



June 18, 2024

Planning for ECBO Sustainability

Organizational Life Cycle and
Strategies for Sustainability

switchboard
connecting resettlement experts



Today's Speakers



Haji Adan

Executive Director, Refugee
and Immigrant Self-
Empowerment (RISE)

Yahya Haqiqi

President and CEO, Afghan
Support Network (ASN)

Nao Kabashima

Executive Director, Karen
Organization of San Diego
(KOSD)

Learning Objectives



By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1

DESCRIBE

the five stages of the development life cycle of an Ethnic Community-Based Organization (ECBO)

2

IDENTIFY

strategies for sustainable growth at each stage of ECBO development

3

APPLY

new tools and resources for sustainable growth at each stage of ECBO development

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Which best describes your organization or yourself?

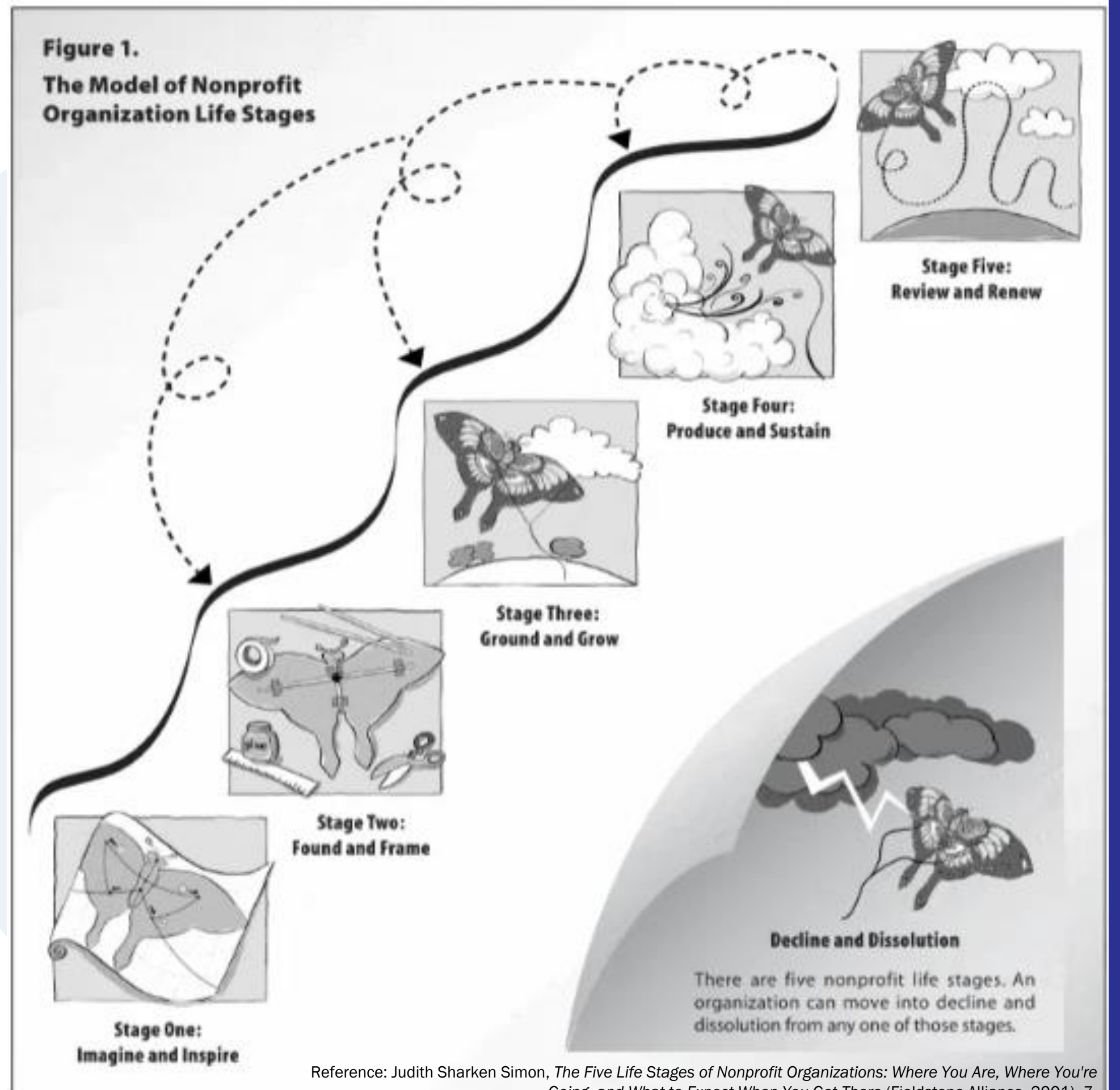
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The Five Stages of the Development Lifecycle of ECBOs

Nonprofit Development Five-Stage Model



Reference: Judith Sharken Simon, *The Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There* (Fieldstone Alliance, 2001), 7.

Applying the Five-Stage Model

To Seven Key Arenas of ECBO Development



Governance



Staff Leadership



Finance



**Administrative
Systems**



Staffing



**Products and
Services**



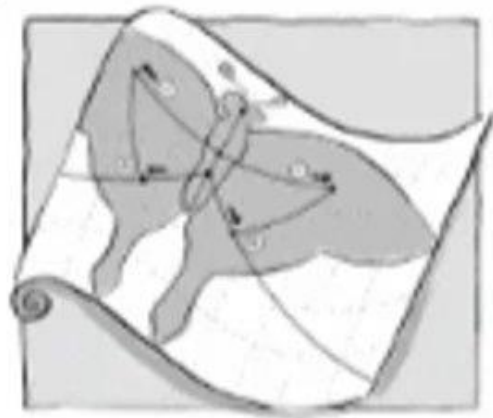
Marketing





Stage 1:

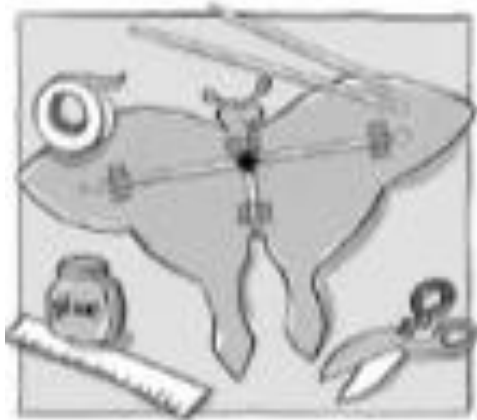
Imagine and Inspire



- Identifying unmet need in community
- Envisioning goals
- Taking action as an informal group (not yet a formalized organization)
- Primary question: "can this dream be realized?"



Stage 2: Found and Frame



- Receiving official nonprofit status
- To “found and frame” organization, completing tasks related to:
 - Administration
 - Logistics
 - Infrastructure
- Primary question: “how are we going to pull this off?”



Stage 3: Ground and Grow



- Establishing the organization's foundation
- Building mechanisms for accountability, ensuring viability
- Growing and “taking care of business”
- Primary question: “how can we build this to be viable?”



Stage 4:

Produce and Sustain



- Stabilizing organization, even while risking some staleness
- Pushing peak productivity
- Focusing on sustainability
- Primary question: “how can we maintain the momentum?”



Stage 5: Review and Renew



- Reinventing in some way, shape, or form
- Revisiting and renewing aspects of the organization including:
 - Mission, vision, products, services structure
 - Target population
 - Organization name
- Primary question: “what do we need to redesign?”

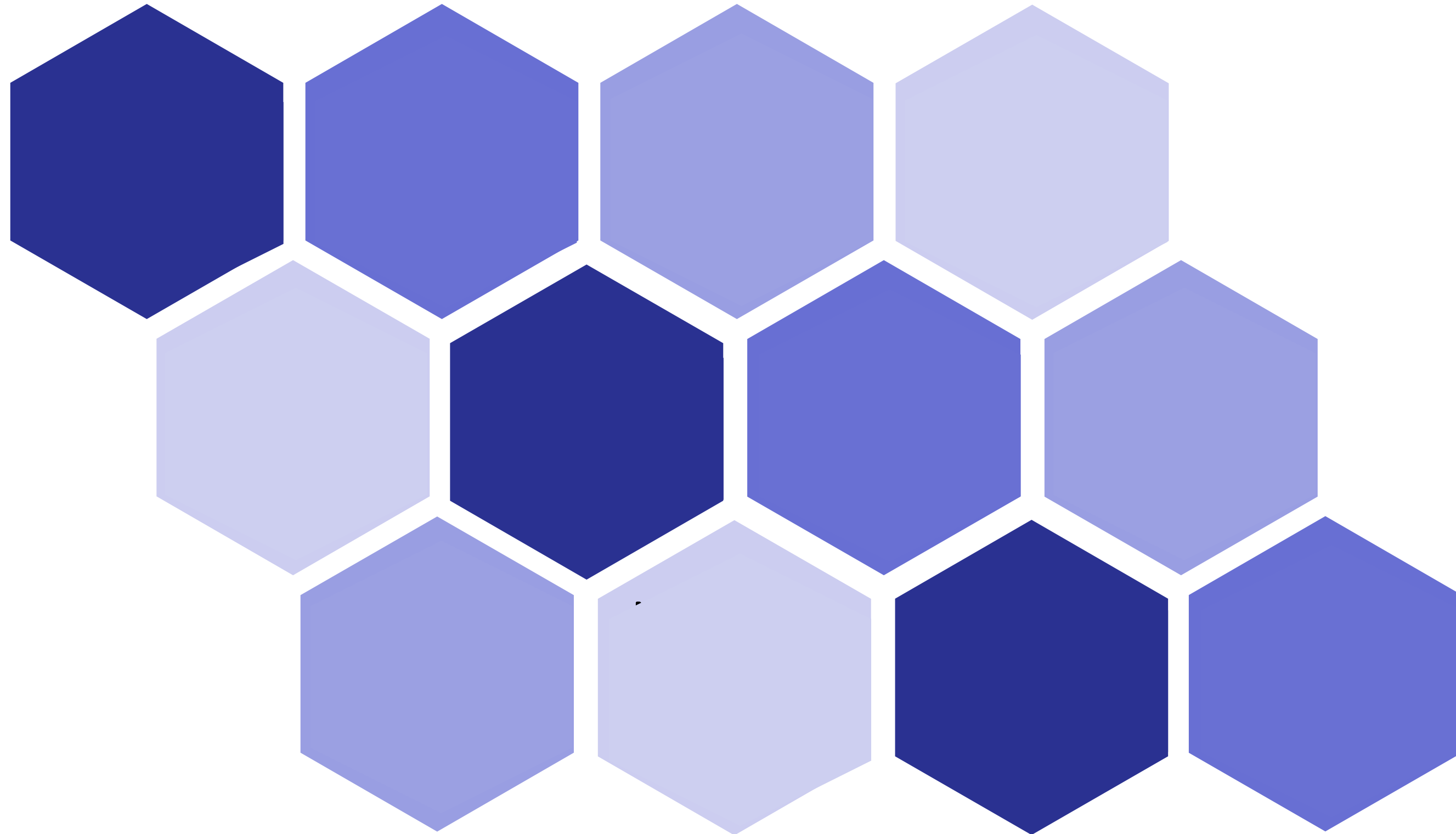


Decline and Dissolution



- Decline and dissolution can happen at any stage
- Not always negative
- Crises in a majority of the seven key arenas may indicate organizational decline

Indicators of Decline and Dissolution





Eight Assumptions

About the Development Stages and Cycle

Organizations are forward-moving

Various dimensions interact to create a pattern unique to a particular life stage

Five factors influence this: age, size, growth rate of field, social environment, and primary leader's characteristics

Significant events occur at each stage



Eight Assumptions

About the Development Stages and Cycle

There is no predictable endpoint in organizational development

The stages of an organization's life are distinct, but the boundaries between the stages aren't always obvious

Each stage can be defined by dominant characteristics

Each stage is uniquely valuable to the organization's positive development

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Which stage is your organization at in the organizational life cycle?

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ECBO Strategies for Sustainability

Over the Course of the ECBO Organizational Life Cycle

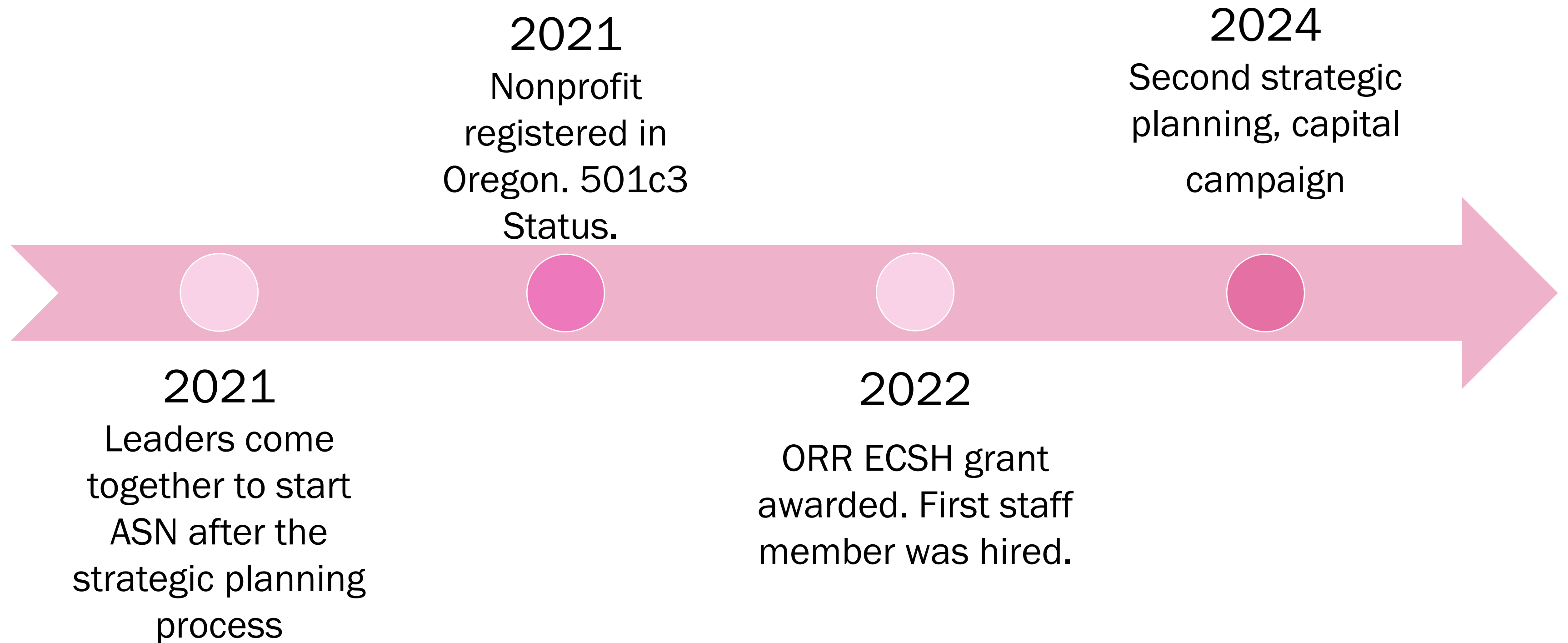
Afghan Support Network (ASN)

Mission Statement

ASN empowers Afghans in the Portland Metro through advocacy, services, and resources.



Timeline of Organization History and Growth: ASN





Programming and Structure

ASN

- 13 current staff
- Six board members
- Four focus areas:
 - Advocacy
 - Cultural navigation
 - Immigration support
 - Service connection

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

In Stages 1-3 (from Imagine, to Found, to Grow)



According to Yahya, establishing and growing ASN in a very short span of time presented certain challenges:

- Growing too fast without setting up the proper infrastructure
- Struggling to control the rate of growth
- Not knowing how to say “no” based on the strategic plan

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What strategies might help overcome these challenges?

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ASN's Strategies for Sustainability

Stage 1-3

- Controlling growth by knowing what to focus on and when to say “no”
- Forming clear strategic plans at Stage 1 (Imagine and Inspire)
- Focusing on the organization as much as clients
- Having a strong, clear mission and vision
- Always considering what the future may look like



Karen Organization of San Diego (KOSD)

Mission Statement

KOSD advances educational, civic, and economic opportunities for ethnic groups from Burma (Myanmar) while honoring cultural heritage.

Timeline of Organization History and Growth: KOSD



2009-2010

Nonprofit
registered in
California, 501c3
status

2017

Lost ORR funding,
new relationships
with local
government,
foundations

2009

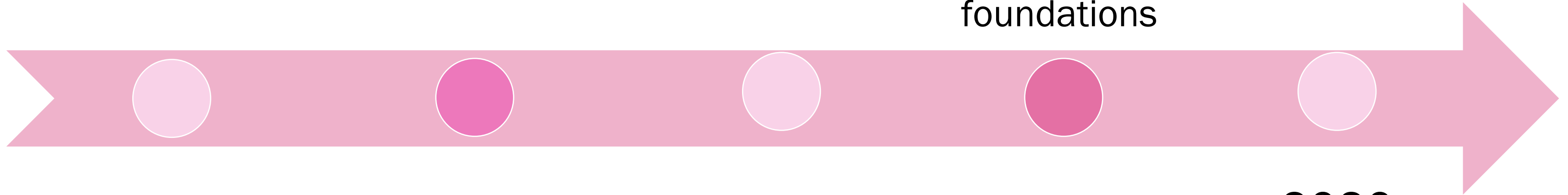
Community
organizing
efforts

2011

ORR ECSH grant
awarded (first
grant), community
office

2020

San Diego
Refugee
Communities
Coalition
(SDRCC)





Programming and Structure

KOSD

- 16 staff members
- 12 board members
 - Community-led board
- Four overarching programs
 - Community program, family engagement program, civic engagement program, and economic development program

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

In Stage 4 (Sustaining)



Along KOSD's journey, challenges included:

- Maintaining cultural relevance to address challenges across diverse ethnic communities from Burma
- Finding sustainable funding supports, especially after losing the ORR ECSH grant
- Navigating emerging community needs
- Improving the organizational structure to meet new operational challenges

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What strategies might help overcome these challenges?

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KOSD's Strategies for Sustainability:

Stage 4

- Creating a community-led board, guiding the organization with collective wisdom about unmet needs
- Building trust and support through transparency with the community
- Involving community members and their stories in fundraising and organizational growth
- Working with other ECBOs to co-apply larger grants, making impacts in larger newcomer communities

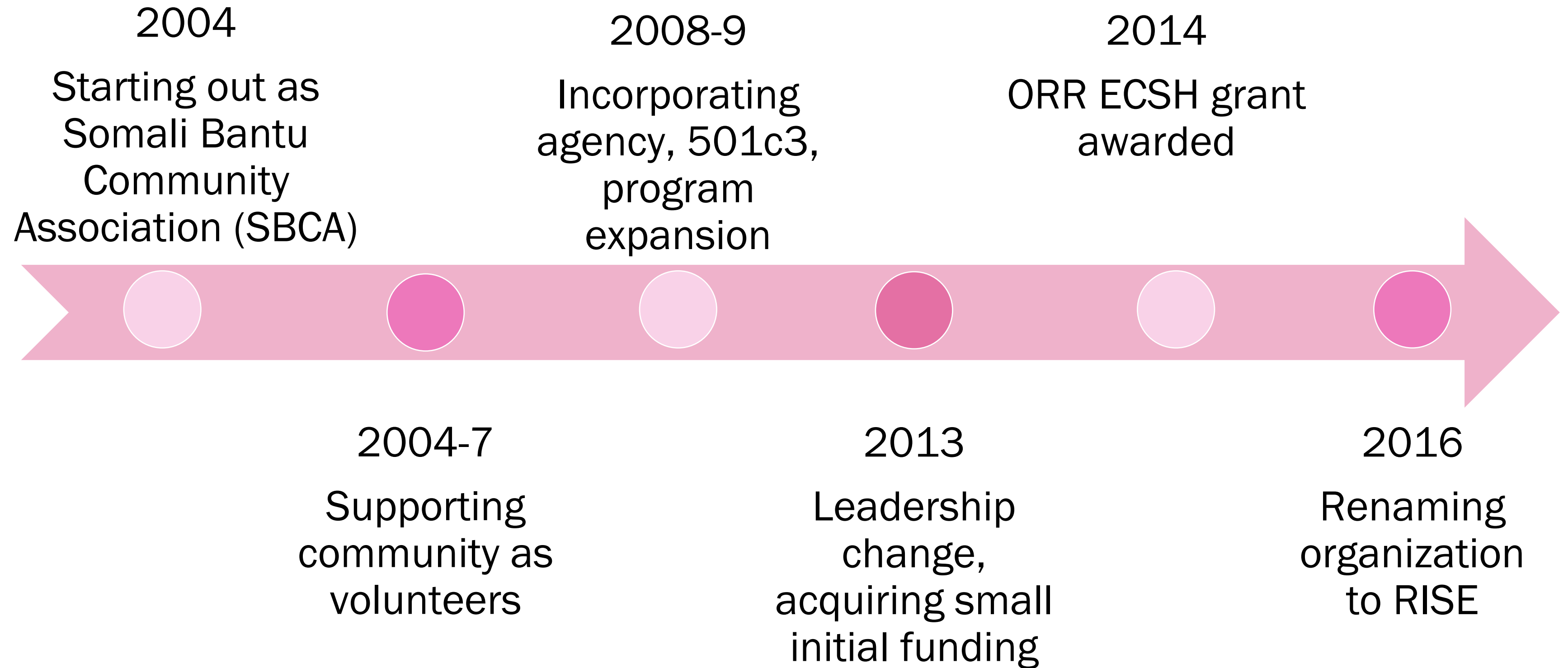


Refugee & Immigrant Self-Empowerment Inc. (RISE)

Mission Statement

RISE advocates for and facilitates economic independence and community inclusion for refugees and immigrants through education, employment, social support, and service navigation.

Timeline of Organization History and Growth: RISE





Programming and Structure

RISE

- 55+ total staff with more than 35 different languages spoken
- Nine board members
- Six main programs:
 - Refugee Resettlement, Syracuse Refugee Agricultural Program, Case Management & Employment Services, Education Initiatives, Individual Development Account, Care Management

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges



In Stages 4 and 5 (Sustain and Renew)

In growing RISE as an ECBO, Haji encountered challenges specifically around transitioning from one growth stage to another, such as:

- Transitioning from community support volunteering to a staffed non-profit organization
- Transitioning leadership
- Identifying misalignment between organization's name and its true purpose (supporting a wider net of refugees and newcomers)
- Managing community ownership and resistance with name change

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What strategies might help overcome these challenges?

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RISE's Strategies for Sustainability:

Stages 4 and 5

- Partnering with local universities for legal support in organizational growth
- Providing time for the board to go along with the name change decision (no rush)
- Adjusting programs every one or two years, always thinking about next stages
- Constantly making use of community needs assessment
- Studying trends in the interests of investors/ funders, what other ECBOs are doing

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Panel Discussion Questions

1

What were some turning point moments when you needed to make a big shift?

2

If you had to start your organization all over again, what would you do differently?

3

What advice would you give to new and evolving ECBO leaders who are in Stages 1-2?

4

Do you have any questions for today's panelists? Type your questions in the **Q&A**.



3

Resources and Tools

For Sustainable Growth at Each Stage of ECBO Development



Switchboard Resources





Toolkit: Developing Your Board to Advance Your Organization's Mission



eLearning Course: Introduction to Theories of Change



Other Switchboard Resources



Getting Started with Fundraising: Guidance for ECBOs

This guide, developed by Switchboard in partnership with Karen Organization of San Diego (KOSD), describes how ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) can diversify their funding sources to improve organizational sustainability and outlines strategies for fundraising within various funding mechanisms while considering the specific challenges that ECBOs face.

What is Fundraising?
Nonprofit organizations like ECBOs derive much or all of their budget from **fundraising**, or the seeking of financial or in-kind support from individual or institutional donors to promote organizational goals, including programming and expansion.

Fundraising Regulations
Fundraising is a regulated activity. While the IRS lists [federally applicable fundraising guidelines](#), fundraising activities are primarily regulated by state law. Most states require nonprofit organizations to register with the state before they solicit donations. Before engaging in any fundraising activities, consult with

state charity officials to check the charitable solicitation registration processes in the state(s) where your organization operates. Once an ECBO is registered with the relevant state(s), staff can explore different funding mechanisms to identify which ones best align with their goals and needs.

Grants
A **grant** refers to funding provided to an organization that is not expected to be repaid. Grants are typically awarded after an organization undergoes an application and evaluation process and may be provided by the federal government, state or local governments, private foundations, or corporations. They usually have requirements for their awardees, including reports on how funds are used.

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Toolkit: Getting Started with Fundraising: Guidance for ECBOs



INTRODUCTION TO MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

A Self-Paced eLearning Course

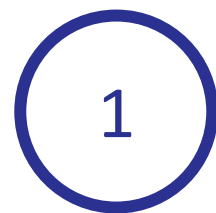


eLearning Course: Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation and Evidence-Based Programs

Learning Objectives

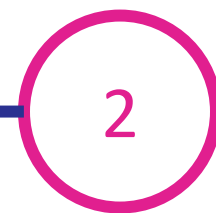


Now you are able to:



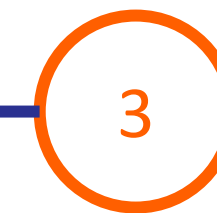
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IDENTIFY

strategies for sustainable growth at each stage of ECBO development



APPLY

new tools and resources for sustainable growth to each stage of ECBO development



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Scan the QR code or click the link in the chat to access our feedback survey!

- Five questions
- 60 seconds
- Helps us improve our training and technical assistance





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