

April 2, 2014

Good morning is everybody hungry is that what I heard lunch is coming after this, okay. I don't know it's probably better than after lunch. Hi, I am delighted to be here today and to see so many of you and I am going to talk a little bit about my research but very little more talking about implications of sustainability. When I started my work back in the mid 1990s, I was working on a large scale project. I had no idea what sustainability look like, how to define it, nobody was talking about it and to sit back in the room this morning and just hear the word sustainability over and over again, it's just it's very heartwarming, so I think, I am sustained so to speak. Feel free we are going to have some time for questions and answers afterwards but if there is something that you know it feels important, please feel free to raise that throughout. This means everything I say is mine and if it's bad or against anything they are not responsible. Come after me, so sustainability what is it, what contributes to it, what detracts from it and then I have how do you know you have sustained your and that there were few comments this morning that alluded to this. Is it sustaining your project, is it sustaining your program, is it sustaining your staff, is it sustaining your activities, is it sustaining your collaborative, is it sustaining a particular relationship and I am leaving that open because everybody has their own priorities of what that means like for their own project but we will talk about all of that. Why sustain, I was asked to talk about why programs, projects, activities what you ever you want to call them, need to sustain and it really boils down to one thing and I always use this quote it was from a program professional because I think it's sums it up beautifully. We have a responsibility to our program recipients, they have had so many losses in their lives and for us to come in for a year or two or three and in your case is five and give them hope only to have the program go away, we've just caused another loss and a further loss of hope in their lives and I think that's why we have to sustain. We cannot have the responsibility and the obligation to do that whether it's on this grant or any funding stream that you receive. So planning, planning, Oh planning, how many of you thought about sustainability when you first got your grant, okay. How many of you started thinking about sustainability after the first year of your grant. Second year, third year, fourth year and that's where you are right now, right you are just finishing your fourth year, you know it really wasn't talked about as much and if it was talked about, we weren't necessarily given the clues so how do I do that. But what most projects find themselves if they don't start planning early is they are spending that last year or two hustling big time trying to get something to happen. Sometimes they can be very successful, it's like putting all your eggs in one basket. There is a number of projects I interviewed that they did just that. They put all their eggs in one basket, one funding (inaudible) and for some of them it was successful right because they got the funding and but for others it wasn't and that's why I know part of what you will be talking about in terms of funding is multiple funding streams. You can't just count on one source to do it. Has anybody has they been under this grant partnered with others that are also providing funding for

the activities and programs they do yeah, because you had your money budgeted and you knew what you needed to do, so that's another way of thinking about this as you move into your last year and then into no grant funding unless you pick up another grant. So early sustainability planning, those of you that planned in the first year or two did you actually write up a plan okay. Did you check back with that plan, minority right, not a whole lot and I would be interested in hearing how that has gone then and you also need to make sure you got the right people at the table. All the key stakeholders involved with thinking and working towards sustainability. Sustainability plans which you will be developing as part of your workshop in the next two days. There are living documents, you can't take them and put them on a shelf. I am an evaluator and frequently that's what I find happens with evaluation results. They make great bookends but in fact they need to be used to be useful, so the roadmaps were being intentional, it's an entry point, it's not an end point. They need to be looked at over and over and over again. How are we doing, we were going to be doing these three things to make this happen, did we do it. Who was responsible for and what was our timeline like. So it is a process, it is not an end point. Defining sustainability you have a definition that OAH provided to you and lots of different organizations that are thinking about sustainability and working towards sustainability for their grantees will have a different way of thinking about sustainability. I think what's important is that you and your funderer on the same page and you and your partners are on the same page. When I started doing my research in about 1996 and we did a 10-year project where I was able to interview, it started out very qualitative long in-depth interviews with 96 different projects at one year at two-and-a-half years, at five years and at six years post their funding and they were funded in three different incremental times. So they weren't all together and it started out very qualitative because I didn't know what I was even really looking for. The literature was not out there in any big way. There was talk of like smoking cessation programs. They would talk about community sustainability and a couple other health initiatives but how I could take that and broaden it and generalize it to all community based programs was a challenge and early on someone said to me well how are you defining it and I thought and I said I don't know yet. Come back to me in another year or two, well it took five before my colleague Jay Mancini and I will comfortable enough with what we had learned through all these in-depth interviews and then some quantitative measures and continuing on and on. One thing we found that as we were looking to determine if programs or projects were sustained is it wasn't just they are or they are not. There was levels of sustainability that make sense. We are going to talk about that more and there is also a lot of ways that sustainability looks and doesn't look either visually or on paper. Sustaining it is complex and it's not just are you still doing the services and we will talk about that. It's not a dichotomy. Here are some of the things we looked at and making determination and then we developed a framework which was validated and also had an assessment tool that we were able to get very strong liability and validity on for any of you research geeks like me out there. Here are the things we looked at, levels of program activity. What is the degree that the current program goals this is post grant funding are consonant with the original program goals

and then what degree does the community continue to benefit. That's not so black and white, that's not so yes and no. There is degrees to all of that so as you are thinking about sustaining your project, it doesn't have to be an all or nothing case. But here is our definition of sustainability. A sustained project is one whose programs and services are maintained continuously over time that keeps a focus consonant with its original goals and objectives including the individual's families and communities, it was originally intended to serve. It is the power or the capacity of the projects to continuously respond to identified community issues. You all have to be thinking about your own definition of sustainability right for your projects. What does it mean for your projects and we were just kind of sharing some of that. Is there something you would want to add to this or take away from this or challenge, does it make sense so how does the definition work. Well there is a lot of as I keep talking about this a lot of stretch on this. The intensity and level of programs and services offered. The flexibility a program demonstrates to their services and program and then how institutionalized it becomes, so when I used the word institutionalized it can be institutionalized as its own independent program. Sometimes that happens with its own name and its own funding stream and people belong to that. Sometimes it comes under the umbrella of another organization or agency to get institutionalized. Sometimes it becomes part of a coalition and they take it on and do it and be all different ways and it can still be considered sustained. You know some of these forms PowerPoint slides I have and there is mostly I wanted you to have it more than that I am going to be reading them to you but it's important to recognize and I am sure you have seen it there are some really, really good programs that do not survive post funding and there are some really, really, really poor programs that do why, it's a \$64,000.00 question. I am going to talk about some of these factors. So when you are thinking about your project and you are saying okay, we got a plan in place, we are developing a plan and what's it going to look like, how do we know we have gotten there. Think about these questions, when you think about your project, is it going to continue to serve Teen Pregnancy Prevention or are you going to be getting a substance abuse or tobacco grant that now you really have to do that but kind of continue back during into this pregnancy prevention. Would that mean that you are still serving, who you intended to serve with, what you intended to serve with goals that are consonant, could be, depends. Is the project maintaining, expanding, reducing or changing their efforts to meet their goals. There are some projects that can shrink considerably but they are still doing what they intended to do. They may not be doing it in 10 communities they may be doing it in three. Are they still sustained, let's say a program is doing the exact same thing they were doing under grant funding. They have shrunk from 10 to three sites, is that sustained. How many would say yes, how many would say no, how many would say sort of, sort of kind of. Is a secure future funding and how did the changes impact the original goals, got to keep it in mind. It doesn't mean because you have a different funding stream, you can't stay with your original goals. You just have to be creative sometimes. But if you go from a pregnancy prevention and you go into (inaudible) which you wouldn't but I am just throwing this out into sample. You go to a tobacco cessation program, I would say you

are not sustained you are doing a new project and that's great but you are not doing the same program. There is a lot of different ways that programs do modify and what we found particularly over the lifecycle of programs so they had five years of funding, they didn't lose their grant funding, so we visited them one year after that happened and then continued visiting them. Some projects at one year looked awesome, unbelievably good so sustained. When we visited them two-and-a-half years later not so much, things happened. They lost some of that original buy-in, they made some modifications, it didn't work so well in the community. On the other hand, I visited some programs which are really hard to find inactive programs right, you got like where is the body, where are you going to find out about or what happened but we did and they were inactive at one year. (Inaudible) well she would even bother revisiting them at two-and-a-half years but yell why not and they came alive. The community realized what they were missing. There was a program champion that didn't want to see that project die and continued working kind of under the radar, continued looking for funding streams, continued trying to get support from that community. A lot of places changed their staffing patterns again another thing to consider. They couldn't afford the same level of paid staff so they started relying more and more in volunteers for good and for bad. When you rely on more volunteers it requires a lot more training not only does it require more training, it requires continuous training because you don't have the same buy-in if someone that's getting a paycheck for 20, 30 or 40 hours a week so you are going to need more of them and the turnover is going to be even greater than it was when you had staff. Its got to be put into the plan, so how much of the above can be done and your project still be considered sustained. I don't know if some of you remembered the supreme court had a quote many years ago about pornography and one of the justices couldn't define it and he said I will know it when I see it and in some ways there are so many pieces that create the sustainability puzzle that it's hard to say unless it looks exactly the same that's (inaudible) and if its totally dead that's a (inaudible) but that in between how much are you still doing what you intended to do at the beginning to the same target population, it doesn't have to be the same way but are they getting the benefits. My research pointed to seven factors and these are very much covered within the factors you have from OAH. They came up with eight and they are just a little different, they fit in differently but it basically covers the same thing and if anyone is interested to know more about these framework items, I am happy to talk more about it but I am not going to spend the time today but essentially it was leadership confidence and you heard what was said before I came up introducing me my quote about leaders. I mean didn't I just make you want to go take a nap so much. Leadership is just I would say one of the most critical factors for affecting sustainability. When I started my research everyone thought it was not everyone but many people said it's just comes down to funding and staffing. Why we do even do a study around that, but we really believed it was much more nuanced than funding and staffing. Again its not is or isn't and one other things that we and now there has been much, much literature and research out their on sustainability leadership confidence, effective collaboration, I mean now doing effective collaboration or knowing we have to do collaboration

is just part of the package right is anyone here not collaborating with somebody, some agency, some organization and you have to, we are no longer of the mindset as we were decades ago that we come in and do something to a community, we work with the community but we have to do it effectively and a lot of times the things that will sink collaborative are the things that nobody wants to talk about. I could do a two-day training on collaboration, it's so complicated and complex but just a few things to consider everybody need to know why they are there. What's their role and responsibility, how do you handle communication issues, turf issues, what's in place for staff turnover, when you get new people into they get a full orientation or you so busy that you are just trying to get them to hit the ground running. There were so many coalitions that meet on a monthly basis you know the first Tuesday of every month that this in this restaurant and they come every month and they have been coming for 10 years but if you ask them, why are you coming, what is your role in this coalition. They don't know, but it's what they do and it's a great opportunity for networking and for kind of almost being a clearing house to referrals and things like that but in terms of having an effective working collaboration to sustain your community efforts that's not going to cut it. Understanding the community obviously in order for you to apply for your grants you had to talk about your community, what was the percentage of teens that were getting pregnant? What were some of the issues around them? What was the parents' involvement? What was going on in your community? You had to know that before you could even step foot in there to do your program otherwise I would say most of you couldn't be successful at all. Program responsivity. Adapting responding to let's say there was no more teen pregnancy wiped out. What might you do? Would you consider doing teen pregnancy prevention programs, of course not but you may start looking more at the health issues around it or with the assistance piece of it, but knowing what your community needs and doesn't need in this case with your grant its pretty cut and clear but for many it is not. Strategic funding, its not just having enough money, how is that money gotten and how is that money used, who has ownership of that money, if collaborate joins together and applies for the grant, who is in charge, it has to be talked through, has to be understood. Staff involvement and integration at first we thought it was going to be just be the quality of the staff but its not, how bared in or your staff to your projects. I would guess considering the area in which you deal with you probably have some very passionate staff members as you must be quite passionate too because we know, we are not in it for the money, or the great time, the great hours that you get to keep. So involving the staff and again I have a lot of details on this and I am not going to go into and lastly is demonstrating program results what I heard is that you each are having evaluation done yourself and you are having a national evaluation. If you can't demonstrate that your program is working, who is going to fund you in the future and you know what sometimes you have great evaluation and it is such a good kept secret. You got to talk it up, you got to think about when you think about demonstrating program results I didn't call it do evaluation or do fabulous evaluation. I called it demonstrating program results, well, there is many steps if you think about that, you got to do a great evaluation but then what you do with the results you use them to leverage future

funding of course and I heard some of you with concern about that we need this information in order to demonstrate this in order to get other funding. But you also have to get buy-in and continued buy-in from the community right so you got it figure out ways to demonstrate what's been fabulous about your projects, stories are good, numbers are really good combining them is fabulous. If you only give narratives, if you only give those success stories, funders are going to say yeah but what you have to show us, we need numbers, you tell the community numbers and they are saying yeah but how did it affect them both, so what factors are most important. I am going out on a limb here because I have always said that it depends on the community which factor you enter into, if you got fabulous leadership you probably have two or three other things already in place. If you got really poor leadership, Oh you better start there. But the research has now gone ahead and talked a little bit more about entry points and I agree with this. If you are thinking short term okay just short term not long term if you are thinking on the short term what do you need leadership funding and staffing are probably the primary linchpins. You could survive short term without strong collaboration, short term you could probably even last for awhile without demonstrating those program results because we all do until we have enough data that we can start demonstrating that and we probably could not continue to be responsive, we could come in and do the program we are going to do regardless of what was going on in the community, short term will probably be okay. But if you have poor leadership not enough money to do what you set out to do and poorly involved staff, you are not going to even make it in the short term, so as you think to the future after your five years of federal dollars if you don't have another grant waiting in your pocket think about that, think about what you need to make sure you strengthen and you guys are going to be doing an assessment in kind of figuring out where you are and all of this, so that will be a really beneficial way for you to move forward with your plan. Well just as there are facilitators sustainability the converse or the obstacles sort of kind of what we found where there are few extra things that happened as people talked about the obstacles to sustaining staff turnover, it's a big one and it's a big one in fairly low paid jobs or young staff that are kind of looking their way does that mean there won't be staff turnover or the leader has to make sure there is no staff turnover, well that would be awesome but the reality is there will be staff turnover, is anyone in the five year four years you have been in this project not had staff turnover, okay now these are the three people that you need to talk with and find out what they do. That's very, very impressive but for most of us, we do have staff turnover. So what do you have to make sure you have in place, I have said a couple of times, I would probably say it a couple more times in my time up here. You have to have good training, good orientation and a good way to integrate them into that project and not just assume that because they came with this degree or with this passion or with whatever experience they're going to just know. Community politics is a big one and for you guys this must be huge and changing, I would imagine sometimes you have a really well a somewhat supportive environment and sometimes lesser. What do you do with that, you got to know it's there, acknowledge it and work at the best that you can but ignoring it is not going to do you any good. the economy

another one that we really can't do a whole lot about but to recognize we need to work much more effectively and efficiently because we no longer have the dollars that we used to have. Conflict whenever you have people together, there is conflict, anyone in here never have conflict in their family. I have two daughters one is 21 and 25 now and we have much less conflict but to say we have no conflict, so what you do with it again it can be the elephant in the room. There is a lot of terrific issues when you are working with different community organizations and agencies is there not, well I give money but this is what I want, I want my name first on this or I will give my staff time but in return, we want X, Y and Z. That's okay but its got to be talked about and determined ahead yeah this is going to work or not we really can't do that. Whatever you can do to bring out whatever conflict is underlying it, it will come up and bite you later if you do not and this has a lot to do with sustainability buy-in, goodwill. User fees, some projects that I spoke with were now charging user fees and someone was talking about that that in New York they never charge but that has to be kind of consideration even though that would be really weird, I would say if you start charging user fees and you start having a different population that you are working with because now they have to pay, I would challenge whether you are sustained. So your program may look exactly the same, the same people going out doing whatever they do in your projects but if you are no longer able to reach a particularly targeted population and now you have to go to from a poverty based I don't know but you know if someone had to be by reduce lunches was how you determined the school based thing and now it was user fees and there was nothing made to include them, you are dealing with the different targeted population which means your original goals may no longer be consonant. Is that mean you can't do user fees now, that's what a lot of projects do to survive, do they do sliding scale typically, do they try to get the grants to at least go and help some of the people that couldn't afford the user fees of course, but again its not black or white. Project ownership issues are already talked about I see that is part of dealing with the conflict or making sure its all clear ahead of time so that there is less conflict. Just wanted to pull out funding and staffing, these two came up as obstacles over and over it is interesting as much as everyone said it was going to come out as facilitators, it came out as obstacles, the two most often times talked about. They need more money, they need it stable, its really hard to run a project when all you are doing is looking for money and if you don't have staff that are committed or qualified, know what they are doing or trained that (inaudible) face of your program. Okay, any questions so far, okay I have about 10 more minutes, I am going to give you two examples of a project and a lot of it is going to just be about what I already had talked about. Okay, this is the program I talked about and after school program for out rescue gave all kinds of activities to them, they continued doing it but they charged user fees and they were no longer serving out rescues, sustained or not sustained. What if they were serving some at rescues partially sustained and that's what we did partially here's one provide (inaudible) teen pregnancy on this one increase student sense of everything that you want them to have, develop all kinds of skills including parenting had six girls and boys in the sixth to eighth grades, the girls went to the YMCA, the boys went to the

BGCA, boys and girls of America, homework is provided field trips every on and on and on after the one year in order to satisfy funding requirements from other granting source which many of you will find yourself in and if you don't have continued funding through this funding opportunities is they have to now take kids from one neighborhood and housing project and could no longer provide it to the rest of them, couldn't do it in the summer reduce programs, no collaboration going on between the two organizations and they couldn't provide transportation to the kids from school to the YMCA and home, sustained or not sustained. But what if they are doing some of it you need more information. Okay, when we go back to this one, this will be the last one I give you, reading literacy program for at rescues to reduce school drop out rates to rural area, so they had to provide transportation for those fourth to sixth graders to an after school program. Provider programming two days a week during the school year, field trip summer programs, parent education was provided through monthly newsletters, a year later what does it look like, funding for the activities were taken over for the project and implementing the program to the schools and other community agencies. The transition to the other community agencies is planned from the beginning of the grant does that mean because you are nearing the end of your fourth year, its impossible to do this of course not you build up the goodwill in your communities, you have been working with others, you are demonstrating results and all of the rest. Programming is now gone from two to three sites, the budget and the number of participants and collaborators has increased and I love this last bullet the former program director is now the director of the project for the agency that took it over sustained. All right I am going to just put that out. Okay, now I know you are hungry, I know you have been sitting but this is the interactive portion of the program and I can't have it be interactive with me alone, so as you think about your projects, do you have any questions or something you want to kind of mull over out loud is there is something about the way you are defining or thinking about it for your own project or is your like those of you that have no staff turnover, does anyone want to tell us the three secrets to that.