

**Beyond The Finish Line – Planning For Sustainability**  
**September 18, 2013**  
**Webinar Transcript**

OPERATOR: The broadcast is now starting. All attendees are in listen-only mode.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: All right. It looks like we are ready to begin. Hello, everyone. And welcome to today's webinar. This is provided for FYSB grantees and their sub-awardees. Our webinar today is called "Beyond the Finish Line: Planning for Sustainability." Our event today is designed to reinforce and to expand upon the sustainability tip sheet that was shared with your primary grantee contacts. I believe it was last week.

So I'd like to take a moment just to briefly introduce this topic, just by saying that we know that project sustainability can be a great challenge in the field of public health. Oftentimes, the public supports these innovative and necessary projects and services, but many times these efforts are not sustained if the primary funding source is discontinued.

So today, we'll be talking about what sustainability means for your adolescent pregnancy prevention initiative and what steps you can take to increase the odds of sustainability.

My name is Stephanie Guinosso. I am a Program Manager with ETR Associates. And I have with me today Jill Elnicki. She is a Senior Program Specialist with ETR. And she'll be assisting us with some of the interactive components of today's webinar. Jill and I both are part of the training and technical assistance team for FYSB's adolescent pregnancy prevention grantees. And we've had the pleasure of interacting with many of you at various trainings and through individual TA.

So in the work that Jill and I and the rest of our training and technical assistance team have done -- and for me in the past year since I've been on this project, we've heard from many of you through the training and technical assistance needs assessments, through the conference and training evaluations and just informally through some conversations, that sustainability planning is a critical need.

We have also heard that many of the grantees have given a lot of thought to what is needed to sustain their work in adolescent pregnancy prevention. But fewer grantees have really developed a concrete sustainability plan. And so we know that this is important for achieving sustainability.

So our goal for today's webinar is to respond to this need. So Jill and I have dug deep into the sustainability literature. And we wanted to pull out some useful tips, tools, and strategies that all of you can use on your project to plan for sustainability if you have not done so already or just to help the planning along further.

So we have three objectives that we'd like to accomplish today. And these are that by the end of today's webinar, we hope that participants will be able to explain the concept of sustainability and why it's important, state the factors that promote project sustainability and develop concrete strategies for increasing your project sustainability.

So we have done our best to make this webinar be participatory and interactive. However, there are a lot of you in attendance today. So please bear with us if we don't get to all of your comments and questions. But there are several ways that we would

like to invite you to participate. So to pose questions or to share comments, we'd like for you to use your question box tool. So on the right-hand side of your screen, you should see a little toolbar. And within that, there is a tab for questions.

So if you enter your questions or your comments there, the presenters will be able to see them. All of the participants will not be able to see what you type in. But where we ask for some brainstorming and some ideas, we'll do our best to read all of those comments and to reflect them back to you. So that you can hear what your other grantees or other participants are seeing or thinking.

We'll also be asking you to answer some poll questions and to raise your hand. So if you want to raise your hand, you should see again on that toolbox, there's a little hand raised icon that has an up arrow. And if you just click on it now just to make sure that everyone is seeing that icon – go ahead and raise your hand just so I know that you know where to find it. I see that hands are being raised. We've got about a third of you at this point. Go ahead and keep raising your hands if you haven't done so already. Let's see if we can get all of those hands raised. We'll be using this tool throughout the webinar. So I just want to make sure that you guys know where to find it. About two-thirds of you. Checking to see if you're paying attention as well.

All right. So it looks like most of you have figured out the hand raising tool. There are still a few of you haven't. If you're having any questions with the technical side of things, you can type your question into that question box. And someone who's on the line will be able to help you with that.

Alright. Go ahead and put your hands down for now. I'd also like to remind you that your phones are on mute. So during periods of discussion, if you raise your hand, we can unmute your lines if you would like to speak. And I'd also like to let you know that for some of the interactive portions of today's webinar, Jill and I will be switching screens. And so when that happens, that generic Go To Webinar screen that you may have seen when you first logged on will pop up onto your computer. So know that you're not getting booted off the webinar. It's just a brief moment while we transfer screens. So I just wanted to give you a little heads up on that.

Alright. Let's begin with a poll. It looks like you're not seeing what I am seeing just yet. I'll keep talking until it catches up. So we'd like to begin with a poll. This is really just to get a sense of where you are with respect to thinking about sustainability for your FYSB funded adolescent pregnancy prevention project.

So if you're sitting with teams, you can answer this question as a team. Or if you're sitting by yourself, you can provide your own individual response based on your perspective. I'm going to pull the poll up now. Alright. So the poll question is to please check the option that best describes your project. It looks like you guys may not be seeing this just yet. Alright. So we may need to switch to your computer if a delay is happening. Do you guys see the poll yet?

FS: I guess not. I can surely try it on my end, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: Alright. So here we go. Now our poll is there. So please check the option that best describes your project. So we've got a little bit about sustainability. We

have a clear vision for what we want to sustain. Or we are taking steps to sustain our project. So go ahead and begin completing the poll now.

Alright. It looks like about half of you have voted. So we'll wait a little longer, get a few more responses in there. Okay. We have almost all of you. Alright. And the final votes are coming in. I'm going to go ahead and close the poll. If you didn't get your response in there, go ahead and do it now.

So what we see based on these poll results, about half of you have thought a little bit about sustainability, 21 percent of you have a clear vision for what we want to sustain. And then about a third of you are taking steps to sustain your project.

So this is kind of what we expected to see. And I think these results just reflect as well that many of you are kind of working under different contexts. And some of you are further into your funding than others and may have given more thought to what is needed to sustain your project. And some of you may just be thinking about this for the first time.

So we hope by the end of this webinar that we'll give you some ideas and strategies to strengthen your sustainability planning effort. And for those of you who are at the bottom and you're already taking steps to sustain your project, we'd like to invite you to share some of those strategies and successes towards the end of the webinar so that we can contribute to our collective learning.

So what do we mean by sustainability? Many of you are operating under different implementation structures. And as a result, each of your respective projects will likely define sustainability in a different way. So before we move forward, we'd like to hear first from you about how you would define sustainability. So don't peek onto the next slide. I know you have these in your handouts. And just take a few moments to type into the question box some words or phrases that come to mind when you think about sustainability.

Alright. And I am going to read these out here. So I'm seeing: keep going, long-lasting, ongoing, diverse funding, keeping it running smoothly, ongoing, steady funding, lots of dollar signs, literally dollar signs, ongoing, keeping your program strong. We have partnership, a lasting project, revenue generating, the ability to continue for a long time.

So a lot of these are looking at longevity, ongoing, having that secure funding to make sure that your project continues. Great. We have tons of responses coming in. I see buy-in, integrating the program into an existing system. Building. So not just continuing, but maybe building your efforts. Alright. So long-term for the community, program success. That's a good one. Next steps, transitioning to new levels, new phases.

Great. So the last of the ideas coming in. And again, bear with me. There's a lot of you. So I'll try to hit the key points that I see. But you hit on some of the key phrases that come to mind when we think about sustainability.

So this next slide, and it looks like you might have a little delay. So you can follow along on your handout if I'm talking ahead of you guys. But this next slide shows some

definitions of sustainability that come out of the literature. When you go to the literature, there really is no single agreed upon definition of sustainability that you find.

So some of the definitions that we've pulled out, and these are also in the tip sheet that your primary contact received last week. So some definitions that we see are the capacity of an organization to achieve long-term success and stability and to serve its clients and consumers without the threat of losing financial support or quality of services. Another definition is the ability to continue services after a funding period is over and to ensure that the organization becomes a permanent part of community resources. And then a third definition is the institutionalization of a project as an integral part of an organization.

So some of the key phrases that come out of these definitions are long-term success without threat of financial loss, permanency, institutionalization. It becomes integral.

So these are just things to keep in mind. And as we move forward with this webinar, we'll be referring to sustainability as the ability to maintain your program and its benefits over time, and specifically beyond this period of funding that you're receiving from FYSB.

Alright. Seeing that you're not seeing what I'm seeing, Jill, I might transfer over to you. I think that I'm just getting a delay. Is that okay? And then you can just keep the slides moving forward?

JILL ELNICKI: Absolutely.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: Alright. Let's do that. So I'm changing to you as a presenter.

Appreciate your patience everyone. There's always a technical glitch. Let's see here.

All right, Jill. I am making you the presenter.

JILL ELNICKI: Okay.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: And so we should be on slide eight which is levels of sustainability.

JILL ELNICKI: I'm ready whenever it comes. Miranda, I will need you to look at the question box as we move along. Okay.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: There we go. I think that will work a little bit better. So advance it to one more slide, Levels of Sustainability. Just kind of moving along with the idea of defining what it is that we mean by sustainability. These are some other ideas that came out of the literature. This is a way of thinking about sustainability in terms of these varying levels.

So the first level is called continuation and this is really referring to the ongoing implementation of your project or your services under your existing host organization. So essentially this means that your project would acquire new funding to replace your initial seed funding from FYSB, to ensure that your current services continue. And often this is the level of sustainability that is most commonly thought of.

So, for example, your current FYSB funding may be used to hire health educators to go into a school or into a community-based setting to implement an adolescent pregnancy

prevention curriculum. And so in order to continue this project at the end of your current funding cycle, additional funding would likely be required to support this type of implementation model.

So institutionalization is a little bit different. And here I'll be speaking about it in terms of shifting the ownership of the project to another organization or to multiple organizations in the community so that the project becomes formally integrated into that organization's operating procedures.

So if we were to carry that same example forward, if your current funding is used to hire an outside educator to implement a curriculum within a school or community setting, institutionalization would mean that you begin shifting that responsibility to the school or the agency so that it becomes integrated into that agency.

So this might include local or school policies that support the implementation of the project, having dedicated staff, staff training and funding within those agencies to ensure their ongoing implementation. So just a different way of thinking about sustainability.

And then this third box here on the right, dissemination, this is taking it even one step further and saying that you're going beyond the implementation of the project in your particular setting that you're working now towards disseminating your project to other sites or adapting it to serve new services. So just getting a broader reach.

So looking at all three of these, I just want to reiterate that there's no single correct model or correct definition of sustainability. And in some cases, your project, when you

begin doing your vision for sustainability, you may have each of these components involved in your sustainability plan. So you may continue to implement some of your project components and then you may move towards shifting some of them to another organization.

Alright. Let's go to the next slide. So given all these different definitions, why is it important for us to talk about sustainability. And I think for many of us this may seem obvious. We are meeting a need in our respective communities and we want to ensure that those needs continue to be met. In addition, we also want to make use of the valuable financial and non-financial resources we put into our project. So as many of us know, our project typically needs a certain amount of time and maturity before the benefits really accrue.

So with your federal funding, many of you have assessed the needs of your community. You've selected and adapted programs to meet those needs. You've hired and trained staff. You've established an infrastructure. So all of that takes time. And with our federal funding, we want to make sure that we make the most of these investments by ensuring their continued implementation where we can.

And then the third thing that I wanted to touch upon is this idea of maintaining trust. So I think that part of the investing in our communities involves the time and energy spent building relationships and trust with our community partners. And so I know in my own experience, I used to do work with the juvenile justice setting. And for some of the facilities that I was trying to get into, it took me a really long time to build those relationships so that they were open to the services that we wanted to provide.

And so once these relationships are formed, you really want to nurture them so that they can continue. And so too often when our funding disappears, these projects end. And that can influence the relationship that we built over time.

So these are just a few of the reasons that I think that it's important to discuss sustainability. Using your question box, are there any other reasons that sustainability is important to you or your team?

Let's see what we've got here. Go ahead and enter into the question box. I'm not seeing anything coming in. So, to continue serving youth. Right. So making sure that you're meeting the needs of the youth that you're serving. Continuing to make progress on a challenge. So, that's a good one. Sometimes these things can't be achieved. Our goals may not be able to be achieved in the way that we want them in the time that we're given. So things take additional time to really tackle a challenge.

So, keeping those hired for the program employed. Right. Many of us want to keep our jobs too. So that's a good thing to think about when you're thinking about what sustainability means for you. Continue doing the good work. Right. To lower pregnancy rates and raise academic achievement I would assume.

Great. So many successes with youth have the potential to reverse. So even though our efforts may be decreasing pregnancy rates, we want to continue with that work so that we don't see things when the trends start to change.

Okay. I see systemic change and policy change within our state, helps create a healthier community, to ensure the problem or issue is not ignored or forgotten. Here's a good one. So, changing norms. And I think that's something that wasn't explicitly stated in some of these definitions. But one way to think about sustainability too is that you're literally changing the norms of society so that things become an expectation that they'll be done a certain way or they'll be done differently.

Good. Alright. So I'm going to close out of that. Those were great responses. So now that we have talked a little bit about what sustainability is and why it's important, I'd like to do another poll. So what approach will your team take to reach sustainability? And you may not know the answer to this question yet. So you can check any that applies here. Is it continuation? Is it institutionalization, dissemination? Is it something different altogether? Or are you not sure yet? So go ahead and take the time to complete the poll.

The results are coming in. So we have about 70 percent of you have voted. Give it a few more seconds here. Alright. So it looks like most of you have voted, a few lingering people have not put in their responses. I'm going to go ahead and close the poll and share those results.

It looks like we are kind of across the board here. So, many of you are looking to continue your project. Some of you are looking to institutionalize. A few are looking to disseminate to other audiences. A couple of you say something different altogether. And many of you are not sure yet. So I think this just speaks of where you are with respect to thinking about the sustainability of your project.

So Jill, go back to the sustainability factor slide. Alright. So now I'd like to move onto the next portion of the webinar. Here we'll be talking about sustainability factors. As I mentioned at the beginning of the webinar, Jill and I dug into the literature to find out what the research says about sustainability. And there's not a whole lot out there. But in the last decade, several different frameworks have emerged that are supported by systematic reviews of public health projects that have been sustained successfully over time versus those that have not.

So Jill presented some of this research in the tip sheet that we shared last week that came out of one of the models used by the Finance Project. If you haven't looked at this already, I highly suggest that you take a look and please forward it along to your sub-awardees or to your community partners.

For today's webinar, we're going to build upon what was in the tip sheet, briefly highlighting factors that cut across some of the different frameworks that are out there. And so, for those of you right now who may be thinking that sustainability is a really big task, I want to demystify that perspective somewhat.

Much of what has come out of the literature, I think is fairly intuitive and it really just reinforces the idea of good project management practices. But that being said, I think it's really helpful to look at these factors together through this lens of sustainability and to use them to help guide your efforts.

Let's go to the next slide. So across the literature, sustainability factors kind of tend to fall into these two different categories. So we have those that are related to your internal capacity to sustain the project and those that are related to external factors and that may influence the success of your project.

So internal factors are going to be those characteristics of your project or the organization within which your project is housed. And external factors include a broader range of social, economic and political factors that may influence the success of your project.

So I will briefly talk through some of these factors now. So go ahead and move to the next slide. So this slide is showing some of the internal factors. And the first one we have on our list - having a clear and compelling vision of what your project intends to achieve, as well as a clear picture for how your project can be sustained. And then to add to that, the internal leadership to carry that vision forward. So this is a factor that has emerged from the literature as characteristics of those projects that are sustained over time.

And so the research shows that visions that respond to a real need in the community are the most successful. And if your vision originates from the community, that's even better. We want your vision to be rooted in community values. And we also know that projects are more likely to be sustained if the project and its vision fit within the larger organization's mission.

So if you are focused on adolescent pregnancy prevention, but the agency is focused on afterschool tutoring, you may want to think about how your vision aligns with that organization's chief mission.

So before we move forward, I'd like to do just a quick and dirty assessment here. So raise your hand if you would consider your team or your agency to have a lot of capacity in this area. Do you have a clear vision and the leadership to carry it forward? And this is just an informal polling process that we'll be doing. We'll show our results at the end. So lots of hands going up. I'd say we have about a third of you. Let's go with 33 percent, Jill.

So then moving on to the next factor, the next factor is that we know that sustainable projects cannot exist without strong internal systems and organizational capacity. So this includes having the staff capacity to implement the projects and the necessary systems in place for fiscal management, accounting, governance. So I think some of this is straight forward. It's hard to sustain a project without having the staff and the structures in place to really keep it running.

So let's do our informal assessment here. Go ahead and raise your hand if you consider your project to have strong internal systems and organizational capacity. So we have about the same, maybe a little bit more. I'm seeing, let's go with 38 percent of you on that one. Go ahead and lower your hand.

Then moving to the next factor. So the next factor that's emerged from the literature is having a results orientation or strong program evaluation. And I think this is an area that

many of you should be familiar with at least. So program evaluation is going to benefit sustainability of projects in two ways.

So first, your evaluation keeps you on track with your goals and outcomes. It's going to help you improve your project if something is not working. So this is what's going to help you develop a quality project.

And then second, if your evaluation shows that the project is having an important impact, this will help you make a stronger case for why it needs to continue. So if you can show that your project is really meeting a need in the community, more people will likely want to give it support. But I do think it's worth mentioning that a common sustainability myth is that any project with good evaluation results will be sustained. So we know that a quality project is important, but each of these additional factors are necessary to kind of get that buy-in and support.

So let's go to our informal polling system. So go ahead and raise your hands if you would consider your project to have strong results orientation or a lot of capacity with program evaluation. Alright. We have about let's go with around 31 percent of you would rate yourselves fairly high with program evaluation.

So moving on to the next factor, this has to do with adaptability. So we know that sustainable projects are those whose leaders are skilled at anticipating, influencing and responding to new opportunities or threats in the community.

So your ability to adapt to changing conditions is critical to sustainability. So if, for example, say that youth mental health is like a new hot topic that's out there. And if you can show how your program might align with that issue or how it can adapt to maybe incorporate some of those components, then that can ensure continued funding for you.

So raise your hands if you would consider your projects to be highly adaptable. So fewer of you here, maybe, maybe not. Numbers are coming in. Alright. Let's go with about 28 percent of you on that one.

And so the next one is communications. So communications refers to strategically getting the message out to stakeholders, including your funders and the public about your project. So I think the key take home here is that if people don't know who you are and why your work is important, they can't support you.

And so, so often we do an amazing job of collecting data about the successes of our project, but we're not as good about strategically communicating those successes and those results to others. And we need to do that so that people know who we are. So that they can support us.

We could do a whole training on each of these, but I'll stop there and let's just do an informal poll. So, how many of you would say that your project is skilled at communicating your successes and results to your key stakeholders, to the public and to your funders? Go ahead and raise your hands. So I'm going to go with about, oh, we're slowly going up. Let's go with 21 percent on that one. We'll close it off at 21 percent. Alright. So, slightly fewer of you are focusing on communications.

The next factor that has emerged from the literature, and this one I think is a biggie, is having a strategic financing orientation and I also put in here diversified funding. So although we know that project sustainability requires a lot more than just having funding, we also know that having stable funding to do the work that you need to do is one of the most important factors for sustainability that emerges from the literature.

So a strategic financing orientation means that project leaders know what activities they want to sustain and the ones that they need to sustain, what resources they need in order to sustain those activities and how to access those resources.

So across the literature, having diversified sources of funding comes out as a really important factor to sustainability. And so this means that the financing for your project comes from multiple sources. So this may be federal funding, foundations, private donors or what's called social enterprises or like a fee-for-service kind of model or even in-kind support, the people who donate location or services, volunteers, to help your program run.

So I'll stop there. I'm going to ask two questions on this one actually. So first by show of hands, how many of your adolescent pregnancy prevention projects are supported by more than one funding source? So something outside of FYSB. Go ahead and raise your hands for that one. Alright. So it looks like we have about 14 percent of you. Let's go 15 percent. So that really speaks to this need for diversified funding, right? So many of you are operating with one primary funding source.

So looking at kind of this idea of strategic planning and seeing the bigger picture, how many of you would consider yourselves to have a lot of capacity in this area? So, you know, good about staying on top of the different resources that are out there, how you can go about obtaining them. So how many of you would rate yourselves high with having a strategic financing orientation?

Alright. So this one it looks like the numbers are a lot lower. Let's go with 12 percent on that one. This is common with many of us, you know, that we're so good. We have the passion. We're out there and we're doing the work. And then knowing the business side of things and how to bring in funding, especially for those of us who may be working in the field, may not be something that we're used to doing all the time.

The last one I wanted to talk about here, the final internal factor related to sustainability is actually having a sustainability plan that brings together all of the pieces necessary for your project to continue. And so good plans clarify where your project is, your vision of sustainability and the specific test that you'll need to take to achieve that sustainability.

And we'll be talking a lot more about sustainability plans on the second half of this webinar. So for now, let's just have you raise your hand if you think that your team and your project has a lot of capacity with respect to sustainability planning. Okay. So we have a few more coming in. Alright. So let's say around 20-21. So we'll go 21 percent on sustainability planning. Good. So we'll be spending a little more time talking about that.

Let's go to the next slide and there are three other external factors that I wanted to touch upon that have come out of the literature as well. So again, these are the factors that are external to the inner workings of your project.

So, the first is having political support for your project. So we all know that no matter how well the internal components of your project operate, the overall economic and political climate will really influence your ability to get things done. So this may come from the federal level, the state, tribal or local levels.

The thing I want to reiterate though is that just because the economic and political climate is external to your project doesn't mean that you can't do anything about it. So it's important to educate people of influence about your work.

And a recent example I'll share is that in California, the Office of Maternal Child and Adolescent Health recently held a conference for adolescent pregnancy prevention providers, and some of the PREP grantees were in attendance. And the Director of the California Department of Public Health was invited to open the conference.

And so this is a great way to build relationships with key decision makers and to inform them about the work that they're doing. So that if they know who you are, then it's easier for them to provide you with support.

Alright. So let's go ahead and raise your hand if you would consider your project to rank high in terms of political support. So everyone stopped paying attention at the same time or nobody raised their hand. Oh, there they go. So we have about 11 percent of

you, let's go with 12 percent of you consider your project to be high in political support. So go ahead and lower your hands.

Then the next factor I wanted to talk about here is having a broad base of community support or partnerships. So this includes local businesses, media representatives, community and tribal leaders, youth and their families, others who have a vested interest in youth wellbeing.

So the thing to remember here when you're thinking about your support from the community and your partners are that people will help to support what they help to create. So if more people are involved in your vision of moving this project forward, then they'll be more likely to support it and help keep it going.

So think of your partners as people who can help connect you to the resources that you need and the expertise. They may be the ones to take over providing some services if your project has to cut back on your funding. They may be providing you with volunteers. And they can also be the ones to educate and influence others to support your cause.

So go ahead and raise your hands. How many of you would consider your project to rank high in having strong community support and partnerships? And think not only do you just have a lot of partners. Are these active partners that have a vested interest in your project?

Alright. So it looks like about 26 percent of you would rank high there. Oh, it's going up. So 31 percent. I'm capping it at 31. You guys had a lot of last minute hand raisers.

So then the final external factor that I wanted to talk about is having key champions. And this one is related to these other two factors of political support and community support and partnership. And champions are the leaders within the community or your different partner organizations who are really committed to your project's vision. And they're going to be the ones to broker connections, channel resources, build networks and generate support for your project.

So these are the people who tend to be really well-connected. They're the strong leaders and they're really passionate about your cause. And that passion I want to reiterate. Because when that passion comes through, it can help get people on board for what you're trying to sustain. So in your work, it's important to be strategic about who you select to be your champions. Sometimes this happens naturally and sometimes it's very intentional about bringing certain people on board.

So by a show of hands, how many of you would say that you have several key champions in the community who actively support your project? Alright. So we have about let's say around 23 percent of people who would rate themselves high in terms of having key champions.

Alright. So I said "briefly." That took a little longer than I imagined, going through some of these key factors related to sustainability. It looks like for the most part, about a third of you would rate yourselves high on any one of these given factors. Some of them are

a little bit lower. And I say that strategic financing, having political support, those are probably some of the lowest ranking. The highest ranking ones are having strong internal systems and having a clear vision for what you want to sustain.

And so we know from the literature that there's no one single factor that's most important. And when you think about your team's capacity, you'll want to think about your current contacts, who your partners are, and which factors are going to be most important for you to build your capacity when you think about sustainability? And we'll talk a little bit more about that when we get to the sustainability plan.

So I'd like to pause for a moment. Jill, go ahead and forward to the next slide. And are there any questions that we have about these factors at this point? And you can go ahead and type them into the question box. So I'm not seeing any questions coming in. I do see a question in there about how to raise your hand. Hopefully, you figured that one out. There's a little hand icon on the toolbox to the right of your screen. If you just click on that, your hand will be raised.

Alright. So, it looks like there are no questions coming in now. So let's go ahead and move forward to the sustainability planning steps. For the remainder of the webinar, I wanted to talk about some steps that you can take towards creating a sustainability plan. And again, I think the goal here is really to demystify this process. So even though many of these factors may seem fairly intuitive, there are a lot of them. And building your capacity in each of these areas can seem like a daunting task for some of us.

So what we're hoping to do is provide you with some concrete steps and some tools that can help to launch you into this sustainability planning process.

So let's go forward. We are going to do one more poll here. The poll is: Does your project currently have a sustainability plan in place? So go ahead and just raise your hand if you have a sustainability plan in place. When I say sustainability plan, I'm talking more than just a paragraph or two that you put into your recent proposal about how you want to sustain your project. I'm talking more of a plan that has action steps, timelines, clearly identified in it.

Alright. So it looks like about 20 percent of you have raised your hands, so have a sustainability plan. For those of you who have plans in place, I'm hoping that these tools are something that you can add to the work that you're doing. And also, if we have time at the end, I'd love to hear some of your thoughts so that you can share some of your process and successes around your sustainability plan with your colleagues here.

So let's move forward. So talking about the planning steps when it comes to going through a sustainability plan. So these are the steps we're going to walk through. So Jill, go ahead and click on each one. So the first is to assemble your team. The second is to envision your future. The third is to assess sustainability capacity. The fourth to prioritize what it is that you want to sustain. The fifth to identify sustainability strategies. And the sixth is to develop a clear action plan for how you're going to achieve those strategies. The seventh is to implement your action plan. And the last one is to evaluate your efforts.

So this process comes from a website called Sustaintools.org. There's a source at the bottom and I'll point it out to you when we get to the end of the webinar. This is a newer site that has recently kind of taken some of the more recent information from the literature. I really like it. I like the tools that they present. So I highly encourage you to check out that website and use it for your planning process.

So I'm going to walk through each of these steps. And as we do that, I want to highlight an example that came out of Colorado State PREP.

I recently spoke with Jan McIssues[?] the state PREP coordinator at the Colorado Department of Human Services and Zoa Chesky – Zoa, I'm sorry if you're on and I'm saying your last name wrong. I should have gotten that down. But Zoa is the local PREP coordinator for the Denver Human Services.

And so they shared some ideas with me about the sustainability of their project. And I wanted to highlight that they are thinking about it from both the state level and the local level. And so what sustainability might look like from those different levels.

So moving to the next slide. So the first step is to assemble your team. And again, I think this one's fairly straight forward. But the key is to make sure that you have the right mix of people. So you want the right mix of project staff, management and people who are in the community who may have a vested interest in sustaining your project.

So I asked the Colorado team about the team that they would like to have on board for their sustainability planning. So they suggested to gather people who are supportive,

who have the same vision and passion for the work. And who have good leadership qualities. And Zoa provided this example in Denver where they inherited some partners that were key players at the start of the project. But then they found that individuals on their team changed. And they identified new partners that provided access to different populations.

So I think this just speaks to the dynamic nature of sustainability planning. This is an ongoing process. And who's on your team today may be slightly different as your planning goes forward.

So let's move to the next one. So Step 2 is to envision your future. And so remember that having a vision alone is one of the key factors of sustainability. And this is really the 'Why should we care?' part of the process. So with your planning team, you're going to want to picture what sustainability would look like for your project, you know, one year, three years, five years from now.

And then think about do you want to continue your project as it's currently funded? Do you want to move towards institutionalization or dissemination? So we've started some of that conversation today. But these are things to think through in more depth with your team.

You'll also want to think about your project's niche. So what sets it apart from other programs in the community? How can you leverage that to gain further support?

Involve project leaders and key stakeholders. So remember if your vision is rooted in the community's values, it's going to be more likely to lead to a sustainable project.

**[NOTE: Here the speaker left out the next step in the slides “Engage a broad range of community partners”]**

And finally, you want your staff to be able to articulate the vision to others. So if people don't know who your project is and why should they care, they can't support you.

So highlighting some examples that came out of the Colorado team. So at the state level, actually the state and the local levels, both Jan and Zoa were really interested in this idea of institutionalizing their projects. So at the state level, Jan mentioned that she wanted it to become an expectation that youth who enter into their agencies receive evidence-based, comprehensive sex education. So it is so integrated, that is the norm, that they will receive that kind of information.

She also wants to maintain a training cadre. So she can step back from implementation, but help to provide trainers to continue to build capacity of people implementing the projects in their different settings.

And then at the local level, Zoa's project in Denver, she's working with youth in systems of care. And she also had this vision of institutionalization that really speaks to having policies in place that require youth in systems of care to receive evidence-based, comprehensive sex education. And that there is a collaboration of agencies who work together to provide a network of services to keep these programs going on.

So let's go through to Step 3. So once you have your team together, you've done some visioning, the next step is to assess your sustainability capacity. And so we've done a little bit of this informally just because I wanted to get you thinking about where some of your strengths or areas you might want to improve on, where those lie.

So what you see on this slide are two tools that I wanted to share with you. Both of these are free. They're available online. And they provide an internal capacity assessment with respect to sustainability.

So I'm not going to go to them now, Jill, just for the sake of time. But I highly encourage you to go and check out these assessments. And basically, they're based on some of those different factors that have come out of the literature and you can do them individually and then bring your individual responses together with your team to think about the areas where you're strong, areas where you need to go. Or you can complete them together as a team. So this could be a good planning exercise to do with your team or some of your partners. But I highly suggest that you take a look at some of these capacity assessments.

JILL ELNICKI: Let me just add one more thing to those who may be are not wanting to write down the website address right now. All of the PowerPoint slides, which is going to include these citations at the end, as well as the tip sheet, will be posted on the Community of Practice website. So for those of you who are concerned 'Will I receive the PowerPoint?', 'I don't have the tip sheet,' access will be available. If you don't have access right now to the Community of Practice, you'll be able to gain that by talking to your primary grantee contact.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: Great. Moving forward. Step 4. So you've put together your team, thought about your vision. You've assessed your capacity. So Step 4 is prioritizing what it is that you want to sustain. And so one of the sustainability myths that are out there is that everything that we are currently doing must be sustained.

So we're really invested in the work and it's all very important. But in reality, it's rare to find projects that have been evaluated and they've honed their efforts so well that every single part of that project is absolutely critical for achieving its goal.

And in reality, think about a situation in which your funding is reduced, and most of us have had this experience, especially with the recent frustration. So if your funding is reduced and you're forced to cut back your efforts, think about what aspects of your project would be most critical to continue until you gain the funding back to nurture the rest of the project.

So the activity on this slide is something that you can do with your team. It comes from Sally Hutchinson of Community Solutions. And we've provided a handout with your webinar materials that you can use for this process as well.

So the idea here is if you look at the left side of your screen, the idea is to list out all of the projects' components or activities that you're currently working on for your project. And so you can do this on the handout that we've provided or you can do this as a

facilitated activity. So you can put all these activities on sticky notes on a wall. And then together with your team, you can think about which column they would fit into.

So for each of these activities, the goal then is to prioritize which activities are most important for you to maintain in your organization, which activities you might be able to transfer to another organization to take over. Or which activities you might want to discontinue.

So the example on this slide comes out of Colorado. And this comes out of Zoa's program in Denver. So she wants to be able to continue to train agencies on the evidence-based programs that they're implementing. She wants to be able to maintain a cadre of trainers. But she wants to shift that implementation of the program to those agencies because she no longer wants to be responsible for the educators who are working with the youth themselves. And then they also do a program for foster parents. This one kind of fell on both sides of the column. So she wants the agencies to be able to take that over, but to be able to provide them with the support that they need to be able to do that.

Before I move on, let me just say that when you go through this process and you're making decisions about which component to continue, to share or to drop, it helps to have some kind of decision-making criteria. So I would suggest you refer to your evaluation data to see where your project is most successful and effective and that can help to guide some of your decisions here.

Alright. Moving to the next slide, what we would like to do is to brainstorm through some of these different areas. And so thinking about your particular project -- you may be at very different levels, at the state level, local, tribal -- think about hypothetically speaking, just because I want to force you guys to make some tough choices. If your funding today was cut in half, so you're working with half of what you had to work with, what would be some components that you would want to maintain within your organization? So Jill can you pull up the handout for Step 4?

So go ahead and enter into the question box, what are those things that are absolutely critical that you would want to maintain within your organization?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Training, education which could also be training, fidelity monitoring, programming for youth, incentives, resources. We've got implementation of curriculum in schools. Providing literature for other agencies. Evaluation. We've got youth programs which I guess could be outside of just implementation. Community connection, staffing.

JILL ELNICKI: This is Jill. We're kind of getting to the bottom of the screen.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: I think that's good for now. I still can't get on the computer, but I can see what you're doing, Jill. So it works to have a three-way for support on this one, for the three of us to be involved. Okay, good. So we have a lot of different ideas that came up for things that you would absolutely want to maintain within your organization. And when you do this with your teams, it may not be such a linear process. You may

put all of your ideas on paper and then you're kind of thinking about where you would put them in the different columns. We're just going through it in a linear way for the purpose of the webinar today.

So let's see, what are some project activities that you would want to transfer to another organization or that you could transfer to an organization? And when you think about this, think about it not as just taking stuff off of your plate. But think about it as how could you empower some of the partners that you're working with to be able to take some of this on? So it's not just that you're trying to push it off onto somebody else. So go ahead and enter in to the chat box.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So we've got training and coordination, day-to-day follow-up or assistance with logistics, in-school education, curriculum implementation, resource clearinghouse, recruitment, marketing, data collection, scheduling, afterschool programs, fundraising, data entry. I may not have repeated exactly what some folks have put in there because they intersect with other ones.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: I'm trying to see if there are some common themes that we can pull out. But let's say maybe the in-school education can go, some of the data collection, afterschool programs. So things that may be happening with youth can begin to transfer to the other organizations. But this may be different depending upon what's important for your project. Some of you would want to maintain something and others of you would want to transfer that over.

But again, this is just to think about under the situation where you have to really cut back, how could you maintain the benefits of your program over time without having the funding at your disposal tomorrow, right? So are there any activities that you might want to discontinue. And this is not to say that these are the least important parts of your project. I would say that they're things that should be postponed until later. So think of it as a fire has come through. You want to save – you have like one seed in your hand. You want to make sure that that plant stays alive until you get the resources back to grow up your garden again. So are there any activities that you may want to discontinue?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The site where fewer youth are reached. Formal evaluation, incentives, pre and post-evaluations.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: I like when we say that sites where fewer youth are reached. It may not be that we're cutting back on the activities themselves, but we've cut back on the amount of them that we provide. So maybe we're focusing on those sites that are able to get a lot of youth and the numbers are really well. And so if we only have so much money, that's where we want to put our efforts.

So I'll stop here so that we can move on. But again, this is a great exercise to go through as your team to think about, you know, just to prioritize what aspects of your project are most important to sustain. So, Jill?

JILL ELNICKI: I'll back up. Let me add to that. In the handouts that were emailed with the slides, for those who received them, they should also have copies of all the worksheets, the handouts that we're going through right now. So anyhow, everyone should have these handouts that go with Step 5 or 4, 5 and 6, also as Word documents. So that you can take them, modify them, use them as needed.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: Okay. So let's keep moving through these steps here. And again, these are tools and activities that I'm hoping – we'll show you how to use them, but you can take them, use them with your team to really think through sustainability. So moving onto Step 5. And this is where you really start to kind of take these ideas and put them onto paper for your plan. It's to identify your sustainability strategies.

And so what I want to do here is I want to present two different approaches for how you want to think about this. I like both of them and I think they can both be useful in different ways.

So the first approach is based upon those capacity assessments that we did or that you will do in Step 3, you may identify specific areas where you want to strengthen your efforts. So that may be in communicating your results. Or it may be in having a diversified funding. So there may be some broad areas or broad strategies that you want to focus on. And that can be what's fed into your sustainability plan.

And so when you think about these strategies, the questions on this slide are just things for you to consider. So which areas are the most urgent? Which would result in the best

payoff? Which areas require the fewest resources? Which would be most feasible for you to take on? And how could you prioritize these areas based on available time and resources?

And this will make sense when we look at that action plan. But I think this type of approach is good for those of you who are at the state level and are thinking more broadly about how to sustain an initiative. You may want to think about your sustainability strategies more broadly as well.

So going to the next slide, the second approach – and this type of an approach I think might be better used by people who are thinking about sustaining a specific project. Or at the local level, how can you sustain specific activities?

And the way that this works – and again, this is one of the handouts that we provided to you with the webinar materials - is to think through, so you've identified your essential project activities. And so then you would list those on the left-hand side of the handout. And then think through what are the specific resources that you need in order to continue that.

So using the example that came out of Denver is that they wanted to train agencies on evidence-based programs. So the specific resources that they would need are the space to host the training, materials for the training, and they estimate it around \$2,000, the food for the training, training time and salary.

So once you get a clear idea of what's needed for each of these activities, then think through what are the possible sources of resources? And what I'd like to think about here when you're thinking of your sources and resources, think about who out there loves your work, who needs your work to continue and who would really care if you were gone. And these are going to be the people who are going to help provide you with resources to keep things going.

So there may be agencies who can donate different training places or who may be able to donate food. Just another idea would be to make your materials green. So instead of having to print copies, you can make them electronic just to cut down on costs. You may want to charge a fee for your training where you didn't used to do that before. So the goal is just to brainstorm all of the different ways where you might be able to generate some resources for these project activities.

And then once you get to that step, that's when you begin to identify specific sustainability strategies for those project activities. So, for example, the strategies that you might be thinking about here are to seek partnerships with in-kind donors. So that's going to be a key heading in your sustainability plan.

And so, for Denver, one of the examples they came up with is there's a local business that's called Pizza Infusion. And they hire homeless to make and serve pizzas. And so since they work with youth in Systems of Care in Denver, they considered this to be a potential partner who would be sympathetic to their cause and could potentially donate food for their training.

So just as an example of a sustainability strategy, thinking about how you might replace what used to cost you a certain amount of money with a potential in-kind donation.

Other strategies they came up with was to develop some key champions to support a fee-for-service model. So since they currently offer these services for free, if they were to charge a fee for the services, they would want some people with some influence and leadership to help support that idea. And another strategy they came up with was to do some fundraising or to look into small grants in their community.

So moving forward, we wanted to walk through this example with you. And I think we have a little bit of time. So let's try and do this one more time. Marisa, we're going to need you on board for this one again. So think about an example.

So one of your project components – and you guys identified this when we went through the last activity – was you want to sustain program implementation with youth. So some you may want to transfer to another organization. Some you may want to maintain within your current organization. But for the sake of the exercise here, let's brainstorm what are all of the specific resources that you might need to continue providing that activity? Go ahead and type them into the question box.

MARISA: Adopt training, money, facilitator time and salary, incentive, curricula, base, webinars, political and community support, project materials. I've got curriculum supplementary

materials as well. An evaluator, interested agencies. This is a good one -- participants.  
Community support.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: For the sake of time, I'm going to keep us moving forward. But you get the idea. So really brainstorm what are all of the resources that are needed out there?

So then moving on to the second column or I guess it's the third column, think about possible sources for some of these resources. And again, you'll be thinking about it from your specific community perspective. But brainstorm what comes to mind. What might be some possible sources for these resources? And share ideas across partners.

MARISA: State funders, connections with other entities for financial support. I'm hoping that I'm not reading ones that were supposed to be for the other column.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: This looks right.

MARISA: Grants, collaborative partners, schools and community centers, private foundations, donations or in-kind donations, volunteers, federal funding, college intern, parenting parents, train school staff to implement within the classroom, pre-incentives like school credit, TANF participants.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: It looks like we're running out of space. For the sake of time, I'll just have us move forward at this point, but this is good. And I think what we see when we

do the brainstorming is that oftentimes the first ideas that come out are the most obvious. But then when you sit down and you really look at the list for ten to fifteen minutes, that's when you start to get some creative ideas that come out. When you're doing this with your team, take some time for those creative ideas.

So then looking at this list, the next step would be to then start thinking about what would be the strategies that you could take for securing these resources? And this should draw upon some of those sustainability factors that we talked about earlier. Or you may think of some strategies that are really specific to these type of resources. So let's brainstorm what are some strategies that come to mind when thinking about how you might secure some of these resources?

MARISA: We've got fees for service, conducting trainings that are open to the community, provide community-wide events to recruit fundraisers and volunteers, tapping board member expertise and experience, meet with local colleges for support. And this is similar to what was put in the former column, offer internships and college credit, presentations at school board meetings.

We might have to abbreviate this entry -- inviting community partners and funders to the decision making and planning table to begin building those relationships. Creating a taskforce of champions, program and project sponsorship, political affiliations, meeting with the community-based services staff, the local SHAC support.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: The local SHAC support?

MARISA: Right, the School Health Advisory Committee.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: So a lot of these ideas are really seeking to kind of building these partnerships and calling upon potential resources, champion partners in the community. So I think that's really good and it's where you want to start getting your ideas to focus. So I want to move on, but I'm hoping that this was a useful exercise for you guys to really think outside of the box in terms of how you can take on some different strategies for securing resources that we need to maintain your project.

So moving on to the next step, Step 6. Once you identify these strategies, the next step is to really flesh out the action plan for it. And again, you have a handout that looks similar to this as well. We included a couple of more columns in your handout that you received with your webinar materials. But the idea here is to take each of those strategies, be it a broad strategy or a specific strategy, and think about the specific steps you need to take to make it happen.

So here we see the examples, going back to the original example, of seeking partnerships with in-kind donors. Some specific steps may be to make a list of all the resources that are needed, that could come from in-kind donors, make a list of all potential partners who have donations to give and then to develop a pitch that shares the project vision as well as what partners may stand to gain. And then to contact those partners and make the ask.

So it's just breaking down each strategy into what the steps are, who will be the person responsible -- so these are folks from Zoa's team -- as well as a timeline for when those things will happen.

So moving to the next slide, the final steps are really to Implement the Action Plan and Evaluate Your Efforts. And all I really want to say about this is that this is a very organic and dynamic process. And so start early and then monitor your progress towards each step.

But Jill, go ahead and forward the slide if you haven't already. So monitor your progress toward each step. And then use the results for achieving these steps towards your action plan. Discuss progress with stakeholders, you know, what's working, what's not working. And how can you keep moving this process forward? And then when you evaluate your efforts, what we suggest is to reassess your sustainability capacity either yearly or biannually. So go back to those assessments that you did in Step 3 and see if you're improving your capacity in some of these areas.

So moving forward, I'd like to just pause there and see if there are any questions. And Marisa, I can't see anything. So if you could just read any questions out loud, that would be great. We don't have a lot of time left. So perhaps we can take one or two questions now, and then I'm happy to answer questions by email if you want to send me an email afterwards.

MARISA: We've got a couple of questions that I thought would be good to address for the whole group. We just received one that says, "When should we start thinking about sustaining our program or projects?" I think that's an easy one for you to answer.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: Yes, great question. Start as early as possible. It's actually never too early to start your sustainability planning. And so if you haven't started, I'd say go ahead and start now. And the idea is that the more you kind of have that vision for the future, you've got something to work towards. And all of the tools that we'll show you in our resource list can help you with that. Just to add to that, I would say if you haven't started already, don't worry about it. It's not like, oh, my gosh, you're behind. It's just I think many of us are in that boat. And it's just something that we're not always expected to do when we begin the planning process. And so, the idea is to shift our way of thinking about that until we get it started.

MARISA: I just want to make an announcement that the webinar slides are going to be posted to the Community of Practice website. But we're also going to be posting it to the FYSB website. Because we do have some folks from OAH that are on the webinar right now that don't have access to the Community of Practice website. So the FYSB website is an open access website and anybody can download the materials that are posted on there. If you want me to ask you a question, Stephanie, I've got one.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: Let's do one more and then we'll close it up.

MARISA: Okay, great. This is going to take a little concentration. It's a little long. How are we to keep up with the high bar associated with evidence-based programming? I ask because maintaining licenses and training for evidence-based programming is expensive. Often communities can keep the programming going in the short-term because the institutionalization is in place. However, in the long run, getting training and licensure may not be covered by future grants or funding streams. Community partners often swing from funding branch to funding branch, and it can be a challenge to keep up with the expensive evidence-based programming.

STEPHANIE GUINOSSO: That's a really good question. And I've heard that from grantees before, that some of the training required to implement these programs is really expensive. And being from an agency like ETR that provides these trainings, I can tell you that we're thinking about this on our end, too. And how is it that we can make these trainings more accessible? And to be honest, I think you're going to start seeing more of these trainings being available online or different opportunities to get training.

I think some of the licensing that's out there, sometimes it's a misnomer. Some agencies have some requirements about that or sometimes funders do. But that's not always the case. So again, I think that's another thing that you'll see as part of the discussions as we move forward, too. Or what are those requirements for people to be able to implement some of these programs? And there may not be as many specific requirements out there as people might think that there are.

With that, I want to keep us moving forward because I know that we're running out of time. I think that's a great question though. It's a challenging question. But I just want to say that it's something that I think we're thinking about on all levels.

So moving forward, I was going to have time to share some sustainability successes. But we are at the end of our webinar. So what I would encourage you to do is that if you have a great sustainability success in your experience that you want to share, you can either post it to the Community of Practice website or share it with somebody that you've met at a training or at a conference. But I want you to connect with somebody else and share some of the successes that you had. Because I think that's how we're going to contribute most to our collective learning.

And then for the next slide, Jill, I'd also like to send you away with some homework. I'm a big believer in homework. I'm in school at the moment. So I think it helps us. It helps us learn. So for your homework, the first thing I want you to do is to complete one of those sustainability assessments. And you can either do this individually or you can do it with your team. But I want everyone to take the time to look at those assessments and think it through and complete it.

And then the second thing is to really develop a concrete sustainability plan, if you have not done so already. And you can use the tools that we provided. There are also many other templates in schools that we've listed in your resources section.

So going to the next slide, if you need any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact your Project Officer or request technical assistance. Again, you can visit the Community of Practice website where all of these materials will be posted, as well as the FYSB site where I believe they're posting a live version of this webinar to access later.

And then in closing, as we close it up, just think to yourself, and we don't have to share this now, but what is one important point from today's webinar that you want to remember? And you can write this down on your notes or on your slide. I just want to make sure that we're internalizing some of the learning from the webinar today.

So the final slides, these slides show what I think are some great resources on sustainability. The second one from the top, the Center for Civic Partnerships, if you put a little star by that. One of the capacity assessments comes from this resource. At the bottom, the Hayes citation. This is a great framework that was used to inform the tip sheet. So that's another one of our favorites that we came across.

And then going to the next slide, if you go to the third from the bottom, Washington University (2013a). This is that sustaintool.org website. So definitely go through here, look at some of the tools that are available. The resource right below it is a related website through – I forget what the cphss stands for, but it's our center that's working on this. It's at Washington University. And so there are some more tools there that you can access.

Alright. So, with that, I'd like to thank you so much for your time and your participation. I truly hope that you got something out of this that will be useful to help you start thinking about sustainability. Again, I love answering questions through email. So please feel free to contact me or request TA from your project officer.

Alright. And with that, I will close things up. Guys, I have no access. So you're going to have to end the webinar because I can't do it from where I am.

SPEAKER: I will end the webinar. Thank you so much.

**(END OF TRANSCRIPT)**