



Collaboration: Pathways to impact

Learning seminar: July 2025

National Evaluation & Learning Partnership

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Welcome and overview

	Time (mins)	Format
Introduction	10	Presentation
Collaboration: why it matters	5	Presentation
Buzz session: what do you hope to learn today?	5	In groups
Method and data	10	Presentation
Doncaster's story	15	Presentation
Questions and reflections	10	Open
Movement break	5	
Explanations of change	15	Presentation
Sharing experiences and understandings	20	Breakout rooms
Feedback session: How will this shape our work in Place?	10	Open
Next steps	5	Presentation
Session feedback	5	Padlet

Purpose of the workshop

For participants

To build understanding of CCA

Consider how and why combinations of conditions may shape intermediate outcomes

Think about how to use and build on this learning in practice

For NELP

To share some findings of CCA

Build confidence of partners in engaging with CCA

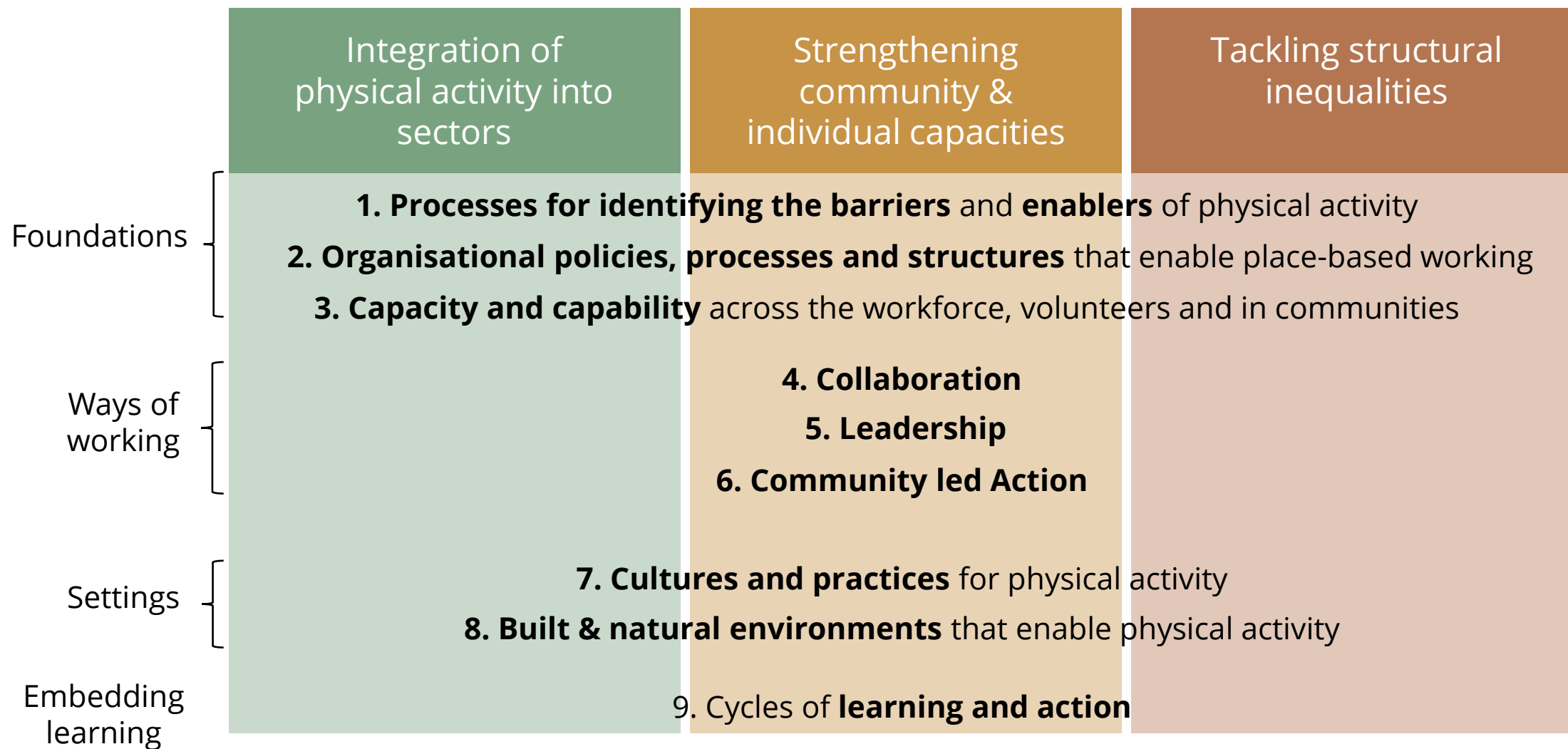
Capture reflections and feedback

Buzz session



Conditions for addressing physical activity inequality

(2024 version - adapted based on participant feedback and data analysis)

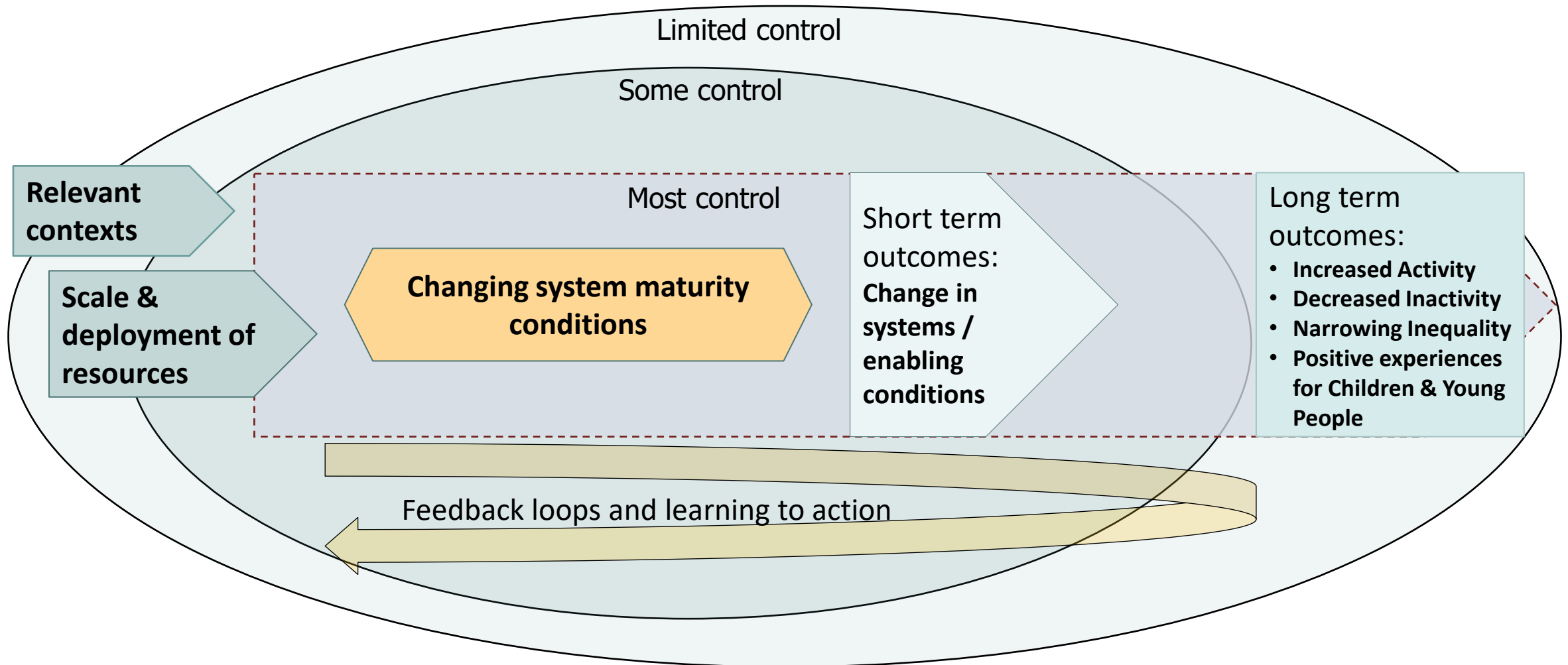


Collaboration: What does this mean and why is it important?



- Organisations working together within and across policy areas to tackle systemic barriers and/or create physical activity opportunities
- The shared purpose is widely owned across place-based partners
- Shared decision-making is routine, and equitable
- Contradictions in policy and practice are routinely unravelled and resolved
- Collaborative practice is the norm and persists beyond individual relationships.

NELP Theory of Change in complex systems



Understanding pathways to impact: Where, why, and how change is taking place



Configurational Comparative Analysis (CCA)

a systematic way of identifying patterns (configurations) of conditions which are associated with positive outcomes

Evaluation & Learning reports

documentary analysis providing in-depth understanding at Place level



CCA Data collection: 47 cases

10 Context measures

Wider context:

Demographics,
deprivation, social
environments, PA levels
(existing sources)

10 Resources measures

Scale,
composition and
deployment of
resources for
place-based
systemic working
(CCA survey)

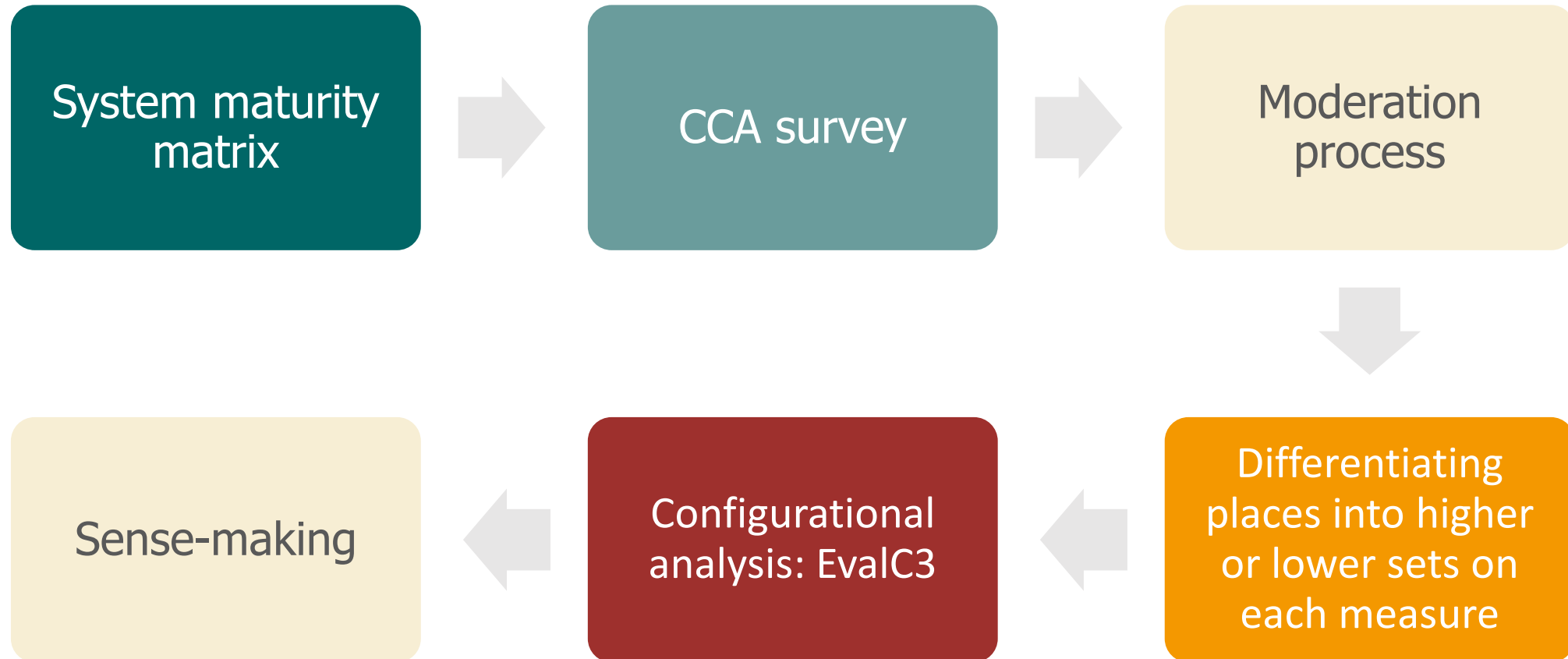
26 System maturity measures

Place Partnership context and action:

Maturity of systemic
place-based working
(CCA survey)



CCA Process

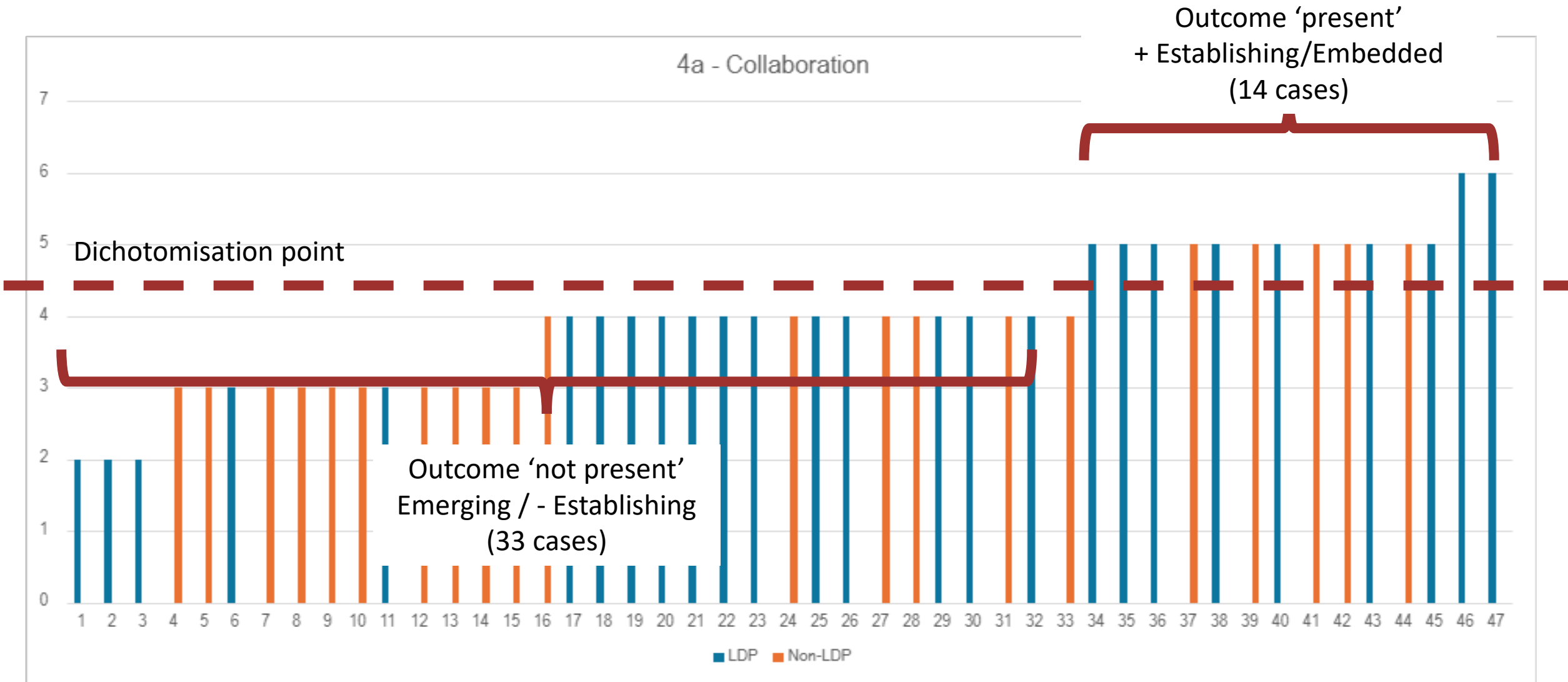




Headline findings

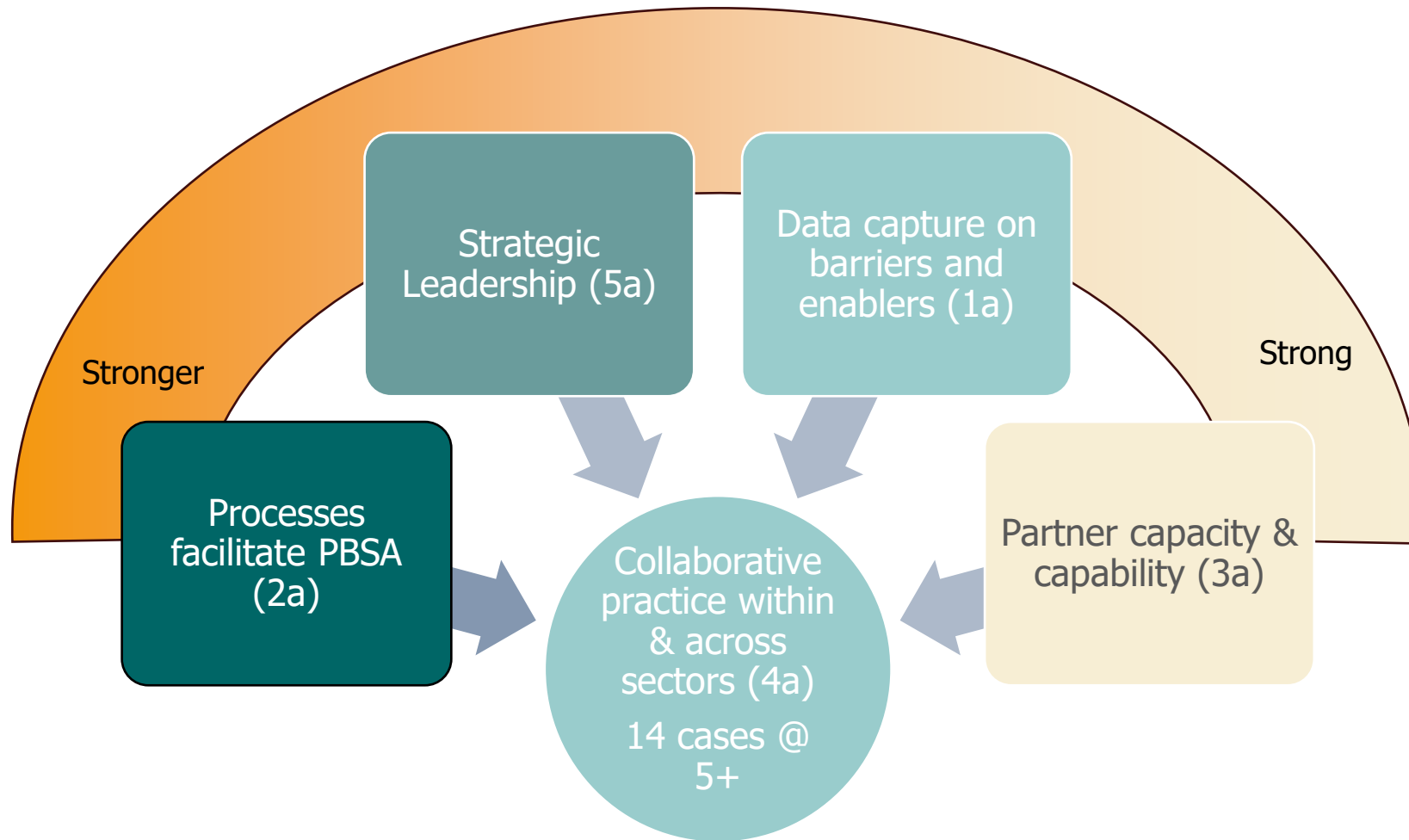
Headline findings: Maturity of collaboration

Collaborative practice within & between sectors (4a)



Headline findings: Conditions predicting collaboration

Collaborative practice within & between sectors (4a)



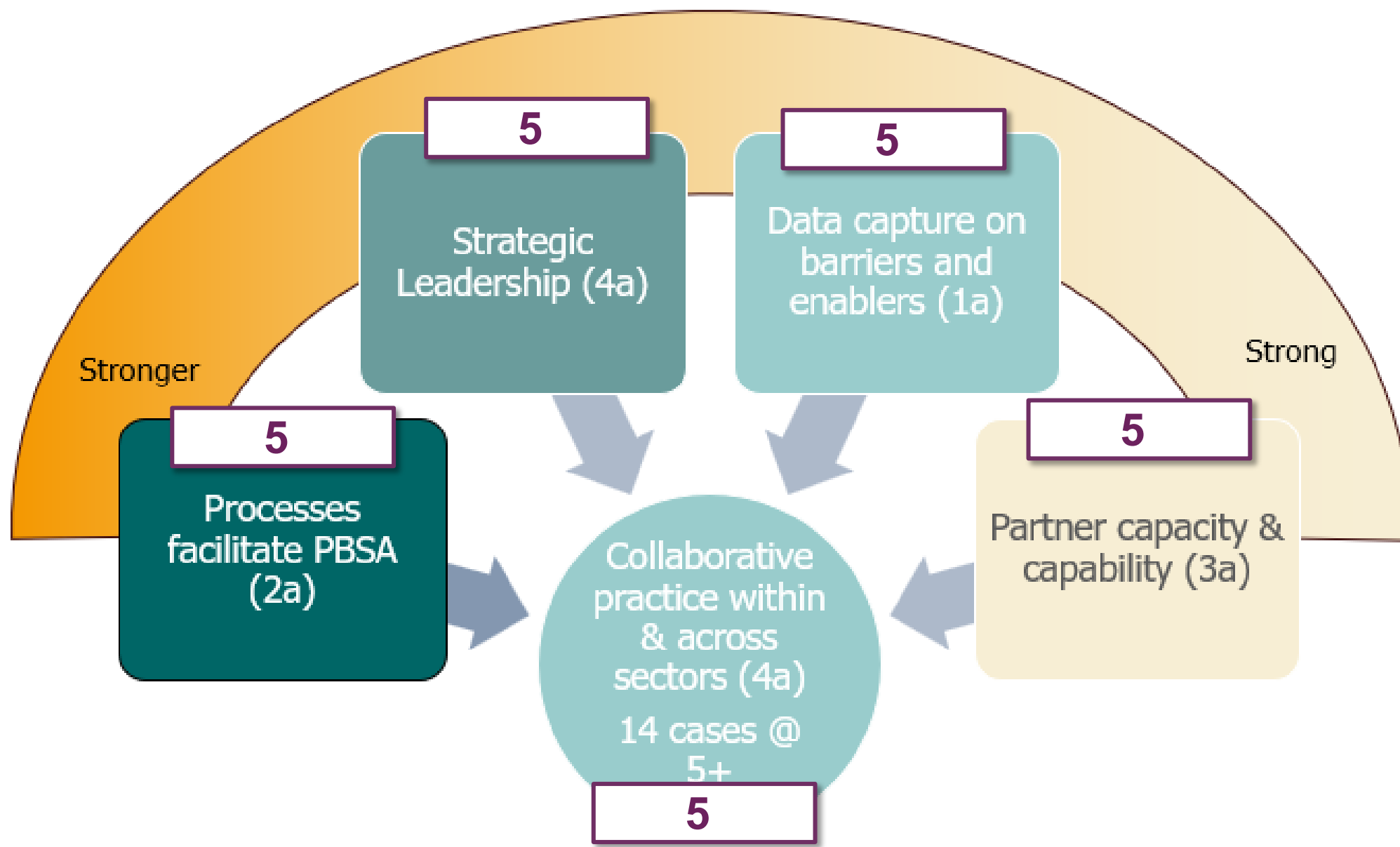
Collaboration within & across sectors

Jodie Bridger

Monday 21st July 2025

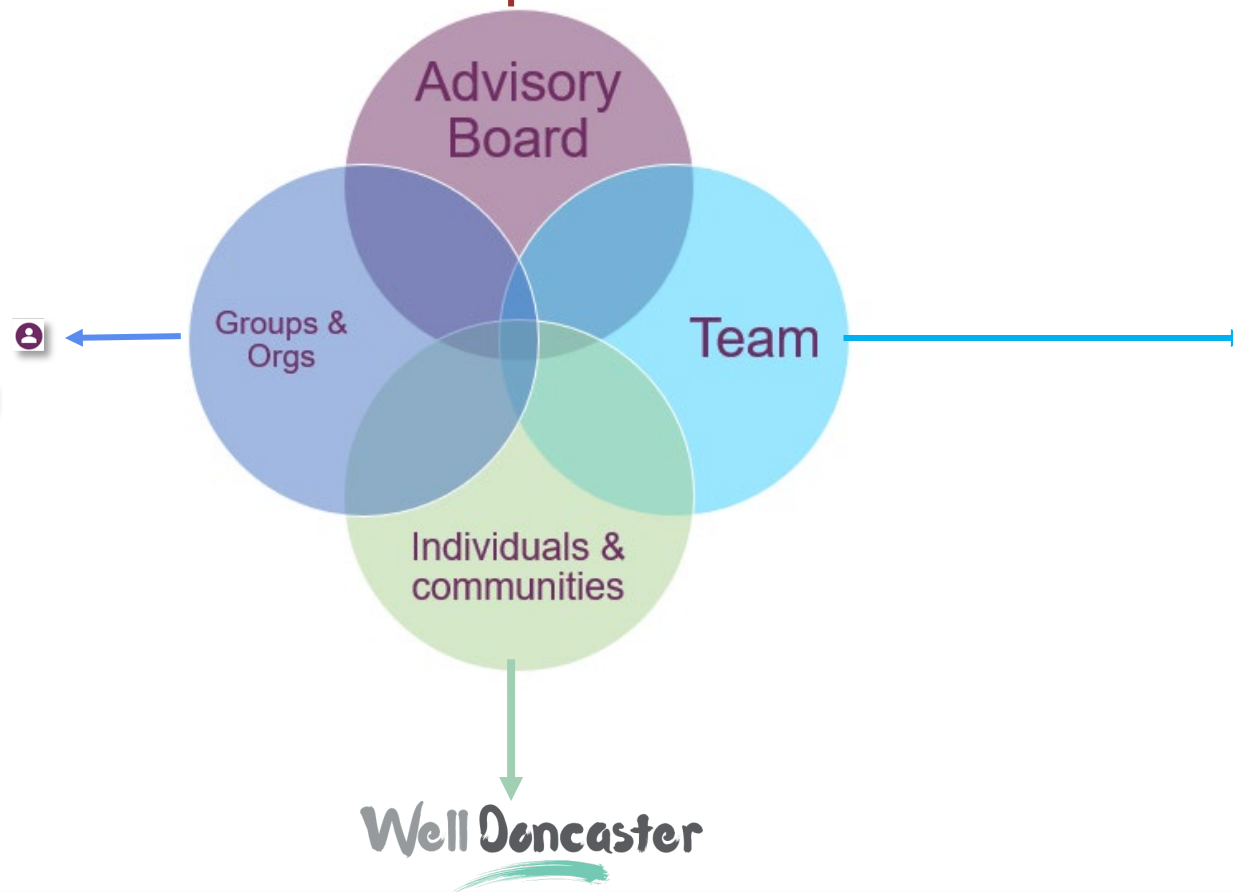
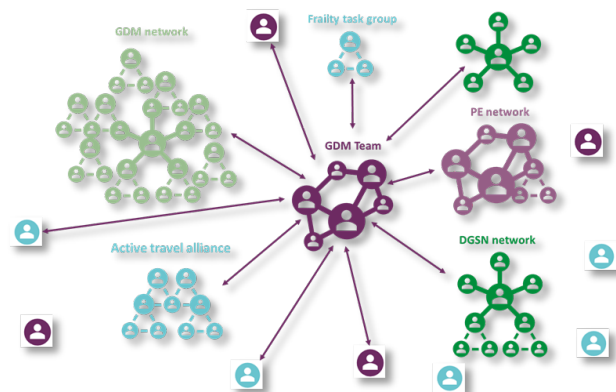
#GetDoncasterMoving

Conditions predicting collaboration



5

Processes facilitate
PBSA (2a)



Guide vision and strategy

Support aligned
approaches and activities

Establish shared
monitoring and
measurement practices

Build public and
organisational will

Advance policy

Mobilise funding and
investment

Well Doncaster

Appreciative Inquiry, Community-led plans, Positive Action Groups, Community Profiles, Active Communities
Grants & Community Connectors



- Physical activity & sport has been a strategic mayoral priority since 2016
- Embedded within Team Doncaster's multi-agency strategy
- Leadership of Director of Public Health
- Strong, high-profile advocates for PA & sport across sectors
- Doncaster's 'Thrive' community-led prevention model
- Embedded roles, from fixed-term to permanent.
- £98m investment leveraged.
- Part of SY-wide collaboration



95% of respondents said "Addressing physical inactivity is an important strategic priority in Doncaster" - which is an increase from 89% in 2023.

Collaborative
practice within &
across sectors
(4a)

14 cases @ 5+

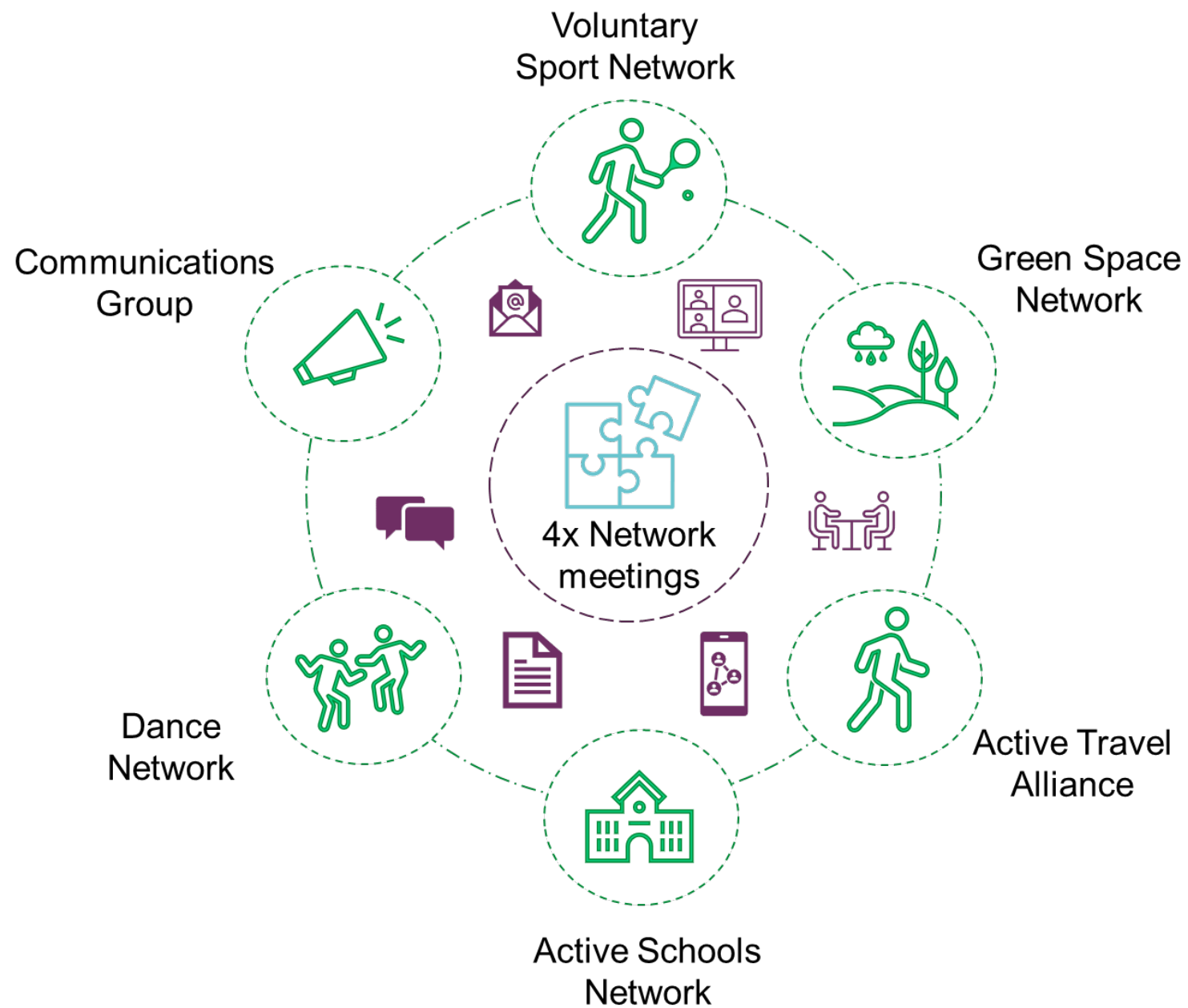
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Collaborative
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(4a)

14 cases @ 5+

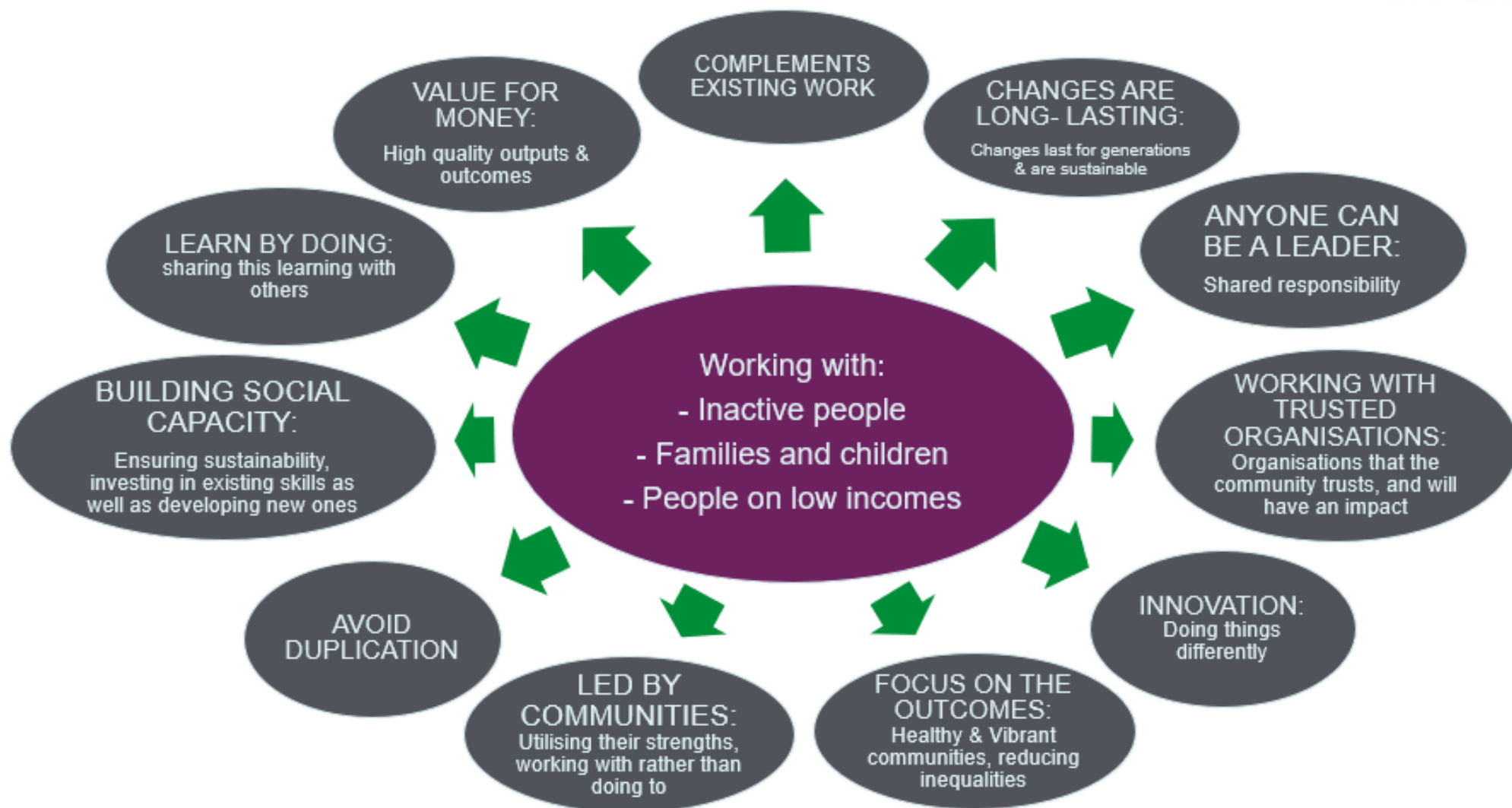
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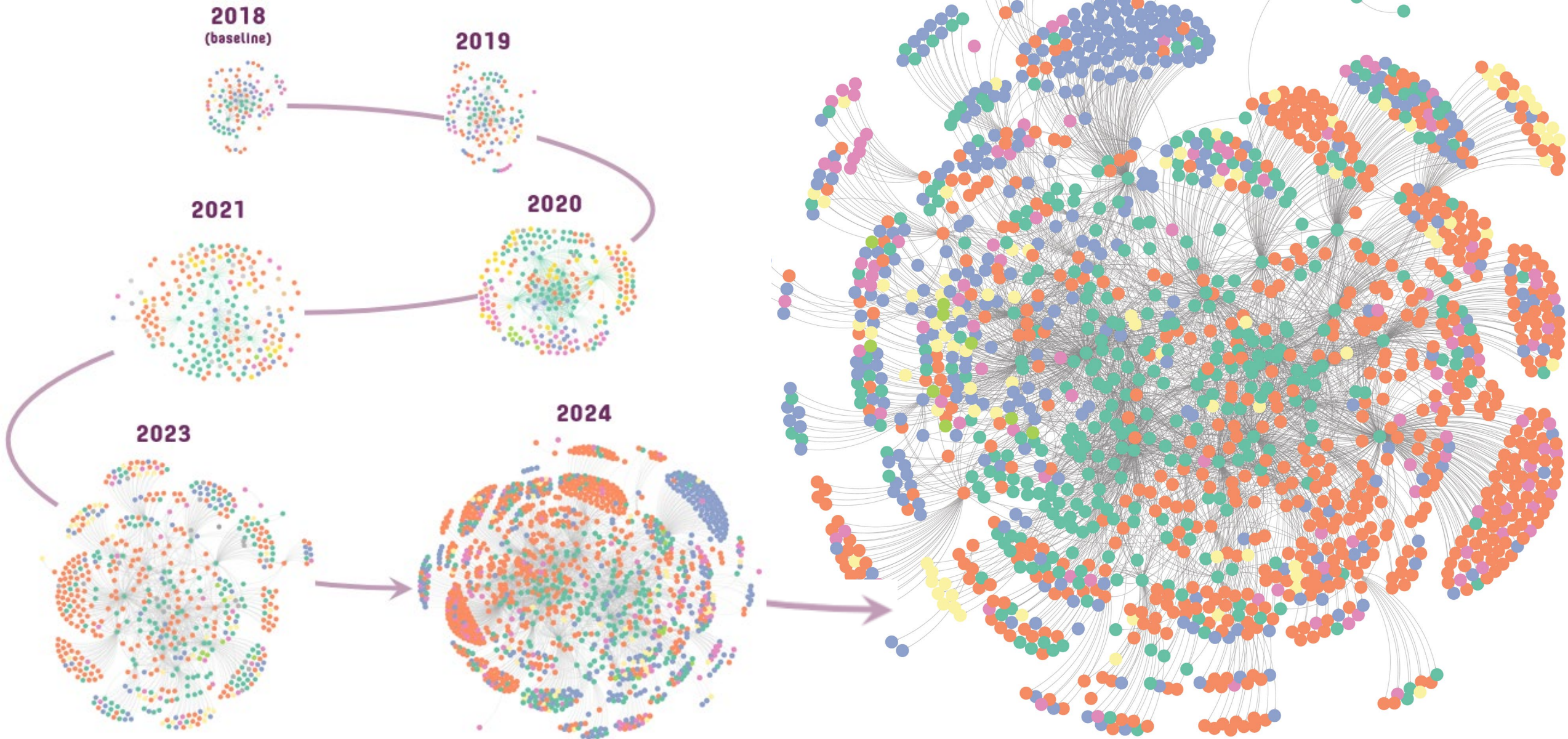
Collaborative
practice within &
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(4a)

14 cases @ 5+

5



The journey so far...



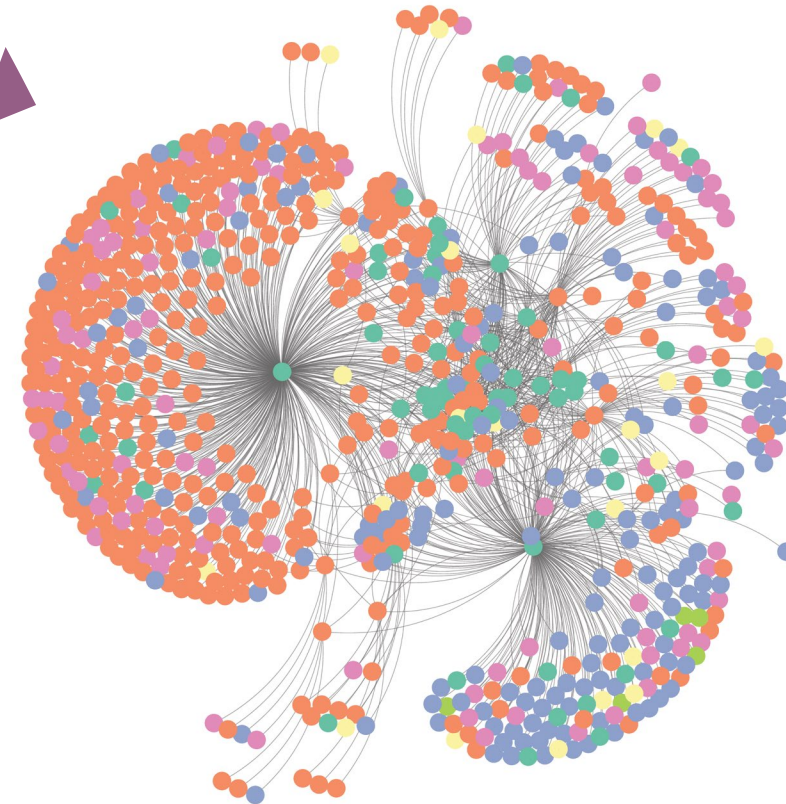
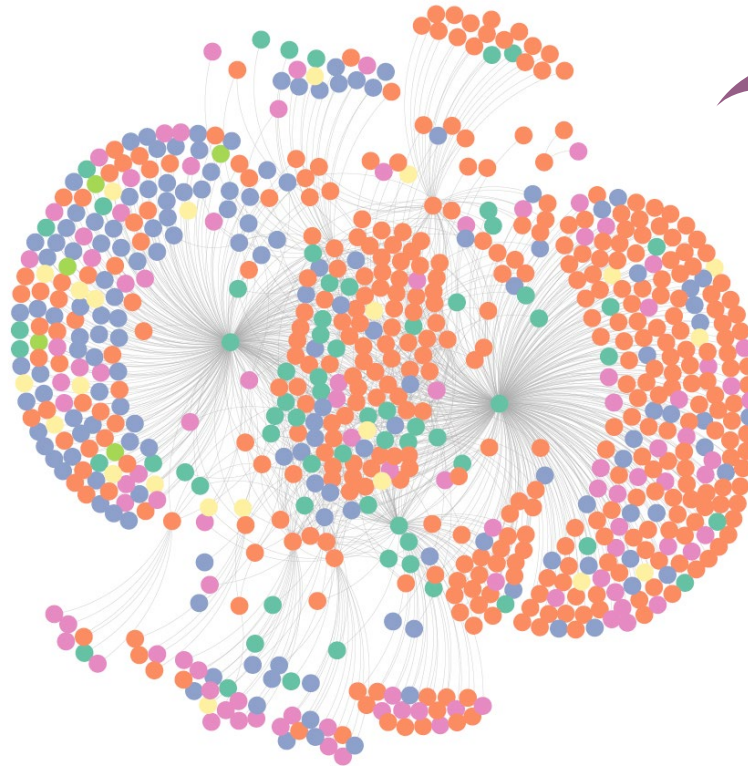
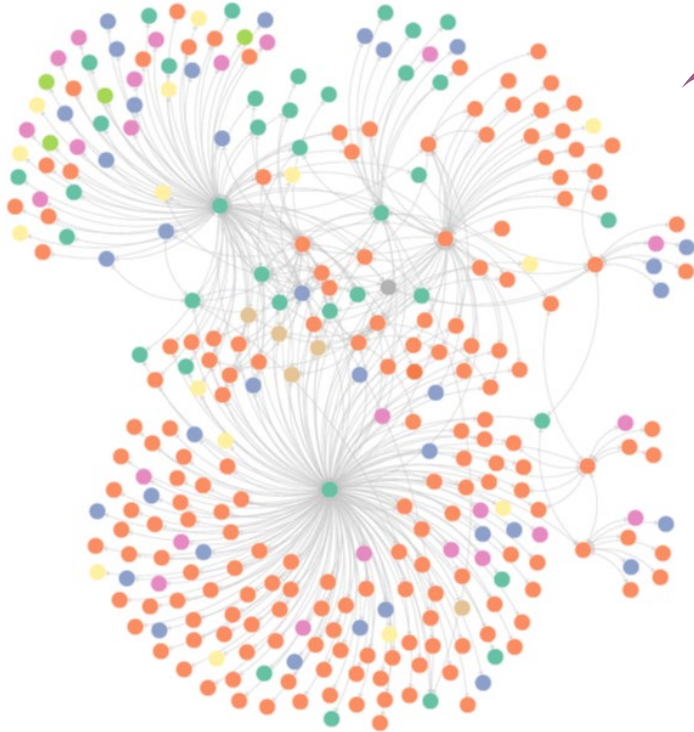
Stronger organisational collaboration



2023

2024

2025



#GetDoncasterMoving

Collaborative
practice within &
across sectors
(4a)

14 cases @ 5+

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Example...

Transforming Parks & Open Spaces – Hexthorpe Park



Collaborative
practice within &
across sectors
(4a)

14 cases @ 5+

5

Not yet fully embedded because...



- Whilst there is an increasing number of examples, they are not yet extensive across the Network.
- Need to de-centralise decision making in the Network.
- Reliance on individual relationships.
- Contradictions in policy and practice remain – this will take time.

Collaborative
practice within &
across sectors
(4a)

14 cases @ 5+

5



What next...

At the GDM Summit, we committed to **grow and sustain more impact by developing ourselves, our organisations, our network...**

... therefore, we are designing an accessible package of training, learning and development to strengthen the building blocks for future collaboration...





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Email getdoncastermoving@doncaster.gov.uk



City of
Doncaster
Council



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

Questions and reflections



**Have a
break!**

Conditions tested in analysis

1a - Effective capture and use of data and insight

2a - Partners implement policies, practices and organisational structures to enable place-based systemic working

3a - Partners are investing in building capacity and capability for place-based systemic working

5a - Strategic leaders, across sectors, promote place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities

5b - People at all levels take on roles and responsibility to tackle physical activity inequalities and can act autonomously

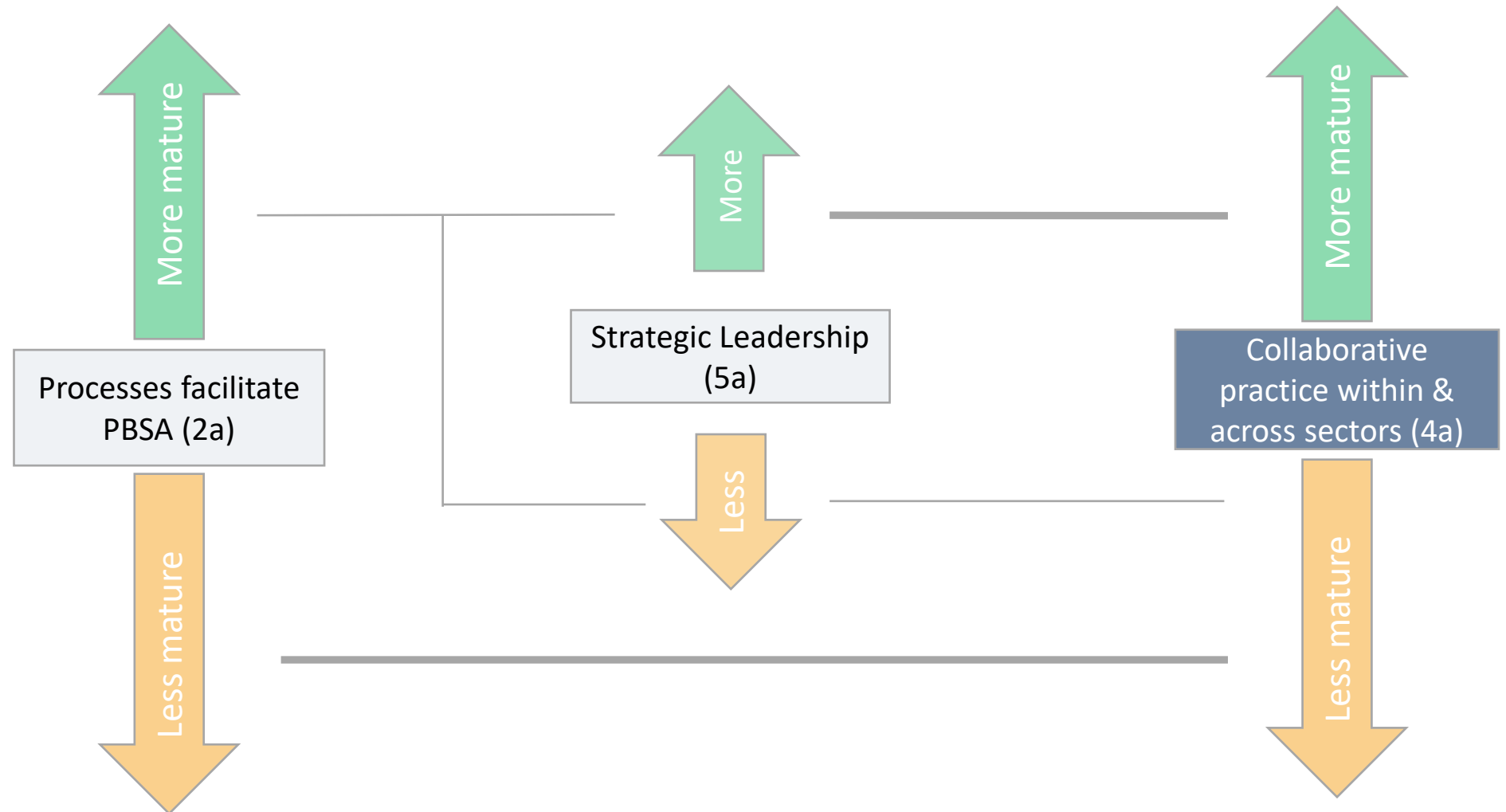
6a - Meaningful involvement of people with lived experience in developing sector-led PA initiatives

7a - Cultures and practices in workplaces enable and support physical activity/moving more in daily work routines

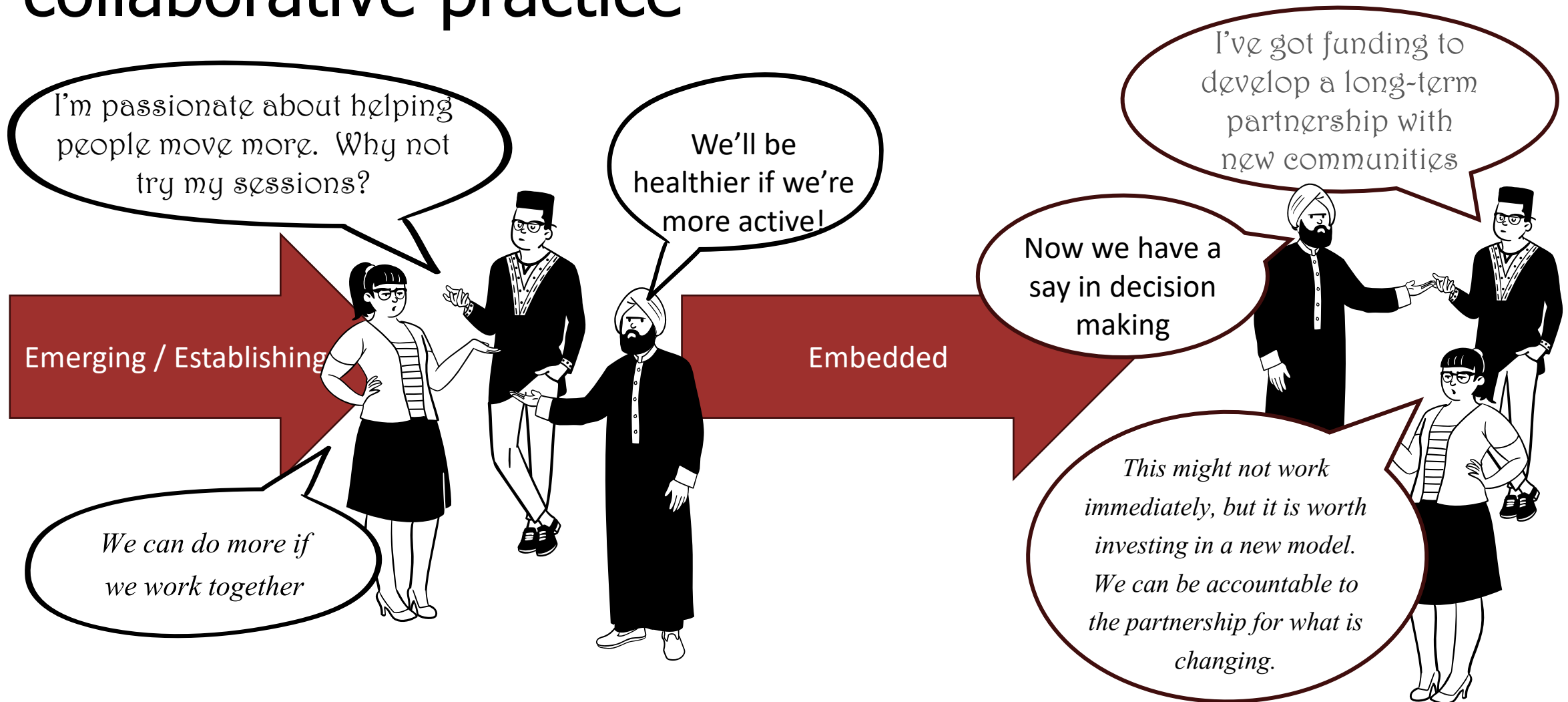
8a - Design and management of built and natural environments to promote interaction and physical activity

9 – Learning culture, processes, and evaluation

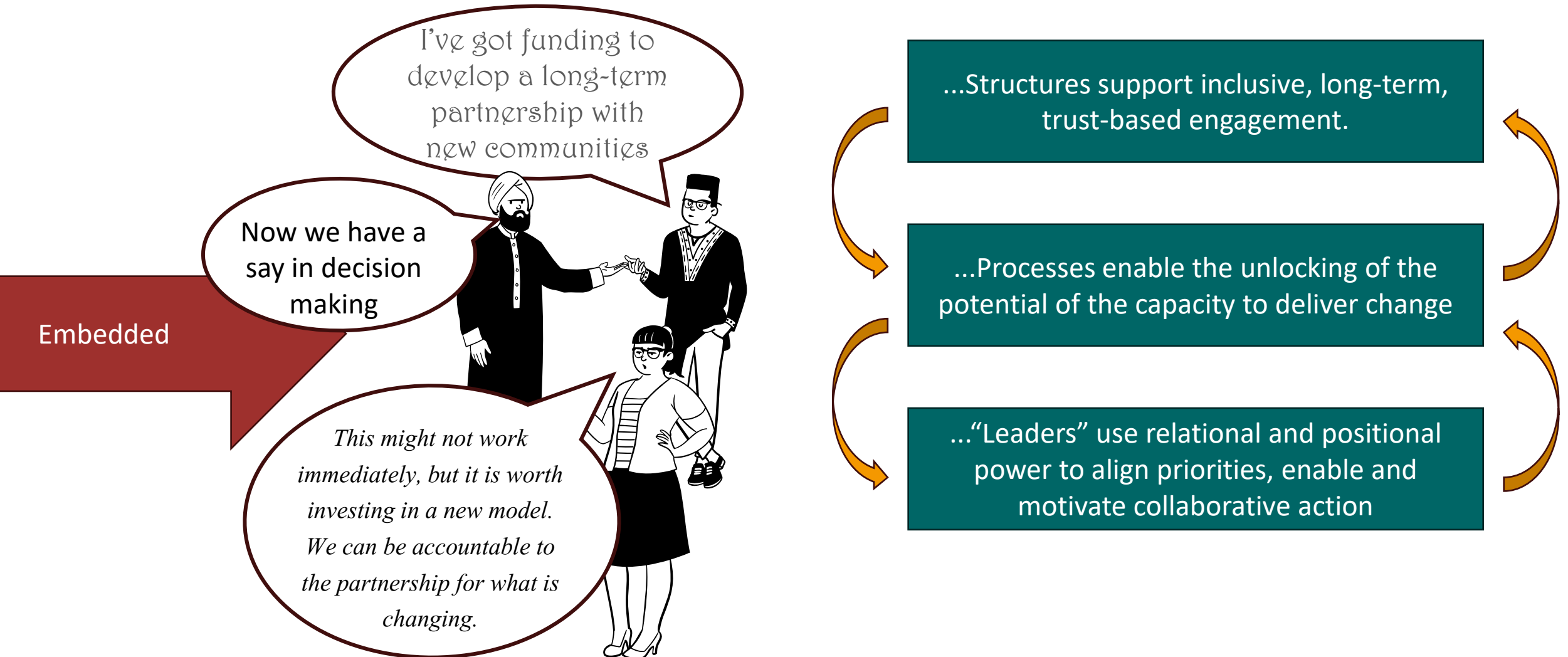
Decision tree 4a: Collaboration: *Collaborative practice within and across sectors*



Why “processes” may matter to embedded collaborative practice



Collaboration emerges not solely from capacity or leadership in isolation, but when...





Doncaster's example of how structure change can make a difference

- IF experienced and embedded staff are **working together as an integrated team** THEN a diverse group of partners can start to identify and create opportunities for *collaborative working (4a)*.
- BECAUSE in contexts where organisations are set up in silos, a team that works together – with capacity to work across organisational boundaries - enables creation of further spaces and opportunities to collaborate, helping to identify shared goals and mutual benefits across organisations.
- By *working together as a team*, people forge relationships, involving trust and allegiance which helps to develop and coalesce around shared goals and beliefs, creating motivation to advocate as well as practice place-based systemic ways of working.

Place example: Strategic leadership and processes to facilitate PBSA (over 7 years)



- **Strategic alliance building** around health inequalities – collective influence and shared goals.
- **Relational approach:** prioritising trust-building, consistent engagement, and a commitment to listening helped repair and strengthen partnerships, laying the foundations for more meaningful collaboration and effective local delivery. This represents a **systemic change in processes** – shifting away from traditional transactional ways of working.
- Leverage of **non-(SPA)traditional, trusted spaces** as entry points for partnership-building and participation, encouraging system-wide connection and community ownership.
- Patient, **relationship-led investment - rather than rigid funding models** - can better unlock the potential of grassroots partners and ensure long-term sustainability.



Summary



Structural capacity (staff, relationships, time) creates potential.



Processes (e.g., governance reform, joint teams, funding models) activate that capacity.



Relational mechanisms (trust, shared motivation, shared learning) are fostered through these structures.



Collaborative outcomes emerge when these align, especially around mutual goals.

Breakout discussions



1. Have you found that bringing people together leads to collaboration in practice?
 - If not, why not?
 - What else is required to enable real change in ways of working?
2. How can changing organisational policies, processes, and structures enable collaboration?
3. How might strategic systems leadership create the conditions for collaborative practice?



Next steps

- Further learning seminars
- Synthesis of Evaluation and Learning reports with CCA findings
- 2025 CCA cycle



Session feedback

- [Padlet]