

Capacity Building

Self-Assessment Tool

2023



CHILD CARE
State Capacity Building Center





Capacity Building: The Ways to the Means

For the purposes of this tool, capacity building is defined as the process through which individuals, groups of people, and organizations obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities they need to set and advance goals toward chosen early learning priorities. Capacity is the means to plan and achieve organizational goals, and capacity building describes the ways to those means so that organizations can lead sustained improvements over time. Capacity building is ultimately focused on empowering individuals, leaders, organizations, and systems so that they can generate positive change in early learning opportunities and outcomes on behalf of communities, children, and families.

Readiness for Change

An essential ingredient for capacity building is transformation. For an activity to meet the standard of capacity building as described in this tool, it must bring about transformation that is produced and sustained over time. Transformation of this kind goes beyond performing tasks. Instead, it is more a matter of changing mindsets and attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, creating readiness for change can be a critical component of both initiating and scaling up your capacity building practices within your organization. “‘Readiness’ is defined as a developmental point at which a person, organization, or system has the capacity and willingness to engage in a particular activity... ‘Readiness for change’ is something that needs to be developed, nurtured, and sustained.”¹ It is not static. As you move through the assessment process of this tool, discuss the potential changes with your team or group. Be thoughtful and sensitive to individual perspectives. Ask yourself, “What challenges would be faced while trying to make these changes? If these changes are not made, what impact would that have? What impact might that have on what we are trying to achieve?”

Self-Assessment Purpose and Applicability

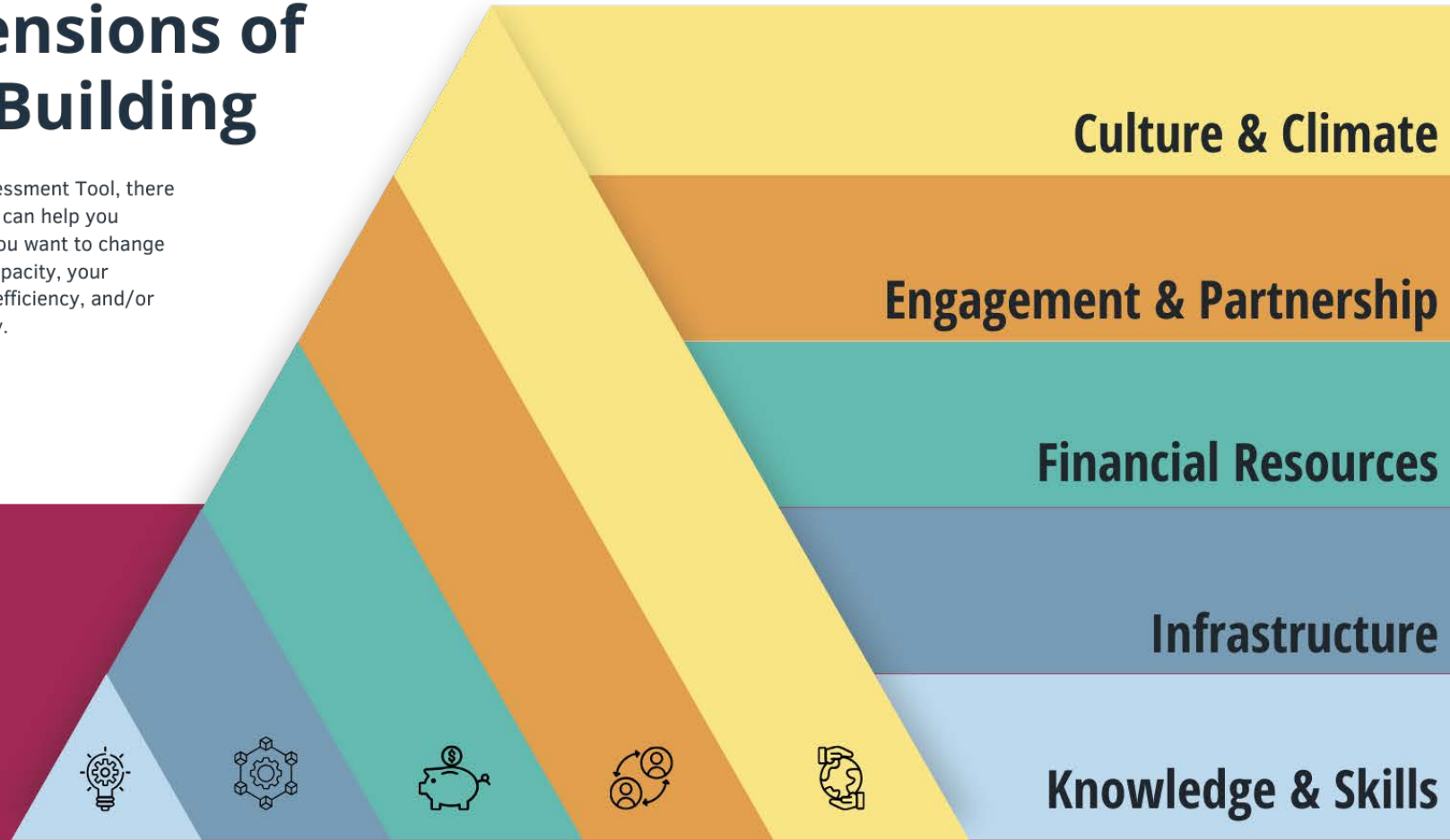
The *Capacity Building Self-Assessment Tool*^{*} aims to highlight capacities within and surrounding your organization, system, or any project or initiative you are launching to improve your early childhood system. In this assessment tool, there are 5 dimensions and 23 subdimensions of capacity that can help you identify the specific capabilities you want to change to improve your organizational capacity, your organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and/or your leadership and staff capacity. As you identify which capacities are currently in place and which gaps need to be addressed, your priorities for capacity building will become clear. The self-assessment tool allows any group or organization to identify strengths and challenges with regard to planning and achieving specified goals. Identifying areas of strength, areas of challenges, and progress made is crucial for ensuring success with whatever it is your organization is trying to advance or improve.

^{*}The self-assessment tool in this document is based on the McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid, which was created by McKinsey & Company and published in *Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organizations* (2001), which was produced for [Venture Philanthropy Partners](#). It is adapted, reprinted, copied, and distributed with the permission of Venture Philanthropy Partners.



Five Dimensions of Capacity Building

In the Capacity Building Self-Assessment Tool, there are 5 dimensions of capacity that can help you identify the specific capabilities you want to change to improve your organizational capacity, your organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and/or your leadership and staff capacity.



- Culture & Climate
- Engagement & Partnership
- Financial Resources
- Infrastructure
- Knowledge & Skills



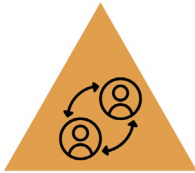
Five Dimensions of Capacity Building



DIMENSION 1: Culture and Climate

Organizational culture and climate consist of shared values, norms, attitudes, and perceptions that influence how people in an organization behave. An agency's priorities, leadership commitments, and staff motivation reflect its culture and climate. For new programs and practices, an agency's culture and climate may affect how people accept and support change. While people often use the terms "culture" and "climate" interchangeably, Charles Glisson, a leading researcher in this area, makes the following distinction:

- **Organizational culture** refers to the shared behavioral expectations and norms in a work environment. This is the collective view of "the way work is done."ⁱⁱ
- **Organizational climate** represents staff perceptions of the impact of the work environment on the individual. This is the view of "how it feels" to work at the organization (for example, supportive or stressful).ⁱⁱⁱ



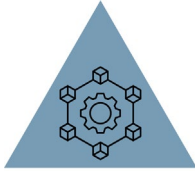
DIMENSION 2: Engagement and Partnerships

Engagement and partnership consist of collaborative relationships within the organization and with external partners, families and community, and cultural groups to support early learning systems and inform improved practices. Productive relationships involve building trust, seeking feedback, and actively collaborating toward shared objectives.



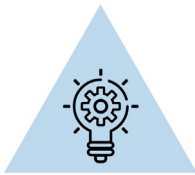
DIMENSION 3: Financial Resources

Financial resources consist of the tangible assets that support your organization, programs, practice improvements, coordination work, infrastructure and service delivery. They encompass adequate and stable funding, staffing, budget materials, the authority to direct or redirect funds, and the capacity to raise capital or advocate for increased resources.



DIMENSION 4: Infrastructure

This dimension consists of the systems, protocols, and processes that give structure to the organization, support its key functions, and embed routine practice. This includes the policies and operating procedures that guide practice and build a shared understanding of how to advance early learning opportunities and outcomes. Infrastructure also includes an agency's systems for operations—from human resources, training, supervision, and ongoing communication systems to data, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement systems.



DIMENSION 5: Knowledge and Skills

Organizational knowledge and skills consist of the essential expertise and competencies needed to perform your organization's early learning work. Think of this as the organization's know-how. For each level of an organization, this will look different. At the frontline, this may include understanding and application of effective practices, decisionmaking, performance tracking, and cultural competence. For managers and administrators, it may include knowledge and skills related to leadership, systems thinking, management, critical analysis, policymaking, workforce development, and change management.

Self-Assessment Use

The dimensions and subdimensions outlined below provide a high-level overview of key capacity areas for your group or organization to consider. The self-assessment tool may be used in whole or in part, depending on what makes the most sense for your organization or system. The tool can be used at the organization level and may also be used to assess capacity within individual teams, initiatives or projects. As such, the tool includes the terms “organization”, “team” and “project” somewhat interchangeably throughout.

Where you begin and the order in which you proceed within the tool will depend on your organization's most pressing needs. Some groups may start with creating or strengthening engagement and partnerships. Others may be ready to build knowledge and skills for systems thinking and better address a priority. It is likely that some of the capacity dimensions will be more helpful to you than others. Use caution when choosing your areas of improvement; it is more prudent to do less initially.

At the end of this tool, there is a glossary of some of the terms. Terms that are included in this glossary are bolded throughout the tool. There is also a crosswalk between the dimensions of capacity building within this tool and relevant chapters of the [Early Childhood Systems Building Resource Guide](#) and a Resources section.



Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Select the people you want to assess your organization. This self-assessment tool is meant to be completed as a collaborative process within your group or organization. When done thoughtfully, the assessment process can yield important insights about your organizational fitness, help ensure commitment to capacity building from your staff, team or board, and serve as a useful conversation starter for how you will further develop your means for planning and achieving your goals.
2. Complete the self-assessment tool individually and/or as a group. It may be helpful to see individual responses before you work together as a group to complete the self-assessment. Review the dimensions of the tool first (culture and climate, engagement and partnerships, financial resources, infrastructure, and knowledge and skills) so that you can determine which areas are most integral to achieving your goals. You may select all the dimensions or a subset of the dimensions.
3. Use the check boxes to rank your current level of capacity for each subdimension. Keep in mind you are trying to rank on a continuum of basic, moderate, or high level of capacity.
4. Use the Notes section at the end of each subdimension to jot down any notes or questions you have within the subdimension.
5. Review the benchmarks with your team and come to consensus about your organization's level of capacity for each subdimension assessed.
6. Summarize and analyze your findings using the summary page at the end of the assessment tool.
7. Share the findings and determine implications for action.
8. Develop plans for needed change.



DIMENSION 1: Culture and Climate

Subdimension 1.a Implementing values and beliefs

Basic

- A common set of basic values and beliefs exists in some groups within the organization but is not shared broadly.
- Values and beliefs may be only partially aligned with organizational purpose or rarely harnessed to produce impact.

Moderate

- A common set of basic values and beliefs is held by the majority of the organization.
- The values and beliefs of the organization are occasionally demonstrated by leaders within the organization.
- Values and beliefs provide members with a sense of identity.
- Values and beliefs are aligned with the team's purpose and are occasionally harnessed to produce impact.

High

- A common set of basic values and beliefs exists and is widely shared within the organization.
- The values and beliefs of the organization are consistently demonstrated by leaders within the organization.
- Values and beliefs provide members with a sense of identity and a clear direction for behavior.
- Values and beliefs embodied are timeless and stable across leadership changes.
- Values and beliefs clearly support the organization's overall purpose and are consistently harnessed to produce impact.

Notes

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Subdimension 1.b Embedding equity

Basic

- The team has an awareness of basic principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and occasionally applies these principles to the creation of new or revision of existing projects or programs.
- The organization has created guiding principles, a vision, or a similar definition of equity as applicable to the organization's work.
- Goals that address equity are rarely included in strategic or operational workplans.
- The organization has limited relationships with communities affected by inequities.

Moderate

- A majority of team members and leaders within the organization have a shared knowledge and understanding of equity.
- Principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion are infused within most projects or programs that are undertaken by the organization. Some formalized processes, protocols, tools, or policies have begun to be developed to address equity.
- The organization has some limited metrics that contribute to equitable outcomes in its strategic or operational workplans.
- The organization has some partnerships and relationships with communities affected by inequities.

High

- All team members within the organization have a shared knowledge and a deep understanding of equity and how it impacts the community served.
- There are formalized processes, protocols, tools, or policies in place to infuse principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into all programs and projects within the organization.
- The organization includes several meaningful goals and metrics that speak to equity within its strategic and operational workplans.
- The process for seeking, distributing, and using resources is based on equity goals. The organization is accountable for equity goals and empowered to uphold goals.
- The organization has many multisector partnerships and relationships with communities affected by inequities.

Notes



Subdimension 1.c Sharing and understanding of common vision and goals throughout the organization

Basic

- There is a somewhat clear understanding of what the organization aspires to become or achieve.
- The vision and goals lack specificity or clarity.
- The vision and goals are held by only a few or they are “on a poster on the wall” but rarely used to direct actions or set priorities.

Moderate

- There is a clear and specific understanding of what the organization aspires to become or achieve.
- A common vision and goals are held by many within the team and are sometimes used to direct actions but are not shared widely with partners or community members.

High

- A clear, specific, and compelling vision for the organization is articulated, and there is a deep understanding of what the organization aspires to achieve.
- A common vision and goals are broadly held, including between partners and community members.
- A common vision and goals are consistently used by the organization to direct actions and set priorities.

Notes



Subdimension 1.d Setting expectations to accommodate and sustain change

Basic

- There is no common approach to change or change management by the team.

Moderate

- There is a common team approach to change and change management exists within some part of the organization's leadership, which may include practices that do the following:
 - Secure buy-in and align individual behavior and skills with the change
 - Are adopted by many people within the organization's leadership
 - Are aligned with the team's purpose and occasionally harnessed to drive toward change

High

- There is a common team approach to change and change management, which may include practices that do the following:
 - Secure buy-in and align individual behavior and skills with the change
 - Are truly shared and adopted by all members of the organization's leadership
 - Are actively designed and used to clearly support the overall purpose of the team and drive performance

Notes



Subdimension 1.e Valuing and aligning performance throughout the organization

Basic

- Staff are recognized and promoted with limited consideration for the impact on the organization's performance goals.
- Individual and team performance measures rarely tie to organizational goals for performance.
- Key elements of performance are rarely discussed at team meetings, if ever.

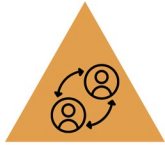
Moderate

- Leadership occasionally recognizes and promotes staff based on their contribution to the organization's performance goals.
- Individual and team day-to-day assignments and performance measures occasionally or partially relate to organizational goals for performance.
- Key elements of performance are regularly discussed at team meetings.

High

- Leadership systematically recognizes and promotes staff based on their contribution to the organization's performance goals.
- Individual and team day-to-day assignments and performance measures consistently relate to organizational goals for performance.
- Key elements of performance are consistently referred to in team meetings, including agendas and discussions.

Notes



DIMENSION 2: Engagement and Partnerships

Subdimension 2.a Establishing and maintaining relationships with partners (e.g., state agencies, advocates, providers, parents, and oversight groups)

Basic

- The organization is in the early stages of building relationships (for example, limited communication and no defined structure or planning) and collaborating with agency partners, families, providers, and others vital to the organization's work.

Moderate

- The organization has effectively built and leveraged a few key relationships with relevant parties through ongoing communication and coordination.
- Some relationships are not fully developed.
- Some relationships may be precarious or not mutually beneficial.
- Few formal mechanisms of recognizing partnership (memoranda of understanding or interagency agreements) are in place.

High

- The organization has built, leveraged, and maintained strong, high-impact relationships with a variety of relevant parties (state and federal government entities as well as those from the for-profit and private sectors).
- Relationships are deeply anchored in stable, long-term, and mutually beneficial collaboration.
- Interagency agreements or memoranda of understanding are in place and are reviewed and updated routinely.

Notes



Subdimension 2.b Establishing and sustaining local community presence and involvement

Basic

- The organization's presence is recognized and is viewed neutrally by communities.
- Some members of larger communities are constructively engaged.

Moderate

- The organization is reasonably well known within communities and is perceived as open and responsive to community needs.
- Community members are constructively involved in organizational efforts.

High

- The organization is widely known within communities and is perceived as actively engaged and extremely responsive.
- Many members of the communities are actively and constructively involved in the organization's efforts (for example, implementing goals).

Notes



Subdimension 2.c Implementing formal feedback loops as part of community engagement

Basic

- The organization has started to plan the necessary elements of a feedback loop to authentically engage parents, providers, and community members in a more formal process to inform decisionmaking.

Moderate

- The organization has some elements of a feedback loop in place that do the following:
 - Connect with families and providers
 - Have some lines of communication among service providers, administrators, policymakers, and other professionals across sectors regarding their goals and policies
 - Are beginning to measure community engagement

High

- The organization has a formal feedback loop in place that does the following:
 - Provides opportunities for families and providers to engage in leadership and inform decisions
 - Ensures effective lines of communication among service providers, administrators, policymakers, and other professionals across sectors regarding goals and policies
 - Uses available data and assessment systems to reach out and inform partners about project efforts
 - Measures community, parent, and provider engagement with decisions

Notes



Subdimension 2.d Mobilizing and motivating the community

Basic

- Those with the potential to be most affected by the project have some knowledge of the work.
- Meetings are held regularly to inform but attendance varies widely.
- The organization has the ability to motivate a small core group of individuals or organizations.

Moderate

- Those with the potential to be most affected by the project are aware of the project and likely to be engaged.
- Meetings are held regularly and are generally well attended.
- The organization has the ability to motivate a segment of the community to mobilize.

High

- Communities most affected by the project see the work as inspiring and motivating.
- Community members are authentically engaged in taking action.
- Meetings are held regularly at convenient times for community members and are well attended.
- The organization has the ability to mobilize a diverse and broad range of groups into specific action.

Notes



DIMENSION 3: Financial Resources

Subdimension 3.a Managing finances

<input type="checkbox"/> Basic	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> High
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organization has financial plans, but fiscal management is rarely discussed with program leadership.• Budget staff and leadership have an awareness of funding sources and uses within the broader early childhood system.• There is some attempt to isolate project budgets within the overall budget, but categories lack the specificity needed to effectively manage them.• The budget is created and occasionally monitored to determine whether actual spending matches what was budgeted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are solid financial plans in place informed annually by program leadership and funding requirements.• There are regular updates provided to relevant team members and leadership by budget staff regarding finances.• Budget staff and leadership have a moderate understanding of funding sources and uses within the broader early childhood system.• Periodic communication between budget and program or policy staff occurs to monitor the operationalization of the budget.• Financial plans reflect the organization's strategic plan.• Solid efforts are made to isolate project budgets within the central budget.• The performance-to-budget is monitored regularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solid multiyear financial plans are in place, are jointly managed by fiscal and program leadership, and align with the expectations of funders.• There are continuous updates regarding finances from fiscal staff to program leadership.• Budget staff and leadership have a deep understanding of funding sources and uses within the broader early childhood system.• Budget staff and program or policy staff communicate frequently (on a regular basis and when needed) to monitor the operationalization of the budget.• The financial plan is used as a strategic tool.• The financing plan reflects the organization's goals and objectives as well as the collective goals for children and families shared among collaborating partners.• There are well-understood divisional project budgets within the overall budget.• The performance-to-budget is closely and regularly monitored.



Notes

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Subdimension 3.b Maximizing revenue

Basic

- The organization has started to have discussions about leveraging and coordinating resources for funding the project and maximizing impact.

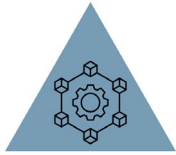
Moderate

- The organization has identified possible sources of funding and other resources from partner organizations.
- The organization has access to expertise to coordinate (pool) or integrate (blend or braid) funding for maximum impact.

High

- The organization has identified and mobilized sufficient resources—within limited budget realities—from across the team and coordinated with other partner organizations to maximize impact.
- The organization has a staff person who is responsible for strategically utilizing and maximizing funding.

Notes



DIMENSION 4: Infrastructure

Subdimension 4.a Creating a high-functioning organization that includes a plethora of experience and skillsets

<input type="checkbox"/> Basic	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some diversity among the team, including their fields of practice. • There is a lack of a diverse skillset among staff and leadership and only a moderate commitment to the organization’s vision and success. • Team members have regular, purposeful meetings that are well planned and during which attendance is good overall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is good diversity among the team, including demographics, fields of practice, and expertise. • Team members have diverse skill sets and experiences. • Team members have a good commitment to the organization’s success, vision, and mission. • Team members have regular, purposeful meetings that are well planned, have consistently good attendance, and achieve results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is diverse representation in the team—members are from a variety of fields of practice, demographics, and lived experiences and they have functional and program content-related expertise as well as experience thinking and operating at both a strategic and systemic level. • Formal efforts are made to hire staff that reflect the population served within the organization, program, or project. • Team members are highly motivated to invest in learning about the organization and addressing its issues. • Team members have an outstanding commitment to the organization’s vision and success. They meet regularly, there is good attendance, and they achieve results.

Notes
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Subdimension 4.b Establishing high-functioning intra-agency planning and implementation

Basic

- Interactions and communications between the different areas of the organization are generally good or somewhat effective in planning efforts.

Moderate

- Team members within the organization function together effectively. They communicate, share information and resources, and collaborate on planning efforts.

High

- There is constant and seamless communication and collaboration between staff and leadership within the organization. They work together effectively on planning and implementation.
- Roles and responsibilities are dictated by project planning and implementation needs (rather than hierarchy or politics).

Notes



Subdimension 4.c Developing and using a strategic plan

<input type="checkbox"/> Basic	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> High
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The team intends to develop a high-level strategic plan but has not written or updated such a plan.• The team operational workplans are used but are not connected to a strategic plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team members have the ability and tendency to develop and refine concrete, specific, and realistic goals.• There is some internal expertise on strategic planning or access to relevant external assistance.• Strategic planning is an activity occurring on a near-regular basis.• Team operational workplans include some activities that contribute to the implementation of the strategic plan.• Input from many teams and individuals across the organization is considered in strategic planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strategic plan is used extensively to guide the organization's decisions.• Strategic planning exercises and revisions are carried out regularly.• There is regular progress reporting on strategic plan execution and revisions as needed.• Each activity in team operational workplans contributes to the successful implementation of the strategic plan.• The strategic planning team is diverse in demographics and level of responsibility and includes members from teams across the organization.

Notes



Subdimension 4.d Planning for sustainability

Basic

- Sustainability planning is typically only done when necessary, such as when it is required for reporting or when a funding source is decreased or no longer available.
- Long-term financing of individual programs, projects, or initiatives is rarely addressed in formal plans.
- Sustainability planning is conducted with input from program, project, or initiative staff but with little outside input.
- When determining whether to continue, modify, or eliminate a program, project, or initiative, decisions are not based on objective measures.

Moderate

- Sustainability planning is occasionally included in strategic planning.
- For some programs, projects, or initiatives, there are formal plans in place for the long-term financing of operations that include considerations of alternative sources of revenue or methods of financing.
- Some individuals or organizations outside the organization are consulted during sustainability planning.
- Some metrics are used occasionally to determine what to continue, modify, or eliminate when determining how to sustain a given program, project, or initiative.

High

- Sustainability planning is routinely incorporated as part of strategic planning and furthers the vision of the organization.
- For each program, project, or initiative, there is a formal plan in place for the long-term financing of operations that includes considerations of alternative sources of revenue or methods of financing.
- Sustainability planning includes a diverse array of individuals and organizations or is part of a collaborative with a common vision for early care and education.
- Clear and objective measures are used to determine what to continue, modify, or eliminate when creating a plan for sustainability.

Notes

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Subdimension 4.e Using performance management and continuous quality improvement

<input type="checkbox"/> Basic	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> High
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a performance team in place, performance is partially measured, and progress is partially tracked.• The organization regularly collects quality data on activities and outputs but lacks data-driven impact measurement.• Input from the community served is infrequently used as a factor in decisionmaking or evaluation.• The data collected by the organization are rarely displayed or shared publicly via dashboards or data-sharing agreements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a performance team in place, performance is measured, and progress is tracked in multiple ways, several times a year. There is no formal continuous quality improvement system in place.• There are some performance indicators, but an evaluation is missing.• Community input is a part of the performance process, as well as other social, financial, and organizational activities.• Limited data are shared with partners or the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a high-functioning performance team and a well-developed, comprehensive, and integrated system (for example, Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) cycle, balanced scorecard) used for measuring performance and continuous quality improvement, including modifying activities.• There is a small number of clear, measurable, and key performance indicators.• Social impact is measured based on an evaluation that includes input from the communities served.• Data collected by the organization are made available to partners (for example, via data-sharing agreements) and to the general public in meaningful ways that also protect personally identifiable information (for example, via dashboards).

Notes



Subdimension 4.f Influencing high-level decisionmakers and policymaking

Basic

- The organization is aware of its potential to influence high-level decisionmakers and policymaking.
- There is some readiness and skill to participate in higher-level policy discussions.

Moderate

- The organization is fully aware of its potential to influence other key decisionmakers and policymaking and is active in relevant discussions at the federal, state, or local level.
- The organization is able to react to unexpected policy changes at state or national levels.

High

- The organization proactively and reactively influences other decisionmakers and policymaking relevant to the project in a highly effective manner at federal, state, and local levels.
- The organization is always ready for and often called on to participate in substantive discussion and, at times, initiates discussions.

Notes



Subdimension 4.g Using organizational structures and processes to function effectively and efficiently in critical areas such as communication, decisionmaking, and planning

Basic

- There is a basic set of processes in place, such as communication, decisionmaking, and planning; however, processes are known, used, and accepted by only a portion of the team.
- Organizational structures and processes are rarely reviewed or improved outside of occasions when problems arise.

Moderate

- There is a solid, well-designed set of processes in place in core areas to ensure the organization's smooth and effective functioning.
- The organizational processes are known and accepted by many, are often used, and contribute to increased impact.
- There is occasional monitoring, assessment, and improvement of organizational structures and processes.

High

- There is a robust, lean, and well-designed set of processes (for example, communication, decisionmaking, or planning) in place in all areas to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the organization.
- The organizational processes are widely known, used, and accepted.
- There is regular monitoring, assessment, and improvements to organizational structures and processes.

Notes



DIMENSION 5: Knowledge and Skills

Subdimension 5.a Using systems thinking

Basic

- The leadership and staff in the organization understand the concept of systems thinking but have not had the opportunity to practice in settings with a group of people.

Moderate

- Some leaders in the organization have a clear understanding of the whole system but have not yet moved groups of people to a shared understanding of complex problems.
- The organization has processes in place and attempts to think creatively and test assumptions.

High

- The leadership and staff in the organization see the whole ecosystem.
- Leadership and staff in the organization have the ability to help groups of people see the larger system so they can build a shared understanding of complex problems.
- Leadership and staff in the organization have the ability to foster reflection, creativity, and generative conversations.
- Leadership and staff in the organization have the ability to examine their thinking, see the underlying assumptions that can be carried into any conversation, and appreciate how **mental models** may limit the team.

Notes



Subdimension 5.b Incorporating a distributed leadership perspective

Basic

- The concepts of a **distributed leadership** are somewhat understood.
- The organization occasionally empowers others to share leadership.
- The organization typically responds to situations based on the gut instinct of the leader(s).

Moderate

- Leadership in the organization understands the concepts of a **distributed leadership** perspective, such as leading and managing from multiple places within a system and not just from formally designated leadership positions.
- The organization empowers others to share leadership.
- The organization recognizes the value of building positive joint visions for the future but is not yet able to move groups beyond reacting to problems.

High

- Leadership in the organization is able to set new directions through a **distributive leadership** model, empowering others to jointly lead and manage.
- Leadership in the organization is able to shift the group focus from reactive problem-solving to cocreating the future.
- Leadership in the organization is artful at helping people move beyond just reacting to problems to building positive visions for the future in a joint approach.

Notes



Subdimension 5.c Using strategic thinking

Basic

- The organization staff are able to cope with some complexity and ambiguity.
- Staff within the organization are able to analyze and periodically generate strategies.

Moderate

- The organization staff quickly assimilate complex information and are able to distill it into core issues.
- The organization welcomes ambiguity, and the team is comfortable dealing with the unknown.
- The organization sometimes or often develops robust strategies.

High

- The organization staff possess keen and exceptional abilities to synthesize complexity.
- The organization makes informed decisions in ambiguous or uncertain situations.
- The organization develops strategic alternatives and identifies associated rewards, risks, and actions.

Notes



Subdimension 5.d Executing the work

Basic

- The organization has a capable set of individuals, but they do not have all the skills or abilities necessary for the project's success.

Moderate

- The organization has a diverse and capable set of individuals who bring complementary skills to the organization.
- The organization is culturally responsive, reliable, and committed to the project's success and to making things happen.

High

- The organization has an extremely diverse and capable set of individuals who bring exceptional implementation skills.
- The organization is culturally responsive, reliable, loyal, and highly committed to the project's success and to making things happen.
- The organization often goes beyond the call of duty.

Notes



Subdimension 5.e Valuing equity and diversity

Basic

- The organization has a shared awareness of equity and diversity, but practices are not in place.

Moderate

- The organization has a shared understanding of equity and diversity policies, but they are not fully implemented.
- There is some diversity in the organization, but it does not reflect the populations served.
- Some practices to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion may be in use, such as the following:
 - Workgroups or staff positions in place to implement equity policies
 - Some general training on diversity, equity, or inclusion
 - Some accountability measures for reaching populations who have been historically underserved, such as data tracking or user feedback

High

- The organization's team has widespread knowledge and skills in equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- The staff of the organization represent the diversity of the populations served.
- The organization has several systems-level practices in place, such as the following:
 - Workgroups or staff positions in place to implement equity policies
 - Ongoing training and dialogue among staff and management to help make diversity, equity, and inclusion part of standard operating procedures
 - Staff accountable for activities that support equity policies
 - Data tracking those who are benefiting from services and those who are not

Notes



DIMENSIONS – Summary Results of Current Capacity Level

Dimension 1: Culture and Climate	Basic	Moderate	High
1.a. Implementing values and beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.b. Embedding equity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.c. Sharing and understanding of common vision and goals throughout the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.d. Setting expectations to accommodate and sustain change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.e. Valuing and aligning performance throughout the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dimension 2: Engagement and Partnerships	Basic	Moderate	High
2.a. Establishing and maintaining relationships with partners (e.g., state agencies, advocates, providers, parents, and oversight groups)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.b. Establishing and sustaining local community presence and involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.c. Implementing formal feedback loops as part of community engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.d. Mobilizing and motivating the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dimension 3: Financial Resources	Basic	Moderate	High
3.a. Managing finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.b. Maximizing revenue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dimension 4: Infrastructure	Basic	Moderate	High
4.a. Creating a high-functioning organization that includes a plethora of experience and skillsets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.b. Establishing high-functioning intra-agency planning and implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.c. Developing and using a strategic plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.d. Planning for sustainability | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.e. Using performance management and continuous quality improvement | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.f. Influencing high-level decisionmakers and policymaking | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.g. Using organizational structures and processes to function effectively and efficiently in critical areas such as communication, decisionmaking, and planning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Dimension 5: Knowledge and Skills

Basic

Moderate

High

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5.a. Using systems thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.b. Incorporating a distributed leadership perspective | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.c. Using strategic thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.d. Executing the work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.e. Valuing equity and diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Glossary

- **Distributed leadership:** This type of leadership focuses on how people complete tasks that involve different people distributed across an organization. This approach is used to determine how leadership works in complex organizations.^{iv}
- **Social impact:** This is the effect of an activity or investment on the social fabric of the community and the well-being of individuals and families.
- **Mental models:** These are conceptual frameworks that are made up of generalizations or assumptions that inform both our understanding of and actions in the world.
- **PDCA cycle:**^v The plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle is a four-step approach that calls for constant interaction and repetition among the steps to support continuous improvement. This dynamic and deliberate nonlinear process can instill sustainable change.
 - Plan what to do.
 - Do it.
 - Check the results.
 - Act to make adjustments and improve.

Resources

Capacity Building Organizations

Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative: The Children's Bureau's [Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative](#) has tools and resources to support your capacity building efforts. The purpose of this collaborative is to help public child welfare agencies, tribes, and courts enhance and mobilize the human and organizational assets necessary to meet federal standards and requirements; improve child welfare practice and administration; and achieve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children, youth, and families.


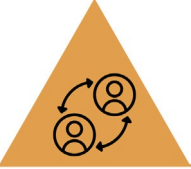

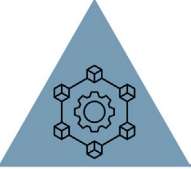
Child Care State Capacity Building Center: The [Child Care State Capacity Building Center](#) (SCBC) works with state and territory leaders and their partners to create innovative early childhood systems and programs that improve results for children and families. SCBC focuses on enhancing the effectiveness of programs implemented under the Child Care and Development Fund, improving the quality and supply of infant and toddler services, and advancing the development of early childhood systems.

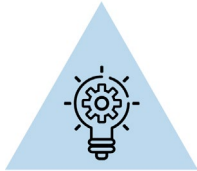


Capacity Building Resources

The [Early Childhood Systems Building Resource Guide](#) (SBRG) is a set of chapters designed to support professionals planning for, implementing, and sustaining early childhood systems. It supports this work through a multidimensional approach, allowing each element to contribute to the effectiveness and sustainability of a systems-building endeavor. Many of the resources featured in the “Resources” section of each chapter of the SBRG are applicable to one or more of the dimensions of capacity building featured in the *Capacity Building Self-Assessment*.

The table below lists the five dimensions of capacity building and the SBRG chapters that feature resources that may be applicable to the corresponding dimension of capacity building. Within each chapter, the corresponding resource is denoted by the icon that matches the dimension. For example, resources in the Financing Strategically chapter of the SBRG that may be relevant to the Financial Resources dimensions will be shown with a green piggybank icon next to them.

Dimension of Capacity Building	Relevant Chapter(s) from the SBRG
 Culture and Climate	“Equity” “Leadership” “Program Design and Implementation” “Program Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement” “Strategic Plans” “Understanding Systems Building”
 Engagement and Partnerships	“Equity” “Program Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement” “Stakeholder Communications” “Strategic Plans” “Strategic Relationships” “Understanding Systems Building”
 Financial Resources	“Financing Strategically” “Program Design and Implementation”
 Infrastructure	“Equity” “Leadership” “Program Design and Implementation” “Strategic Plans” “Program Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement”



Knowledge and Skills

- “Project Management”
- “Stakeholder Communications”
- “Strategic Relationships”
- “Sustaining Gains”
- “Understanding Systems Building”
- “Equity”
- “Leadership”
- “Program Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement”
- “Project Management”
- “Strategic Plans”
- “Understanding Systems Building”

ⁱ State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices Center & National Implementation Research Network. (2014). *Activity 5.1 (Improvement cycles): Getting “ready” for change*. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/resources/activity-5-1-getting-ready-change>

ⁱⁱ Glisson, C. (2015). The role of organizational culture and climate in innovation and effectiveness. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership, & Governance*, 39(4), 245–250. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5008450/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Glisson, 245–250.

^{iv} Spillane, J. P., & Diamond, J. B. (2007). *Distributed leadership in practice*. Columbia University, Teachers College Press.

^v W. Edwards Deming Institute. (n.d.). *The PDSA cycle*. <https://deming.org/explore/pdsa/>

The State Capacity Building Center (SCBC) works with state and territory leaders and their partners to create innovative early childhood systems and programs that improve results for children and families. The SCBC is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care.

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