase health equity and improve health outcomes for USVI residents.

**Goal 5.2.** Facilitate partners' and collaborators' understanding of the value of and need for translational research.

**Objective 5.2.1.** By the end of Quarter 1, Year 2, develop educational materials on translational research.

**Strategic Priority 5: *Translational Research*** → Establish mechanisms to support translational research that informs targeted interventions to increase health equity and improve health outcomes for USVI residents.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Create PowerPoint and other materials that speak to translational research application in the VI.	Publications, websites CERC outputs	Research Director, (additional staff depending on funding)	Monthly	Educational tools produced.	N/A
Determine platform for information sharing (in person, virtual meetings, Podcasts etc.).				Settings for information sharing determined.	N/A

**Objective 5.2.2.** By the end of Quarter 2, Year 2, develop a communication strategy for ongoing information sharing.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Determine what communication tools will be most effective.		Research Director, (additional staff depending on funding)		Communication tools selected.	N/A
Create electronic mailing lists separately and combined for partners and collaborators, and stakeholders.	Contact information for previously identified persons and entities	Administrative support person	Monthly	Mailing lists compiled with adjustments as needed.	N/A
Create a quarterly newsletter.	CERC activities		Quarterly	Newsletters published.	N/A
Develop a feedback survey to determine effectiveness of communication activities.		Research Director, (additional staff depending on funding)		Implementation of quarterly surveys	N/A

**Objective 5.2.3.** By end of Quarter 2, Year 2, orient stakeholders to Translational Research.

Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Convene stakeholders meeting		Research Director (additional staff depending on funding)	Quarterly and annually	Meetings held as scheduled.	N/A
Invite primary and secondary stakeholders to participate	List of stakeholders			Stakeholders are invited.	N/A
Share the translational research framework with stakeholders				Stakeholders receive Framework document.	N/A
Plan and execute the stakeholders meeting to further inform about translational research				Meetings held as scheduled.	N/A

<b>Strategic Priority 5: <i>Translational Research</i></b> → Establish mechanisms to support translational research that informs targeted interventions to increase health equity and improve health outcomes for USVI residents.					
<b>Goal 5.3.</b> Develop and implement translational research projects.					
<b>Objective 5.3.1.</b> By end of Quarter 2, Year 2, obtain collaborators/stakeholders agreement on focus of research project.					
Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Determine stakeholders/collaborators' perceptions of important areas of focus.	Stakeholders and Collaborators	Research Director (additional staff depending on funding)	Quarterly and annually	Stakeholders' views of important research foci are documented.	CERC needs assessments and other health research data
Obtain agreement on research project focus.				Stakeholders' consensus on research projects	
<b>Objective 5.3.2.</b> By end of Quarter 3, Year 2, design and obtain appropriate agreements and approvals for translational research project.					
Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Develop the design and methodology for the research project(s).	Prior research in the area(s) of focus	Research Director (additional staff depending on funding)	Quarterly and annually	Research project design complete. Manual of Operations developed.	N/A
Obtain any necessary Memoranda of Agreement/Memoranda of Understanding for access to subjects.				MOA/MOUs executed.	N/A
Obtain IRB approvals if necessary.				IRB approval received for each human subject study undertaken.	N/A
<b>Objective 5.3.3.</b> Implement translational research project.					
Action	Data Sources/System	Responsible Person(s)	Frequency of Monitoring	Indicator(s) of Progress	Baseline Data
Collect data.	Primary and/or secondary data sources	Research Director and team (additional staff depending on funding)	Monthly, quarterly, annually	Data are being collected.	N/A
Analyze data.	Collected data			Data analysis completed.	N/A
Document findings.	Collected data and results of analysis			Research report completed.	N/A
Disseminate findings.	Primary and/or secondary data sources			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Presentation to key Virgin Islands entities impacted by findings</li> <li>✓ Presentations at professional meetings</li> <li>✓ Publication in refereed journal</li> </ul>	N/A

## Performance Measures and Desired Outcomes for Goals in Support of Strategic Priority 5: Translational Research

<b>Goal Statement</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b> <i>that will show that the goal has been achieved</i>	<b>Desired Outcomes</b> <i>based on achievement of the goal</i>
<b>Goal 5.1. Establish a framework for engaging in translational research.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The most relevant research focus areas have been identified.</li> <li>✓ The framework for Translational Research has been developed and agreed upon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The translational research framework is used in research and other courses at the University.</li> <li>✓ The translational research framework supports collaborations and proposal development effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 5.2. Facilitate partners' and collaborators' understanding of the value of and need for translational research.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Educational material on Translational Research has been developed.</li> <li>✓ Information on Translational Research has been shared with stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The translational research framework is used in research and other courses at the University.</li> <li>✓ The translational research framework supports collaborations and proposal development effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 5.3. Develop and implement translational research projects.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collaborators and stakeholders' agreement on focus of research project(s).</li> <li>✓ Research project(s) are designed, and all agreements and approvals are in place.</li> <li>✓ Implementation of research projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Government agencies and community groups seek to participate in translational research projects.</li> <li>✓ Public and Private sector organizations request translational research data to be included in policy development.</li> <li>✓ CERC collaborations and opportunities to work with the VI community increase.</li> </ul>

## Resource Needs

As with all strategic plans, CERC's strategic plan's success will be dependent on the availability of the resources needed to support the plan's implementation. Thus, what follows is a summarization of the key resources needed to ensure the success of the strategic plan. Resources are identified by goal and in four key areas – financial, human, operating, and time.

### Financial Resources

To successfully implement this strategic plan, CERC will need an infusion of funds. These funds are needed to enable the hiring of additional key staff needed to support the strategic goals delineated in the plan. With only two current full-time personnel – Research Director (who is also serving as the Interim Center Director) and an Administrative Specialist, who is providing administrative support for the Center, funding is needed to fill key positions to ensure the success of the strategic plan. In addition to personnel, funding is also needed to engage at least two consultants [CBPR training, Community Toolbox development, evaluation, and capacity building) and part-time and temporary staff to support the development of grant applications during the first two years of the strategic plan implementation. Additionally, additional funding will be needed to procure operational supplies, equipment, statistical software, data visualization software, and to sustain software licenses over the life of the strategic plan. *[Financial resources needed: \$454, 455 (annually) for salaries; \$65,000 consultants (5 years); \$75,000 operating (5 years): Total funding anticipated for full implementation (5 years): \$2,412,275]*

### Staffing Resources

Key additional staff are urgently needed to support the implementation of CERC's strategic plan. Specifically, at least one research associate is needed to support the implementation of the strategic plan, particularly in the areas of the development of funding applications, the development of the initial Community Toolbox, and the establishment and engagement of the CERC Community Advisory Board and CERC Research Partnership. A research analyst will also be needed to support the implementation of the Summer Student Research Training Program as well as support the development of applications in response to funding opportunities. Two other positions critical to the successful implementation of the CERC strategic plan are a Communications Specialist and a Program Manager. The Communications Specialist will be essential to the work to be done in the areas of Community Engagement, Collaboration and Partnerships, and the conduct of translational research. The Program Manager will manage strategic plan outputs and ensure adherence to timelines, review draft outputs, and support dissemination of outputs in various formats to stakeholder groups. *[Seed funding for staff sought is \$150,000 (33% salary and fringe) annually; \$450,000 over three years, specifically Years 2, 3, and 4]*

### Operating Resources

Successful implementation of CERC's strategic plan will also require additional operating resources, including computer hardware, with essential operating systems and other peripherals, data visualization software, data capture, management, and analysis software and required licenses, grant writing resources, and materials and supplies to establish Summer Student Research Training Program. *[\$60,000 over the life of the strategic plan]*

## Communication Plan for Implementation

CERC recognizes that communication is critical to the success of its strategic plan. As the inaugural strategic plan for the Center, it will be crucial to inform primary, secondary, and key stakeholders of CERC's efforts and progress in addressing each of the five strategic priorities and the strategic goals and objectives that have been delineated to address each strategic priority.

Built into the strategic plan is the direct engagement of primary, secondary, and key stakeholders as CERC addresses each strategic priority. As such, through participation on the CERC Community Advisory Council, the CERC Research Partnership, grant writing activities, research projects, research dissemination efforts, and community engagement activities, stakeholders will be continuously informed about strategic plan activities, accomplishments, and challenges.

CERC intends to utilize various modes of communication to share information with stakeholders. Specifically, quarterly meetings will be convened for members of the Community Advisory Council as well as members of the Research Partnership. At those meetings, updates on progress on key strategic plan goals will be shared. Additionally, Newsletters and Factsheets will also be developed quarterly and made available on CERC's microsite. Further, through outputs such as the annual Community Toolbox, stakeholders will have the ability to access information developed for targeted members of the community, addressing health issues of concern to residents.

Communication with stakeholders will also include the engagement of community members in listening sessions, townhall meetings/community forums, and targeted focus group discussions linked to the achievement of strategic plan objectives. CERC also plans to take advantage of relationships that have been established with the media for sharing information, when appropriate.

Required administrative reports will be completed at regular intervals, as needed – monthly, quarterly, and or annually. These reports will be submitted to funding agencies as well as internal units – School of Nursing, Provost, UVINext Committee.

Once CERC secures additional staff, a more detailed Communication Plan will be developed and appended to the Strategic Plan document.

## Approach to Strategic Plan Evaluation

As important as effectively communicating information about progress and accomplishments related to the CERC strategic plan implementation, it is essential that CERC also puts in place a mechanism to determine, on an ongoing basis, the success of the plan implementation. To do so, it will be important to engage in both process and outcome evaluation activities. By focusing on both process and outcome evaluation, CERC will be able to pivot, when needed, if challenges arise with processes throughout the strategic plan implementation cycle. Indicators of progress, delineated within each of the five Action Plans presented (one for each strategic priority) will also inform the process evaluation activities. The process evaluation information will be used to inform adjustments to the strategic plan, and these would then be documented in progress reports – monthly, quarterly, and or annually, over the life of the strategic plan.

Performance measures will serve as a starting point for the outcome evaluation work, and it is anticipated that at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, interim outcome evaluation reports will be completed, with a final evaluation report, documenting overall outcomes of the strategic plan being completed within six months of the end of the strategic plan (by March 31, 2027).

By engaging in both process and outcome evaluation activities, CERC hopes to address the following key areas:

1. Monitor progress towards the achievement of the 15 strategic goals (3 per strategic priority) delineated in the strategic plan.
2. Identify the need for modifications to the strategic plan over the life of the plan.
3. Identify the need to modify strategies for engaging primary, secondary, and key stakeholders over the life of the strategic plan.
4. Determine whether the components of the strategic plan, as delineated in the action plans, are producing the desired outcomes.
5. Identify opportunities for improvement of CERC processes and services.
6. Affirm the value and quality of the outputs generated by CERC and the positive social impact of the community engagement, capacity building, and research efforts.

CERC proposes the use of an inclusive process that will engage primary, secondary, and key stakeholders in the evaluation process. CERC also proposes to engage the services of a consultant to complete the overall evaluation of the strategic plan implementation.

## Closing Statement

CERC's FY2022-FY2026 Strategic Plan: Focus on Sustainability and Social Impact provides a blueprint and roadmap to guide the Center's efforts to inform healthcare policy, practice, and health outcomes by focusing on the five strategic priorities identified, specifically: sustainability, responsible community engagement, capacity building, collaboration and partnerships, and translation research. CERC recognizes the need to work collaboratively and intentionally with primary, secondary, and key stakeholders to ensure the social impact of the Center's undertakings as well as to sustain and eventually expand the work and reach of the Center. Grounded in the support of the UVI leadership and current collaborators and partners, CERC will continue to engage in and contribute to research that informs and transforms.



## References

- Ahmed, S.M. & Palermo, A.S. (2010). Community engagement in research: Frameworks for education and peer review. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(8), 1380-1387).
- Cooke, J. (2005). A framework to evaluate research capacity building in health care. *BMC Family Practice, 6*(44), (11pp). Retrieved from <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2296/6/44>
- Eastern Tennessee State University: *Strategic Plan for Research 2015*. Retrieved from [etsu\\_strategic\\_plan\\_for\\_research.pdf](#)
- University of the Virgin Islands. *Greatness through Innovation: UVI Strategic Plan 2018-2023*. Retrieved from [Greatness Through Innovation \(uvi.edu\)](#)
- Holzer, J.K., Ellis, L., & Merritt, M.W. (2014). Why we need community engagement in medical research. *Journal of Investigating Medicine, 62*(6), 851-855.  
DOI:10.1097/JIM.0000000000000097.
- Mineo, D. & Chapman, C. (nd). Strategic planning in research organizations (PPT). McGladry; SRA International. Retrieved from [Strategic Planning in Research Organizations \(umt.edu\)](#)
- National Institutes of Health. Minority Health and Health Disparities Strategic Plan 2021-2025: Taking the Next Steps. Retrieved from [Minority Health and Health Disparities Strategic Plan 2021-2025: Taking the Next Steps. - Search \(bing.com\)](#)
- World Health Organization. (nd) *WHO Community Engagement in Research*. Module 6: Community Engagement, (110-125). Retrieved from [WHO Community Engagement in Research. Module 6: Community Engagement, - Search \(bing.com\)](#)