Health Through Action: A Collaborative Development Framework

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
As Health Through Action Community Grant Partnership Program (HTA) grantees are reporting progress towards putting together and growing their local collaboratives, they also report facing a multitude of issues and challenges. This paper was therefore developed not necessarily to provide answers to current challenges being faced by HTA grantees, but to create a vehicle for strategic learning on the topic of collaborative development. Based on an extensive literature review, findings within this paper are organized into three main sections: (1) an orientation to defining collaborative development, (2) a comprehensive framework for considering key elements of collaborative development, and (3) a tool for HTA grantees as they approach their own collaborative’s development.

Defining Collaborative Development
The use of community collaboratives to promote systems change and support improved community health outcomes has grown increasingly in the past two decades. Correspondingly, a growing theoretical knowledge base exists that can begin to frame how HTA grantees might approach collaborative development in their respective communities. Specifically, a preponderance of literature points to the existence of distinct stages that collaboratives pass through as they mature. These stages—which are both progressive and cyclical—are defined below:

- **Formation Stage**: Collaborative members are establishing themselves as well as the processes and infrastructure needed for effective collaborative functioning.
- **Implementation Stage**: As the collaborative action plan is carried out, the collaborative “pilots” both programmatic and operational strategies.
- **Maintenance Stage**: This stage is characterized by relatively stable collaborative operations and programmatic activities, providing the opportunity to reassess existing collaborative mission and practices.

Literature also articulates different types of collaborative formation, that ranges from a loose and informal network of individuals and organizations, to a formal coalition with by-laws, staffing, and independent fiduciary status. The type of collaborative formation that groups typically choose to organize themselves into typically depends on the specific purpose for collaboration; no one type of collaborative is “better” than another. Although all collaboratives progress through predictable stages of formation, implementation, and maintenance, the specific types of issues faced at each stage are strongly shaped by the specific form that a collaborative takes.

Approaching Collaborative Development: A Proposed Framework
The exhibit below proposes a framework that collaboratives—regardless of structure—can consider as they move through stages of formation, implementation, and maintenance. The literature highlights each component as a critical element of an effective collaborative development process, although certain collaboratives may have a greater focus on certain areas than others based on how they are organized, their goals, and their particular stage of development.
The Framework has five main components:

**Shared Vision.** At the core of all collaboratives is a shared vision for collaborative endeavors. This includes developing a *clear mission and vision*, an *action plan* to reach this mission, and a collaborative *sustainability plan*.

**Collaborative Membership.** Members are the fundamental element within collaboratives. *Strategic recruitment* therefore critical for ensuring that key community and systems stakeholders are at the table to accomplish collaborative goals. Continued *membership engagement* and satisfaction is also key to collaborative success.

**Collaborative Processes.** Formally adopted processes can provide clear guidelines for collaborative work. The collaborative processes most critical to consider include:

- **Decision-Making.** Decision-making processes clarify the extent to which members and member agencies have influence in determining the actions of the collaborative.
- **Communications.** Effective communications processes keep collaborative members informed and engaged in collaborative activities. This may include modes of communication within the collaborative, as well as protocol on the types and timing of information to share.
- **Resource Allocation.** Collaboratives need to have resource allocation processes in place to determine how resources, such as funds, in-kind services, or staff time, will be shared and allocated across members and tasks.
- **Fund Development.** Fund development processes can provide a collaborative with a neutral governing body, protocols, and procedures for moving forward on fundraising issues.
- **Conflict Resolution.** Strong conflict resolution processes supports members in their ability to move from initial open disagreement and debate to consensus on an issue.
• **Capacity Building.** Capacity building processes are typically required to support member organizations, with the understanding that member organizations must be strong and well-resourced before they can participate effectively as part of a collaborative. An aspect of collaborative capacity building also includes a focus on leadership development and leadership succession within the collaborative.

**Collaborative Infrastructure.** Collaboratives are more likely to engage members, pool resources, and assess and plan well when they have formalized structures in place. Key areas in which collaboratives typically focus on infrastructure development are the following:

- **Governance/Leadership.** Infrastructure in this area might include governing bodies, such as executive committees, advisory boards, work groups or a non-profit organization.

- **Collaborative Operations.** Infrastructure that defines their collaborative operations and/or formally establishes agreements with collaborative members might be articulated in formal documents such as by-laws, coalition agreements, or Memoranda of Understanding across partners.

- **Program Management.** Infrastructure to manage collaborative operations and implement programmatic activities is necessary for day to day functioning of the collaborative. This might take the form of formalized staffing to manage coordination, timelines, resource allocation, accountability of assigned tasks, and other logistical needs of the collaborative.

- **Evaluation/Assessment.** Evaluation infrastructure creates a continuous learning orientation for the collaborative, ensuring that the collaborative is timely in adapting to shifting contextual conditions, addressing problems, and seeking external expertise.

**Collaborative Interface Strategies.** This last element considers how the collaborative operates with external stakeholders. Key areas might include:

- **Branding/Marketing.** Branding/marketing strategies address how to showcase collaborative members—who may have traditionally been viewed by the public as independent organizations—as part of a unified organization.

- **External communication.** This might entail developing a formal communication plan, designating an official collaborative spokesperson, and/or investing in communications consultants to support collaborative communication endeavors.

- **External Partner Cultivation.** Especially as collaboratives engage in collective advocacy, they may need to consider how to extend their capacities by leveraging the expertise and networks of strategic partners outside of the collaborative.

- **Grassroots/Community Mobilization.** For community-based collaboratives, mobilization of AA&NHPI communities and community leadership development are core to collaborative success.
Application of the Framework: Stages of Collaborative Development
Recognizing that collaboratives are not static entities, the last section of this paper offers a tool that overlays the framework laid out in the previous section with the three stages of formation, implementation and maintenance. For each major element of the framework, we have provided some practical questions that might serve as a tool for HTA grantees to consider as they move through different stages of development.

Conclusion
The framework and ideas presented in this paper are just a way to begin and advance a larger dialogue around collaborative development. SPR sees a real opportunity to build upon existing literature on collaborative development and generate additional learning where the literature stops short—specifically, thinking through collaborative development from the perspective of AA&NHPI organizations focused on improving the health and wellness of AA&NHPI communities.
HEALTH THROUGH ACTION: A COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

As Health Through Action Community Grant Partnership Program (HTA) grantees are reporting progress towards putting together and growing their local collaboratives, they also report facing a multitude of issues and challenges. The issues are multi-faceted, ranging from recruiting local partners, to setting an actionable collaborative agenda, to creating workable governance and communications infrastructure, to managing collaborative budgets. HTA grantees share that they have already benefited from both formal and informal learning about how other HTA sites are approaching similar challenges in their local areas. At the same time, they also acknowledge that they have not yet fully maximized the potential synergy that could result from more strategic cross-cluster sharing of common challenges, individual successes, and lessons learned.

This desire for greater formalized learning on collaborative development concurs with HTA’s vision. When the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Asian Pacific Islander American Forum launched the HTA Community Grant Partnership Program, they recognized the potential for a rich laboratory of learning on collaborative approaches focused on increasing the health and wellness of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA&NHPI) communities. The eight HTA communities from across the nation were funded as a cluster by design, with Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) brought on as an evaluator to in part serve as a learning partner to support cross-cluster learning.

This paper was therefore developed not necessarily to provide answers to current challenges being faced by HTA grantees, but to create a vehicle for strategic learning on the topic of collaborative development. Specifically, it proposes a framework for collaborative development, which is envisioned to serve two complementary objectives for advancing learning among HTA grantees:

- **Allow individual HTA grantees to reflect on their own collaborative development.** The opportunity for HTA grantees to assess and consider their own collaborative development effort within a broader framework can potentially uncover gaps not considered thus far and/or identify areas for local evaluators to conduct further investigation.

- **Create a means for HTA grantees to engage in peer-learning across the cluster.** Frameworks like these can also serve as critical tools for facilitating peer-learning within diverse groups like HTA grantees, specifically by organizing common issues and introducing shared language so that challenges, promising practices and lessons learned can be systematically discussed or addressed.

The paper is organized into three main sections. The first section steps back to provide a short orientation to how we are defining collaborative development. The second section presents a comprehensive framework for considering key elements of collaborative development. Finally, the third section provides a tool for HTA grantees to consider different elements of the framework as they approach their own collaborative’s formation, implementation and maintenance.

*Defining “Collaborative Development”*

The use of community collaboratives to promote systems change and support improved community health outcomes has grown increasingly in the past two decades. Underlying this strategy is the assumption that, given the interrelated factors influencing an individual’s health,
attaining improved health outcomes can be achieved more effectively by groups working in collaboration. Further, community collaboratives are viewed as being better positioned for success by virtue of their ability to capitalize on the synergy created by combined perspectives, resources, and skills of involved partners. Funders such as private foundations and governmental funding agencies often make collaborative activity a funding requirement in the interest of promoting a strategy that potentially leverages existing community resources while also developing and sustaining new approaches to health concerns. While specific measures of collaborative development are still emerging, given the sustained focus on collaborative approaches, a growing theoretical knowledge base exists that can begin to frame how HTA grantees might approach collaborative development in their respective communities.

**Stages of Collaborative Development**
A preponderance of reviewed literature—with roots dating back to the 1960s—describes collaborative development in distinct stages. While various models for thinking about stages of collaborative development exist, we have chosen to simplify our discussion into the three key stages described in Exhibit 1: (1) formation, (2) implementation, and (3) maintenance.

**Exhibit 1: Stages of Collaborative Development**

- **Formation**
  This is the stage where collaborative members are establishing themselves, as well as the necessary processes and infrastructure needed for effective collaborative functioning. Roles and responsibilities are being defined and assigned to individual members, and the group sets its course for collaborative action.

- **Implementation**
  As the collaborative action plan is carried out, the collaborative "pilots" both programmatic and operational strategies. First signs of tensions typically arise at this stage. Resolution typically creates opportunities to test the strength of a collaborative's vision, its member relationships, and established processes/infrastructure.

- **Maintenance**
  This stage is characterized by relatively stable collaborative operations and programmatic activities. This provides an opportunity to strategically revisit and assess existing collaborative vision, membership, processes and infrastructure to determine areas for fine-tuning. At this stage, questions of sustainability also become a central focus.

These three stages of collaborative development are both progressive and cyclical. Specifically, while each stage theoretically builds upon one another, it is not uncommon for different stages to recur as needs arise and community situations dictate. Should some type of transition occur during a collaborative’s lifetime, such as a shift in collaborative leadership, membership, or mission, the collaborative may need to revisit an earlier stage to stay on track with meeting its goals. As the collaborative accomplishes its collective goals, the group may also choose to reassess its focus and/or reorganize itself accordingly to evolve with new directions. Especially as it is transitioning from one stage to another, the collaborative may also engage in activities from two stages simultaneously. For example, the collaborative might already be at the implementation stage of program management, but still at the formation stage of fund development.
Forms of Collaboration
Although all collaboratives progress through predictable stages of formation, implementation, and maintenance, the specific types of issues faced by collaboratives at each stage are strongly shaped by the various forms that a collaborative can take. A “collaborative” has been described in the literature as encompassing anything from a loose and informal network of individuals and organizations to a formal coalition, with MOUs, collaborative staffing, and independent fiduciary status. The side bar describes a range of collaborative structures, ranging from informal to formal. All eight HTA grantees fall within this spectrum.

No one type of collaborative is “better” than another. Groups typically choose to organize themselves into different types of collaboratives, depending on their specific purpose. For example, a collaborative established to provide better coordination and functioning of direct service provision to a community on immunizations might call for a loosely organized collaborative infrastructure to support efficient interagency communication and client referrals. A collaborative serving the function of promoting systems change work on the other hand, must address more overarching and fundamental social determinants of health, which requires involving a greater number and type of partnerships, strategies, and intervention activities. As collaborative needs change over time, so too might the form that the collaborative takes.

For purposes of this framework discussion, we assume that—regardless of its structure—each collaborative considers similar factors in collaborative development as it goes through stages of formation, implementation, and maintenance. While a formal coalition of partners may ultimately choose to adopt more formal infrastructure than an informal network, both still must address questions of how they intend to approach organizing themselves. Even if a collaborative may ultimately operate with the intention of disbanding after it accomplishes its specific goal, it must at some point still address the question of sustainability. As such, the framework described in the next section should be broadly applicable to all HTA collaboratives, although, depending on the type of collaborative, specific elements may have more relevance to some grantees than others.

A Spectrum of Collaborative Structures
Type I. Collaborative has little to no structure, typically created for the purpose of generating a base of support, communicating information, or addressing shared interests. Typically non-hierarchical and flexible, with minimal to no group decision-making required. Communication among members is relatively infrequent.

Type II. Collaborative has minimal structure, typically created for the purpose of cooperation among different organizations to ensure that certain tasks are accomplished. Typically non-hierarchical, with most decisions tending to be low-stakes. Leadership may be concentrated in one primary agency, who serves as the conduit for information, communication, and resource sharing. Communication among members is relatively informal and infrequent.

Type III. Collaborative consists of a central body of members that regularly coordinates efforts and shares resources to address common issues. Member organizations maintain separate autonomous identities but establish mutual goals, shared decision-making processes, and formal communication channels.

Type IV. Collaborative exists as a formal coalition that has merged individual resources to create a separate entity. Typically committed for a long period of time, coalitions usually have a formal infrastructure to support implementation of multiple short-term and long-term coalition objectives. Leadership is strong, shared and delegated across partners, and there is strong commitment to capitalize on the strengths of coalition members. Communication is clear, frequent, and prioritized. Membership commitment and investment in the coalition is high.

Approaching Collaborative Development: A Proposed Framework
Exhibit 2, “Key Elements in Collaborative Development,” proposes a framework that a range of collaboratives can consider as they move through stages of formation, implementation, and maintenance. In addition to our early understandings of some of the issues that HTA grantees are
Currently grappling with, this particular framework was primarily informed by a comprehensive review of the following types of published literature (a full list of references is included in Attachment A):

- Reviews that describe core competencies and processes generally needed within collaborative bodies to facilitate their success;
- Studies that propose measures for assessing collaborative functioning, as well as for quantifying the “collaborative advantage” of working together versus in isolation;
- Literature that focuses specifically on community-level coalitions, with a specific focus on studies that address the role of community-based organizations in collaboratives;
- Evaluations and case studies of collaborative community-based interventions as vehicles for promoting health; as well as
- A few select articles that focus on community participation and/or building community-based pan-ethnic coalitions.

While the framework and its elements draw from the literature, no one has explicitly laid out these concepts in this way, and no one has specifically considered collaborative development within the context of AA&NHPI communities. Therefore, we see potential to break new ground and generate field-wide learning as the framework is fine-tuned based on the experiences of HTA grantees.

**Exhibit 2. Key Elements in Collaborative Development**

Essentially, the framework has five main components: (1) shared vision, (2) collaborative membership, (3) collaborative processes, (4) collaborative infrastructure, and (5) collaborative interface strategies. We hypothesize that each component is a critical element of an effective collaborative development process, although individual collaboratives might have a greater focus on one area or another based on how they are organized and their particular stage of collaborative development (i.e., formation, implementation, maintenance). Below, we will discuss each
component in more detail and provide references to literature/tools that HTA grantees or their evaluators can access.

**Shared Vision**

As demonstrated in the framework above, at the core of all collaboratives is a shared vision for collaborative endeavors. Developing a **clear mission and vision** is widely regarded as an essential aspect of any collaborative partnership; studies document that collaboratives with a targeted mission were able to demonstrate significantly more community health outcomes than those who had a more general mission around “healthy communities.”

Literature also highlights the importance of coming to consensus on an **action plan** to reach this mission, emphasizing the need for group clarity on the broad steps that should be taken to accomplish stated objectives, as well as a shared understanding of the context in which this change will be taking place. A third area requiring shared vision is a collaborative’s **sustainability plan**. Especially as the collaborative matures, it benefits from keeping members on the same page with regard to the nature of their commitment to their collaboration and—if there is agreement on continuing collaboration beyond the current objective—a plan for generating resources and creating infrastructure to support this. Achieving shared vision in these three areas requires an investment in consensus-building processes that facilitate input from all collaborative members. This investment might be greater within AA&NHPI collaboratives where linguistic or cultural barriers may require additional time and/or expert facilitation.

**Collaborative Membership**

Stemming from shared vision are the specific members that make up the collaborative itself. Clearly, **strategic recruitment** in the formation stage of collaborative development is critical for ensuring that key community and systems stakeholders are at the table to accomplish collaborative goals. The appropriate configuration of collaborative members may differ depending on the collaborative and even at different points in time within the same collaborative. For example, one study highlighted that bringing together similar members can make sense for increasing the “critical mass” behind an effort, while bringing diverse members allows the collaborative to leverage a wider range of expertise and resources to carry out multipronged interventions. In strategic recruitment of members, AA&NHPI collaboratives may need to additionally consider strategies for building upon the existing cultural formation of local ethnic communities that they are trying to reach; authentic mobilization of ethnic communities often requires trusted “gatekeeper” individuals or organizations to represent community voice and interests.

Discussions of collaborative development heavily emphasize the importance of **membership satisfaction** to a collaborative’s ultimate success. Specifically, sustained member interest and participation are predicated by a positive **collaborative climate** that is “cohesive, task-oriented and innovative.” The presence of **relationships with other coalition members** outside of collaborative activity is also a predictor of member satisfaction, as is **active participation** in collaborative activities beyond just attending meetings. In their cost-effectiveness calculation of their participation, members need to be clear that they are deriving benefit, as well as feeling that they are adding value to the collaborative itself.

**Collaborative Processes**

Moving to the right of the framework, we include key factors that influence collaborative functioning. As have been documented in numerous research studies and witnessed in our own
evaluation work, strong internal processes are essential to ensuring effective collaboration. Even within informal collaborative networks, formally adopted collaborative processes can clarify individual and organizational roles and responsibilities and provide clear guidelines for collaborative work. Within more established coalitions, formalized operating procedures and processes are critical for creating a stable, consistent, and routine internal collaborative environment that promotes task accomplishment. Below, we describe collaborative processes most integral for HTA grantees to consider as they address their own collaborative functioning and development.

- **Decision-making.** Establishing how a collaborative intends to approach decision-making is likely one of the most important early decisions that it can make. Decision-making processes clarify the extent to which members and member agencies have influence in determining the actions of the collaborative. By formalizing the decision-making process, members can gain clear guidelines and predict with certainty when they will and will not have authority to give input on an issue. In our past work, we have documented collaboratives benefiting significantly from simple clarification of when consensus or simple majority vote is appropriate and whether voting rights extend to all collaborative members or to only one representative per partner organization. Formalized decision-making processes ensure neutral, mutually agreed upon protocols for all partner organizations to follow prior to the emergence of challenges or conflicts.

- **Communications.** Regardless of the type of collaborative, keeping collaborative members informed and engaged in collaborative activities is essential to collaborative survival. Effective communications processes might take the form of different tools, such as listserves, websites, meeting minutes, all with the goal of informing the broader membership of collaborative activities. A communication flowchart, which outlines the communication conduits, helps to decentralize communication while improving timeliness and likelihood of improved communication sharing. In some cases, collaboratives may want to consider implementing additional processes—such as an early communication “audit” of collaborative member preferences and/or periodic assessments of existing communications processes—to ensure alignment of communication processes with collaborative member needs and preferences.

- **Resource Allocation.** As groups undertake collaborative endeavors, human and financial resources must be available and efficiently leveraged to implement programmatic activities and operate the collaborative. Therefore, collaboratives will likely need to have resource allocation processes in place to determine how resources, such as funds, in-kind services, or staff time, will be shared by collaborative members and allocated across collaborative tasks. Depending on how they are organized, collaboratives may also need to first fundamentally decide who has access to and/or authority over collaborative budgets. Collaboratives may want to provide significant attention to the question of resource allocation; several studies have concluded that collaboratives with strong resource allocation processes in place are better able to recruit and retain satisfied members, successfully sponsor or implement programmatic activities, and ultimately sustain themselves in the long-term.
**Fund Development.** Inherent challenges present themselves when organizations who have previously conducted fund development independently—potentially even historically competing with each other for funding—join forces. Proactively considering fund development processes can provide a collaborative with a neutral governing body, protocols, and procedures for moving forward on fundraising issues. Even if the collaborative is not engaged in fund development as a collaborative, having guiding principles in place on how individual members will handle competitive funding opportunities may avoid potential conflict. For collaboratives actively pursuing resources as a group, formalizing collaborative infrastructure around fund development might be considered. For example, a fund development board might develop a matrix to score different RFQs and a master calendar to help determine which funding opportunities to pursue, cultivate a cadre of grant writing consultants, or compile background literature on collaborative history, member organizations, and accomplishments ready to insert into a grant proposal.

**Conflict Resolution.** Interpersonal conflict or discord is a strong possibility when any group of individuals come together for a common cause. This possibility might be particularly intensified among AA&NHPI ethnic organizations with different histories of inter- and intra-ethnic tensions within their communities who are coming together for the first time under a panethnic umbrella. Further, because conflict might present itself less overtly within AA&NHPI collaboratives, HTA grantees may need to consider culturally appropriate conflict identification and resolution strategies. Conflict is not reason for concern in and of itself, but may actually provide an opportunity to test existing infrastructures and processes and catalyze growth. An explicit focus on establishing strong processes that support conflict resolution supports members in their ability to move from initial open disagreement and debate to consensus on an issue. Governance and communications infrastructures, as well as a strong sense of shared mission and trusting interrelationships between collaborative members and organizations, help to provide the supportive environment necessary for preventing conflict.

**Capacity Building/Leadership Development.** The literature we reviewed underscored the role of capacity building and its relationship to collaborative success. Capacity building can take on many forms. Specifically, processes are typically required to assess and support organizational development of member organizations, with the understanding that member organizations must be strong, knowledgeable, and well-resourced themselves before they can participate effectively in collaborative activities. Capacity building in core competencies such as community assessment, member recruitment, leadership development, program development and implementation, evaluation, and fundraising are additional areas which have been identified as enhancing and strengthening the broader collaborative.

A third dimension of capacity building within collaborative focuses on development of individual leaders. Studies have documented a strong correlation between strong leadership and higher rates of environmental change.
in support of healthy outcomes and found the loss of leadership to be adversely related to lower community outcomes. Some offer specific competencies of effective leaders, such as skills related to communication, facilitation, negotiation and networking. Literature emphasizes thinking about leadership development broadly—because different leadership skills are required at different stages of collaborative development, the collaborative may want to think about either emphasizing different skills and/or fostering different leaders over time. Further, given the potential for staff turnover, the collaborative may want to consider putting processes in place that build the leadership capacity of not only existing collaborative leaders but also emerging members who have the potential to lead collaborative endeavors in the future.

**Collaborative Infrastructure**

Beyond the processes discussed above, several studies have shown that collaboratives are more likely to engage members, pool resources, and assess and plan well when they have formalized structures in place. The level of formal structures that a group will choose to adopt will naturally be dictated by the type of collaborative organization, the anticipated length of time the collaborative intends to work together, and the level of time and financial resources available to dedicate to infrastructure development. The following are key areas where collaboratives may focus on infrastructure development:

- **Governance & Leadership.** Building a governance and leadership infrastructure is one of the first activities that a collaborative must undertake to organize and share collaborative work, clarify member responsibilities, and create the focus necessary to achieve target goals. Central to this might be the creation of governing bodies, such as executive committees, advisory boards, work groups, and chairpersons with clearly defined job descriptions and policies regarding authority of these positions so that they can make decisions for or speak on the behalf of defined aspects of collaborative activity. For larger or more complex coalitions, organizational charts can assist in clarifying to members which governing bodies have authorization over certain issues, as well as provide a broad overview of how the different governing bodies complement one another to address the overall mission and goals.

- **Collaborative Operations.** As collaborative become more formalized, many also find the need to establish infrastructure that defines their collaborative operations and/or formally establishes agreements with collaborative members. These are typically articulated in formal documents such as by-laws, coalition agreements, or Memoranda of Understanding across partners. Depending on the needs of the collaborative, these formal documents might address: What is the guiding mission of the collaborative? How is collaborative membership defined? What are the responsibilities of collaborative members? What are processes for terminating membership, if at all? How is the collaborative governing itself, and how is this governing body selected? What are the limits of power of the governing body, if any? How are resources allocated within the

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* For the sake of clarity, above we have described both infrastructure and internal processes as discrete elements of collaborative development. However, while researchers are still exploring the ways in which different collaborative infrastructures and processes influences work together, it is clear that these elements are interdependent and influence one another.
collaborative? How does the collaborative approach decision-making—who has input, how are decisions reached?

- **Program Management.** Program management infrastructure to manage collaborative operations and implement programmatic activities is necessary for the day-to-day functioning of the collaborative. This is particularly the case within coalitions with many participating members. Program management infrastructure typically includes aspects of handling the “business” activities of the collaborative (i.e., hosting meetings, carrying out administrative functions, serving as the fiscal agent, determining resource allocation, etc.), as well as keeping track of collaborative activities (i.e., managing timelines, coordinating internal communication, facilitating meetings, handling external communication, etc.). Several studies have shown that having formal staffing in place to manage coordination, timelines, resource allocation, accountability of assigned tasks, and other logistics is a key indicator of collaborative effectiveness. At the most basic level, program management entails encouraging member involvement, setting agendas, and facilitating meetings to reach agreement on collaborative activities. For more complex coalitions, subcommittees, workgroups, or other types of program management infrastructures help to cultivate a climate of shared responsibility among members as they plan together, identify agenda items and implement key objectives.

- **Evaluation/Assessment.** Having an evaluation/assessment infrastructure creates a continuous learning orientation for the collaborative in which the collaborative consistently seeks and responds to feedback and adapts to evaluation data. An effective evaluation infrastructure helps to ensure that the collaborative is timely in adapting to shifting contextual conditions, dialoguing about problems, and seeking external expertise. This infrastructure can take the form of a designated evaluation subcommittee to identify indicators and outcomes as part of overseeing progress on collaborative goals. Tools such as needs assessments, asset mapping, or event sign-in sheets can help standardize the evaluation measurements being used across the collaborative.

**Collaborative Interface Strategies**

The last and final element within the HTA Collaborative Development Framework focuses on strategies that consider how the collaborative operates with external stakeholders. While published literature here is still fairly limited, our experience evaluating community-based multicultural coalitions tells us that the following might demand strategic consideration:

- **Branding/Marketing.** By the nature of a collaborative being made up of separate organizations, each with their own identities, challenges may arise related to the degree to which external stakeholders acknowledge and respond to a new, unified collaborative entity versus individual member organizations. This can be an important missed opportunity, as the value of collaborative systems change endeavors lies in leveraging the full weight of collaborative members and their constituencies. To present a unified brand, some collaboratives report taking relatively simple steps such as developing collaborative logos, websites, and/or letterhead that lists member organizations. Pan-ethnic coalitions made up of member organizations with strong reputations within their particular ethnic community may require additional investment strategies related to inclusive marketing that addresses differences in culture and promotes transference of trust from member organizations to the broader collaborative. Collaborative members who traditionally
provide direct services to their respective constituencies will similarly need to consider how to strategically market advocacy goals to their own communities as part of a broader collaborative mission.

- **External Communications.** Consideration of infrastructure to support communication with external stakeholders can ensure that the collaborative’s identity, mission, resources, and activities are being consistently shared with the broader external audience. Infrastructure for external communications might entail developing a formal communication plan, creating an official communication position (such as a member-at-large or chairperson) who serves as a spokesperson for the collaborative to external audiences, and/or investing in communications consultants to support collaborative communication endeavors. It might also entail creating a bank of resources such as PowerPoint presentations, websites, or brochures to communicate and share the work of the collaborative to an external audience.

- **External Partner Cultivation.** As they engage in collective advocacy, collaboratives will likely need to consider how to extend their capacities by leveraging the expertise and networks of strategic partners outside of their collaboratives (such as policymakers, advocacy groups, regional/statewide organizations). Community-based collaboratives endeavoring to represent different cultural communities will also likely focus on identifying strategic partners who might further bridge trust and broker relationships with those communities. This process will require ongoing strategic discussions among partners about who might be targeted as strategic partners and how to cultivate relationships with these individuals or organizations. In some cases, the latter may entail thinking through how to extend to the larger collaborative the existing partnerships that individual collaborative members hold. Partner cultivation will also require setting up a single point of contact for interested outsiders looking to make contact with the collaborative for things such as joint advocacy, letters of support, or signing onto a cross-racial advocacy platform, as well as a process for deciding which opportunities make sense for the collaborative to consider.

- **Grassroots/Community Mobilization.** For community-based collaboratives such as those represented by HTA grantees, mobilization of AA&NHPI communities will be core to collaborative success. Assuming that each participating organization has a base of support within its respective community that can be easily mobilized, the challenge will be to knit together a collaborative-wide base of support for collective advocacy endeavors. In addition to the marketing/branding strategies described above, this may entail the collaborative inventorying and managing various community outreach vehicles (e.g., ethnic media, religious or clan networks, listservs, case management relationships, etc.), and strategically tailoring messages to effectively mobilize different cultural communities. Community leadership development—a key element within most community-based advocacy efforts—is also more complex within these collaboratives. In addition to focusing on basic recruitment and curriculum issues within leadership development efforts, HTA collaboratives will need to additionally consider factors such as navigating ethnic and cross-ethnic community politics.
**Application of the Framework: Stages of Collaborative Development**

Collaboratives are not static entities. Therefore, the table shown on the next two pages in Exhibit 3 considers the “Key Elements in Collaborative Development” Framework within the context of developing collaboratives. Specifically, the table overlays the framework laid out in the previous section with the three stages of formation, implementation and maintenance, as a way of delineating how different elements of the framework may generate distinct challenges and promising practices at different points in a collaborative’s development. For each major element of the framework, we have provided some practical questions that might serve as a tool for HTA grantees to consider as they move through different stages of development.

**Conclusion**

The framework and ideas presented in this paper are just a way to begin and advance a larger dialogue around collaborative development. As part of our ongoing data collection, SPR will be talking in depth with individual HTA grantees about their own experiences in collaborative development. This framework will serve as an organizing tool for us to gather challenges, lessons learned and promising practices on how grantees have thus far approached building shared vision and collaborative membership, as well as developing internal processes, collaborative infrastructure and collaborative interface strategies. We see a real opportunity to build upon existing literature on collaborative development and generate additional learning where the literature stops short—specifically, thinking through collaborative development from the perspective of AA&NHPI organizations focused on improving the health and wellness of AA&NHPI communities.
### Exhibit 3. HTA Collaborative Development Framework Considerations by Stage of Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage I: Formation</th>
<th>Stage II: Implementation</th>
<th>Stage III: Maintenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Vision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have we come to a shared understanding around our mission/vision for coming together? Have all collaborative members had an opportunity to provide input into that vision?</td>
<td>• To what extent do our collaborative mission and action plan resonate with collaborative members as the work gets underway?</td>
<td>• To what extent does our mission continue to resonate with collaborative members? Are our goals and associated activities still in alignment with our shared vision? Are we providing ample opportunities to discuss fine-tuning our mission and/or action plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do collaborative members have clarity on our action plan for accomplishing our collective objectives?</td>
<td>• Do collaborative members share a common understanding of the context in which our work is unfolding (i.e., so that we can come to agreement on how to strategically modify our work as needed to capitalize on opportunities/minimize barriers)?</td>
<td>• Do collaborative members have consensus on a vision for sustaining our collective endeavor? Have we created space to have this discussion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborative Membership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have we discussed our assumptions about who should be brought together as partners in this collaborative endeavor (i.e., like-minded versus diverse stakeholders)?</td>
<td>• Are we providing the right climate and support to build strong, trusting relationships among collaborative members?</td>
<td>• To what extent are we actively reflecting on whether we continue to have the right mix of members at the table? Have we weighed the benefits and trade-offs of modifying our collaborative membership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In support of our mission, have we strategically recruited appropriate community and/or systems stakeholders as collaborative members? Have we assessed who is missing from the table?</td>
<td>• Are we creating appropriate roles for collaborative members to actively participate in collaborative activities? Are we effectively building on individual member and organization’s strengths?</td>
<td>• To what extent are existing collaborative members satisfied with their participation? Have we set up appropriate feedback mechanisms to monitor this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have we inventoried the assets that collaborative members bring to the table? Have we made clear the strategic role that individual members might serve?</td>
<td>• Are members clear about the value that they derive from their participation in the collaborative? Are they clear about the value that they provide the collaborative?</td>
<td>• Have we developed strategies to continue to keep members interested and engaged? To engage less active members? To build our overall connectedness to one another?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Processes</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have we established processes for collaborative decision-making (i.e., what type of decisions need the input of which members)? Are collaborative members aware of and on board with these processes?</td>
<td>• Are collaborative members feeling positive about collaborative decision-making? Do they feel that they have enough input?</td>
<td>• Have we thought strategically about leadership transition? Are we creating opportunities for shared leadership among more junior members of the collaborative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do we have a sense of collaborative members’ preferences in terms of communication? Have we set up communications processes that addresses these preferences?</td>
<td>• To what degree is our collaborative operating with strong inter-agency and inter-group communication? Are collaborative members feeling informed about collaborative activity?</td>
<td>• To what extent are we assessing how well resources are being leveraged and used effectively to support collaborative endeavors? Have we considered whether alternative strategies make better sense?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To what extent have we explicitly addressed resource allocation within the group? Who will have say with regard to how the collaborative</td>
<td>• Have we established protocol and infrastructure related to how collaborative members will pursue funding opportunities—either as individual organizations or as a collaborative?</td>
<td>• To what extent do we have resources in place to sustain collaborative activity? Do we need to fine tune our fund development strategy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage I: Formation</td>
<td>Stage II: Implementation</td>
<td>Stage III: Maintenance</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Processes (cont’d)</strong></td>
<td>• To what extent have we addressed processes for working through potential conflicts across collaborative members?</td>
<td>• To what extent do we have a process in place to consider long-term capacity building needs of the collaborative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disburse financial and human resources in support of our goals?</td>
<td>• Have we created space and opportunities for collaborative members to provide feedback on existing collaborative processes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To what extent have we assessed the degree to which members have the capacity to undertake this project? Have we considered how to support participating organizations so that they can fully participate?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborative Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Community Interface Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have we established a workable governance/leadership structure for our collaborative?</td>
<td>• Have we identified potential external partners that can help the collaborative in accomplishing its goals? Have we thought through strategies for cultivating these relationships?</td>
<td>• Where are the remaining gaps in terms of cultivating relationships with systems and/or community partners? What are our strategies for addressing these gaps? Have we fully leveraged internal partners’ relationships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have we articulated our collaborative operations to collaborative members? Do we need formal documents such as by-laws, MOUs, or coalition agreements?</td>
<td>• Have we discussed strategies for mobilizing AA&amp;NHPI communities behind our collaborative endeavors? Have we established a clear vision for identifying and building community leaders to support our goals?</td>
<td>• To what extent should we consider fine-tuning our messaging and/or collaborative “brand” in our external communications?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To what extent have we reached agreement on how our collaborative activities will be managed? Do we have the right systems in place to facilitate progress towards our objectives? To manage collaborative timelines and deliverables?</td>
<td>• To what extent do external stakeholders recognize the existence of a separate collaborative entity? Particularly, how are our targeted AA&amp;NHPI communities responding to our collaborative efforts?</td>
<td>• How are we assessing our impact and influence with external stakeholders?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Have we established evaluation outcomes and indicators that we want to track? Do we have appropriate we set up evaluation systems that can help us measure progress towards those outcomes? A plan to unify data collection and analysis efforts across agencies?</td>
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<td>• Are we documenting short-term outcomes emerging from our collaborative activity?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• To what extent are we making progress towards our programmatic goals? Do collaborative members feel like we have appropriate infrastructure to efficiently move forward with our collective work? Where are the gaps in coordination?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Are we strategically assessing and adjusting existing collaborative infrastructure based on collaborative member feedback?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Is our evaluation yielding data that are useful for our ongoing decision-making? Are there additional information and/or measures that we should consider tracking?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are external stakeholders hearing about our collaborative activity? Are we speaking with consistent messages to external stakeholders? Are we set up to efficiently respond to media and other requests for information?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Do external stakeholders have a clear sense of our mission? Do they feel a sense of connection and engagement to our action plan?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How are we effectively engaging grassroots leaders in our collaborative endeavors?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Ibid.


Butterfoss, Goodman, and Wandersman. op. cit.


Roussos and Fawcett. op. cit.

Ibid.


Foster-Fishman, et al. op. cit.


Lasker, et al. op. cit.


Butterfoss, Goodman, and Wandersman. op. cit.


Foster-Fishman, et al. op. cit.


Kegler, et al. op cit.

Butterfoss, Lachance, and Orians. op. cit.

Kegler, et al. op cit.

Foster-Fishman, et al. op cit.

Ibid.

Butterfoss, Gilmore, et al. op. cit.

Butterfoss, Gilmore, et al. op. cit.

Butterfoss, Gilmore, et al. op. cit.

Roussos and Fawcett. op. cit.

Foster-Fishman, et al. op cit.

Butterfoss, Lachance, and Orians. op. cit.
ATTACHMENT A: LITERATURE REVIEWED


