



HUNGER FREE COMMUNITIES NETWORK

June 13, 2023 Meeting

AGENDA

2:00pm	Welcome- introductions in chat
2:05pm	Review of new HFC strategic plan- Minerva Delgado
2:20pm	Explanation of HFC research project- Amanda Bankston
2:40pm	2023 HFC Virtual Summit- November 1
2:45pm	Small group brainstorm
2:52pm	Group reports
3:00pm	End

Strategic Plan

- Interviews were conducted with members of the HFC network and Alliance staff, board and members to develop a 2-year strategic plan.
- The plan concludes:
 - *The Hunger Free Community network can be a significantly more valuable asset than it is today. At present, the Alliance serves primarily as an **advisor, supporter and convenor** to its HFC network. These priorities should remain but be ramped up to achieve a significantly higher level of impact.*

Key Themes

- The annual HFC summit is seen as very valuable and (pre-pandemic) provided opportunities to connect with others who do this kind of work. The in-person format is much preferred.
- People find great value in the connections to other HFCs. The Alliance “connects me to others who have experiences that might help me” and “makes connections so others can learn from us.”
- HFCs face significant financial challenges, especially with the decline in funding post-COVID.
- Quarterly webinars provide useful information but need to be more interactive.

Key Themes, cont'd

- There is real value in many of the tools the Alliance shares (e.g., Racial Wealth Gap simulation, HFC impact framework).
- This is a highly challenging advocacy climate for HFCs. For example, some States have been introducing bills attacking SNAP.
- HFC effectiveness is often limited by underinvestment in operations and communications.
- There are significant opportunities to expand communities of practice and convenings.

5 Strategic Initiatives

1. Enhance Alliance's capability to support HFC initiative
 - Hire full-time associate
2. Enrich and expand convening role/communities of practice
 - Currently convening a community engagement discussion group
 - Will plan in-person regional convenings
3. Provide financial support to HFCs where possible
 - Will start a micro grant program for HFCs
4. Take steps to assist HFCs in moving along impact scale
5. Improve communication at the national level about the value/impact of HFCs in addressing food insecurity

Hunger Free Communities Research Project

Amanda Bankston

*Doctoral Student, Research Associate
Program for the Advancement of
Research
on Conflict and Collaboration*



How can we help people **work together** to build stronger, healthier, more equitable communities?



Presentation roadmap

1. Research motivation
2. Research questions
3. Project overview
4. HFC Impact Framework
5. Discussion
6. Next Steps



Research goals

1. Connect theory to practice through an inclusive and **participatory research process**
2. Create accessible deliverables that evaluate and support HFC progress:
 - *HFC Impact Framework 2.0*
 - *HFC Stories of Impact (Case Studies)*
 - *State of the HFC Network Report*
 - *Peer-reviewed journal article*
3. Examine how members leverage the HFC Network to build knowledge, advance their missions, and impact communities

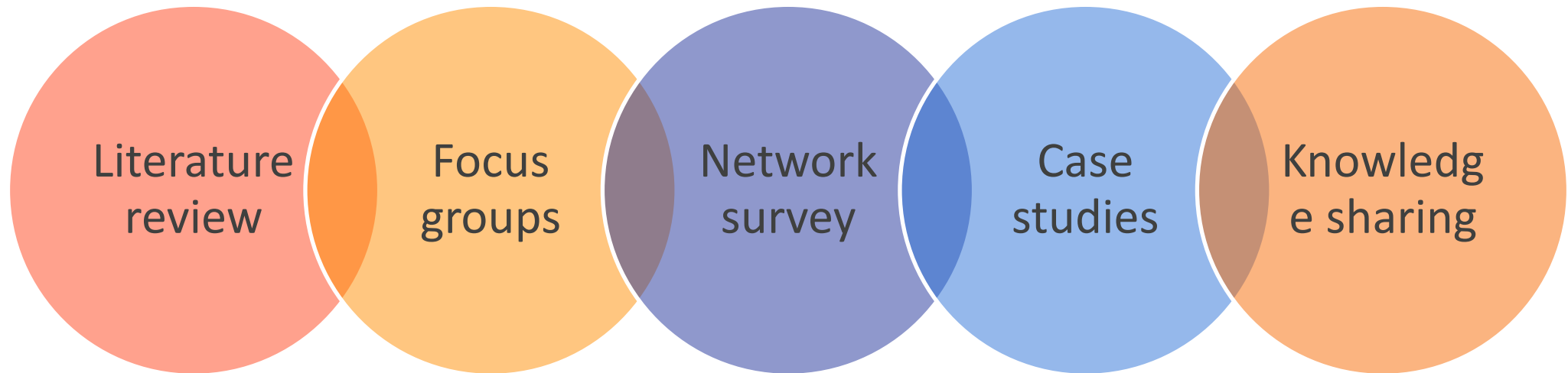
Research questions

Examining the impact of the HFC Network

- ❑ **IMPACT:** What impact has the HFC Network had on participant organizations and their communities?
- ❑ **PARTICIPATION:** How do HFC partners participate in the Network? What resources and support do they need?
- ❑ **THEORY:** How does the HFC Impact Framework hold up in theory and practice? Are there gaps and/or additional considerations that should be included to guide their progress?
- ❑ **TRENDS:** What are the common characteristics of longstanding and effective HFC initiatives ?

Project overview

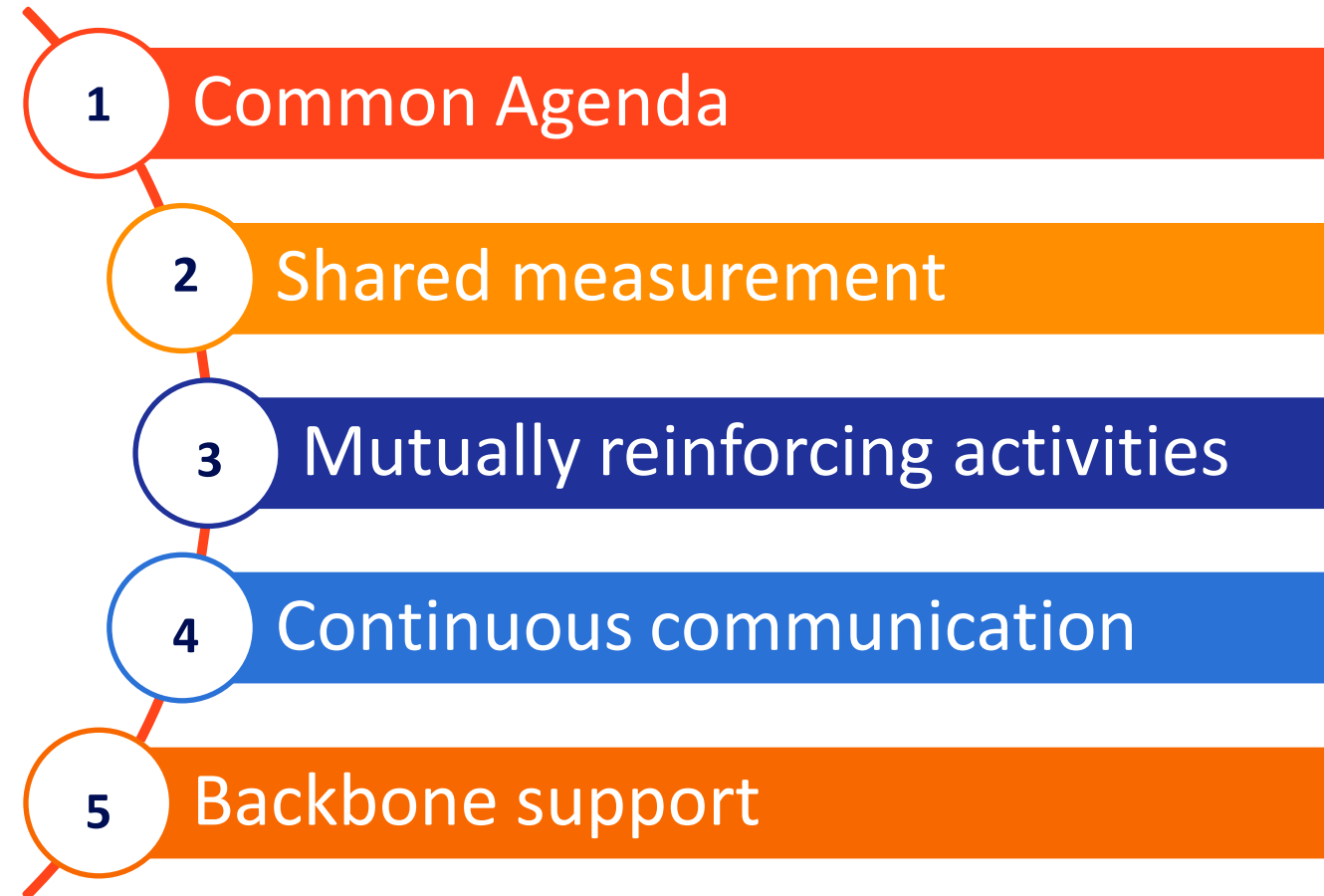
We're using a multi-method approach to understand the trends, approaches, and challenges shaping HFC Network impacts



The How: Collective Impact Theory

“The complex nature of most social problems belies the idea that any single program or organization, however well managed and funded, can singlehandedly create lasting large-scale change.”

--Fay Hanleybrown, John Kania, & Mark Kramer (2011)



The What: HFC Impact Framework



JAMBOARD ENGAGEMENT:
Are you familiar with this framework?

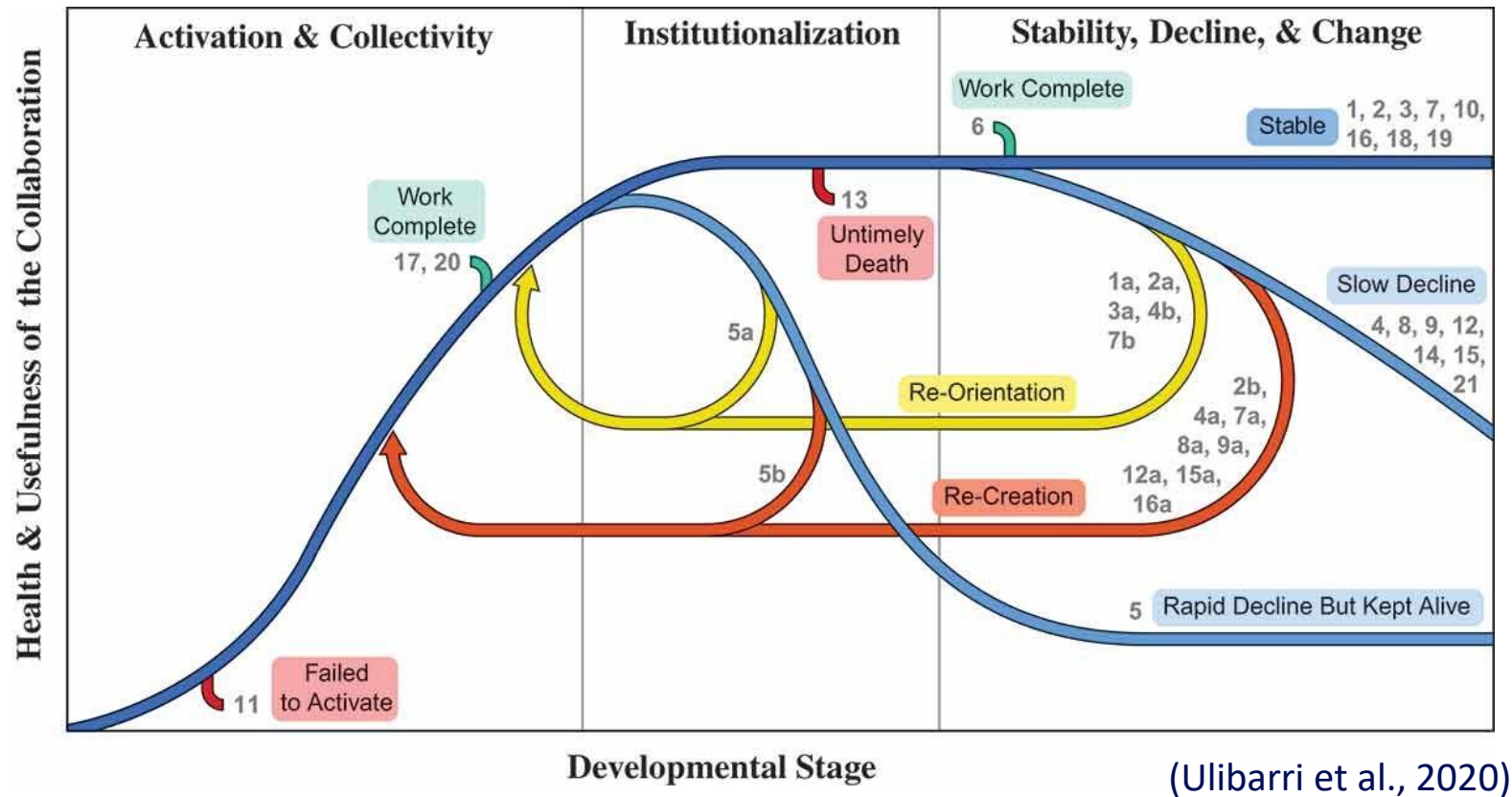
How does the **HFC Impact Framework** align with existing studies of community-based collaboration?

Literature Review *(Section 1)*

- 119 case studies (1-50 years)
- 34 peer-reviewed studies
- 9 theoretical frameworks
- 5 policy domains



How do community-based collaboratives evolve?



Key variables

- **Activation**
(internal/external)
- **Process dynamics**
(Engagement/alignment)
- **Leadership**
(Convening/facilitating)
- **Accountability**
(transparency/oversight)
- **Evaluation**
(outputs/outcomes)

Awakening

Responding

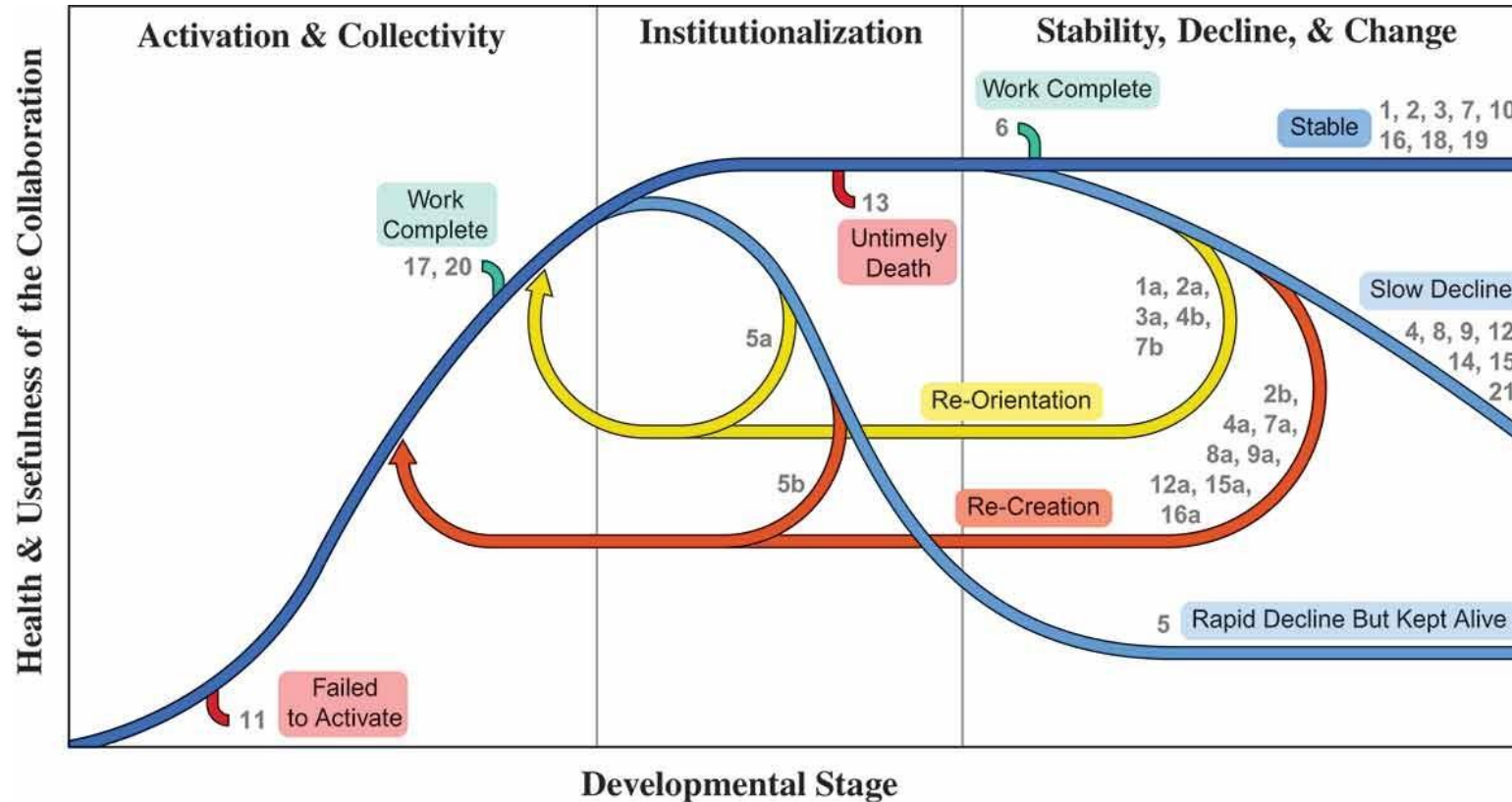
Coalescing

Formalizing

Maturing

Performing

Activation: What triggered your HFC's “awakening”?



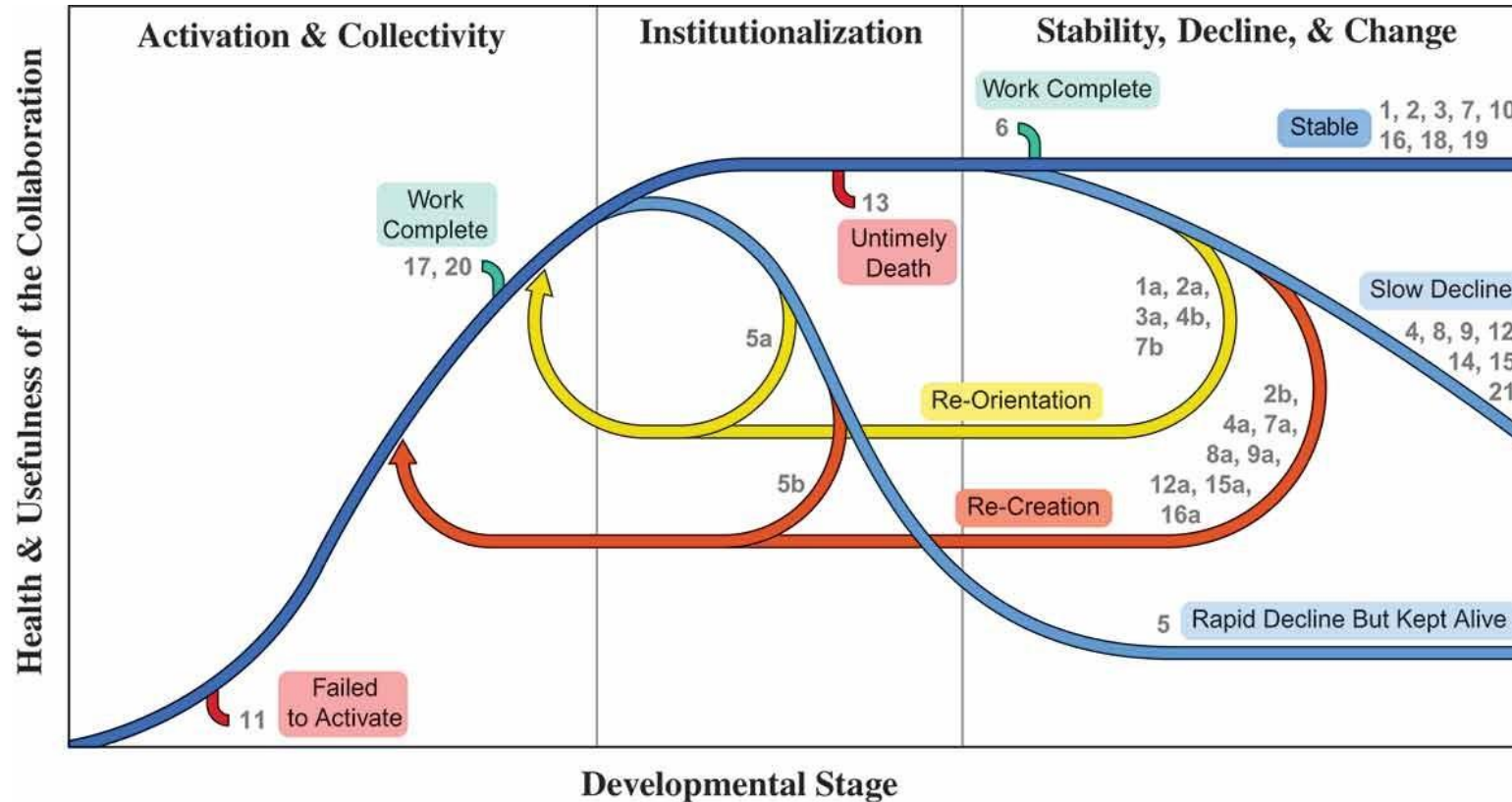
(Ulibarri et al., 2020)

Activation

- Self-initiated coalitions take longer to initiate but are more engaged and productive over time.
→ *Responding, coalescing*
- Externally-directed (mandated/incentivized) collaboratives develop more quickly, yet often fail to achieve full engagement, limiting long-term usefulness.
→ *Formalizing, maturing*

Awakening → Responding → Coalescing → Formalizing → Maturing → Performing

Process dynamics: How do you work together?



(Ulibarri et al., 2020)

Focus on formalizing

- Consistent processes create stable collaborative dynamics.
- Dialogue, joint action, knowledge sharing, and tangible intermediate outputs are essential components of implementation.
- Engagement declines over time in externally-directed collaborative arrangements.

Awakening

Responding

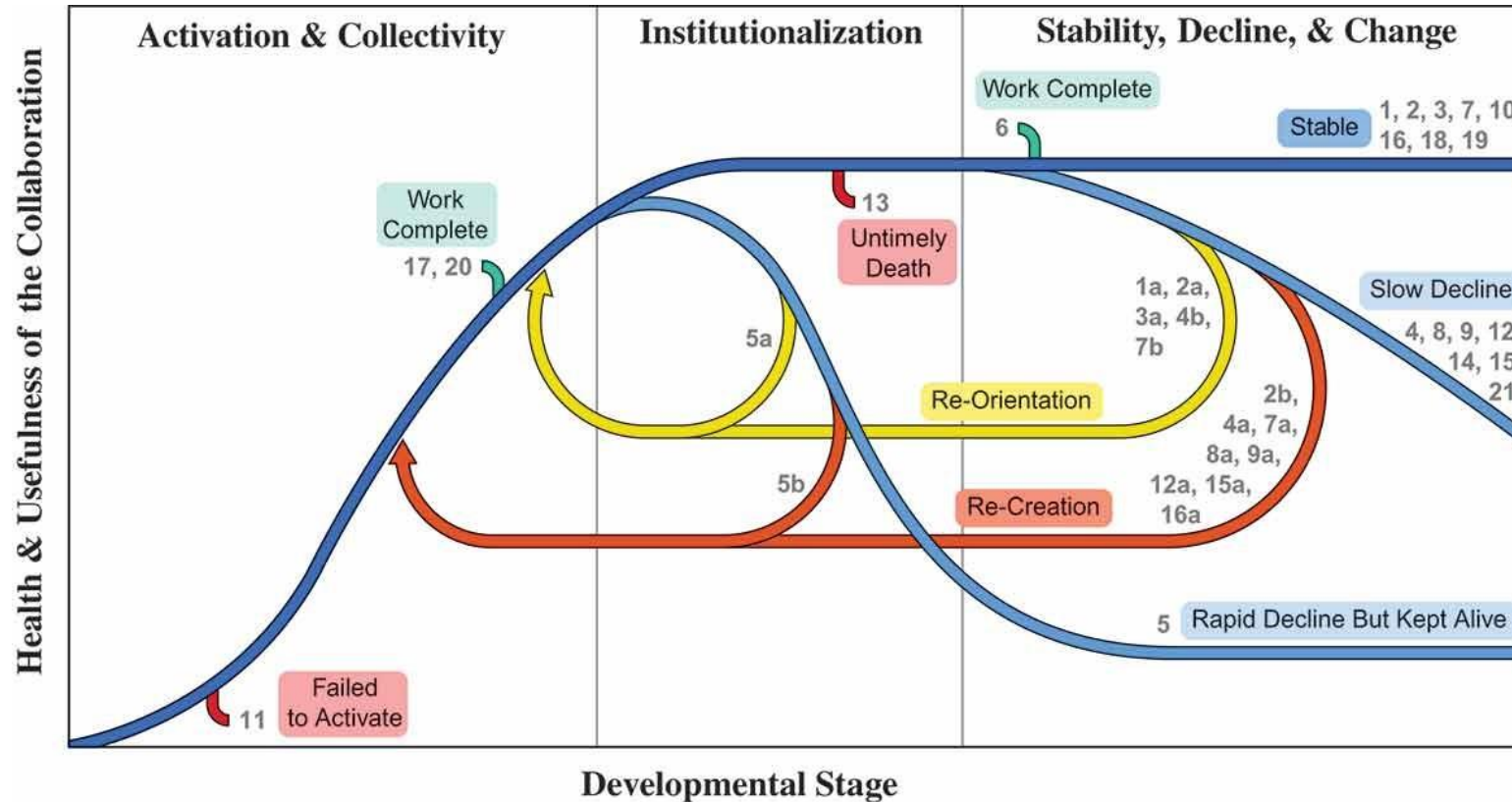
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Leadership: Who leads the way?



(Ulibarri et al., 2020)

Fostering

emergence of single, well-defined leadership structures work best in early phases.

→ *Awakening > Formalizing*

- Shared leadership emerges in the longest-lasting coalitions.

→ *Maturing*

- Key leadership responsibilities shift along the way (e.g., convening, facilitating); and in performing coalitions, "leadership"

Awakening

Responding

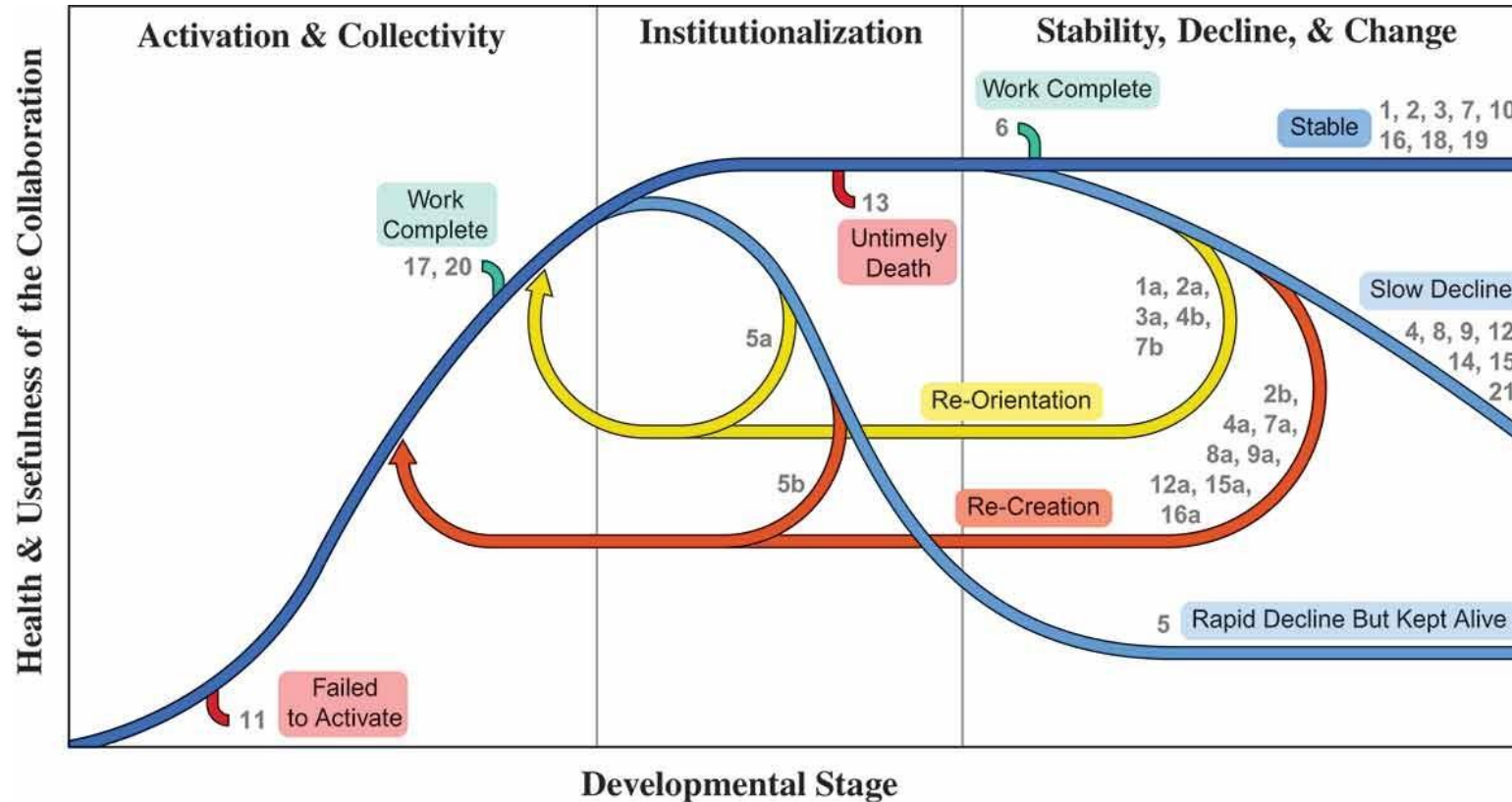
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Evaluation: How do you define success?



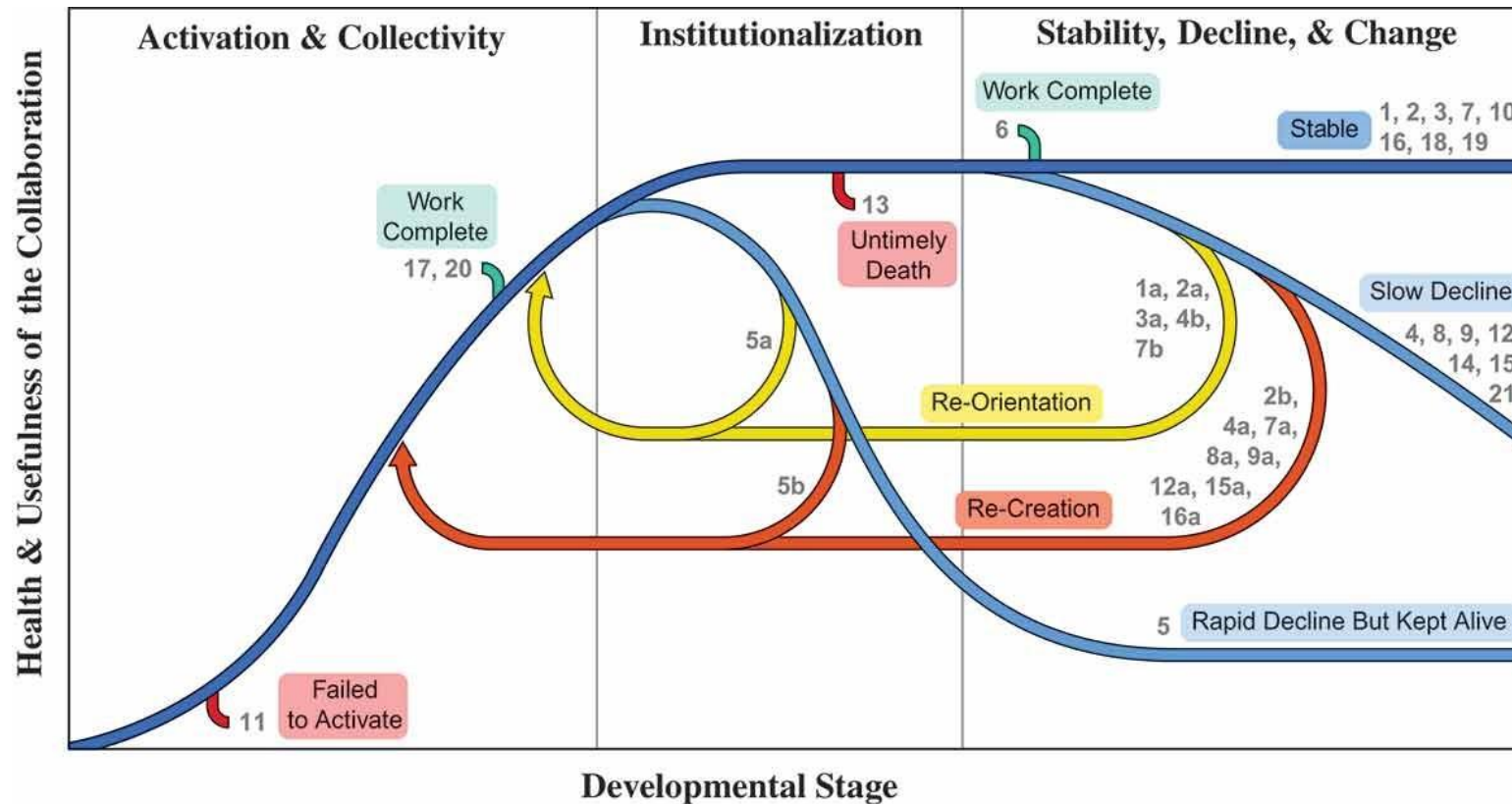
(Ulibarri et al., 2020)

Problem definition

- The scope of the challenge shapes the duration and dynamics of collaboration.
 - *Awakening > Formalizing*
- Common and consistent measurement of progress is essential.
 - *Formalizing > Performing*
- **Intermediate outcomes** fuel advancement toward long term

Awakening → Responding → Coalescing → Formalizing → Maturing → Performing

Accountability: Success according to whom?



(Ulibarri et al., 2020)

Incorporating equity

- Accountability is an increasingly important and understudied variable in coalition-building and collaboration.
- Clear articulation of goals and frequent assessment of progress are markers of success.
- HFC encouragement of lived experience engagement and racial justice frameworks are fertile areas for

Awakening

Responding

Coalescing

Formalizing

Maturing

Performing

Toward an HFC Impact Framework 2.0



JAMBOARD ENGAGEMENT:

What information would be most helpful?

What's next?

Summer 2023 – Spring 2024

- ❑ **FOCUS GROUPS:** We're recruiting groups at different stages for conversations about their challenges, needs, and approaches.
- ❑ **SURVEY:** You'll receive a survey about your HFC work and engagement.
- ❑ **CASE STUDIES:** We'll spend time with 10 HFCs this fall to develop case studies.
- ❑ **REVISED HFC IMPACT FRAMEWORK:** We'll use data and our research to unveil a revised framework at this year's Summit.
- ❑ **ONGOING ENGAGEMENT>** Are there research questions, tools, or deliverables that would support your efforts? Please reach out with your ideas!

Thank you!

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2023 HFC Virtual Summit

- Will be held on November 1
- Will be the last fully virtual summit
- Our goals are to promote successful methods of ending hunger at the community level through:
 - highlighting effective policies and programs for reducing community food insecurity and impacting root causes of hunger;
 - sharing best practices and resources;
 - demonstrating effective multi-sector collaborations; and
 - building skills among participants.

Small Group Brainstorm

Questions:

1. Is there a theme for our next “community of practice” group you would like to explore?
2. What suggestions do you have for topics to address at the HFC summit on Nov. 1?

Please record your suggestions for sharing with the larger group.

Contact

- Minerva Delgado, Director, Coalitions & Advocacy, Alliance to End Hunger