Regional System Assessment Toolkit

Oregon Department of Education – Early Learning Division

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Weaving Change
Systemic Equity through Engagement

Contents

Introduction

Overview

This introduction describes what a regional system assessment is (and is not), some of the benefits the process can bring about for Hubs and regional partners, and the main steps in the assessment process.

What is a regional system assessment?

A regional system assessment is a process to understand how conditions within regional programs, organizations, systems, and communities are helping and hindering the Raise Up Oregon objectives and ultimately affecting whether children are getting ready for kindergarten and families are healthy, stable, and attached with fewer disparities.

The process involves gathering and making sense of information about regional conditions from different perspectives (e.g., families, leaders and staff from cross-sector organizations, community members, etc.) and relevant data sources. Hubs determine which methods make the most sense to use within the assessment given their unique regional context.

Regional system assessment information can be used to identify shared priorities for a strategic plan *and* to help Hubs design targeted strategies to address local conditions and anticipate and address potential implementation needs.

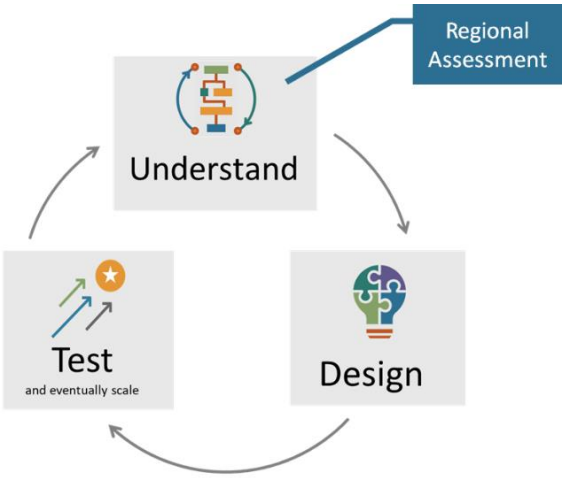
Instead of a report that sits on the shelf and collects dust, regional system assessments can be thought of as a dynamic process that can guide adaptive strategic planning AND contribute to a larger action learning cycle where Hubs continually:

1) UNDERSTAND ecosystem conditions affecting outcomes for children and families.

2) DESIGN strategies to address what's not working and amplify what is

3) TEST out these strategies in "safe to fail" situations

4) Gather short cycle feedback in real time to UNDERSTAND whether the strategies are working and why. If yes, move to start scaling them. If not, re-DESIGN the strategies and re-TEST them until they do.



This action learning cycle builds on common approaches to community change, including popular education and participatory action research.

Why do a regional assessment – what benefits can it bring about?

A regional assessment can bring about benefits for Hubs and assessment participants. The following are some example benefits that can help enhance regional change efforts.

Build Critical Consciousness and Buy-In

Asking and answering questions about how regional conditions are contributing to inequities in early childhood outcomes can help people gain a deeper understanding of what needs to change to improve the lives of all children and families. This "critical consciousness" helps build the buy-in to take action to change these conditions.

BENEFITS FOR THE HUB

Hub can build a network of individuals who have the knowledge and motivation to take action around early childhood outcomes.

BENEFITS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS

Regional partners – including families - can use their understanding of regional conditions to guide change efforts within their organizations and communities.

Develop Shared Data Resources

The regional assessment process can help Hub partners gather, organize, and make sense of a diverse array of qualitative and quantitative data about regional conditions affecting targeted objectives and outcomes to guide their decision-making and action.

BENEFITS FOR THE HUB

Hub can draw from a more comprehensive array of data to guide decision-making and systems change actions.

BENEFITS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS

Partners can use this data to enhance their organization's efforts (e.g., grant writing) and build their data skills.

Expand Engagement and Relationships

Engaging cross-sector partners, families, and community members in the regional assessment can enhance the data that is gathered and expand the community's collective power and capacity. It can also provide an invitation to for these individuals to continue engaging with the Hub *after the assessment is over*.

BENEFITS FOR THE HUB

Hub can expand who is engaged in their efforts to represent a broader array of perspectives and system roles.

BENEFITS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS

Partners can develop new or enhanced relationships with cross-sector entities, families, and community members.

Generate Shared Priorities for Action

The regional assessment can help partners reflect on what they are learning about regional conditions to identify shared priorities for action.

BENEFITS FOR THE HUB

Hub can use these priorities to inform (adaptive) strategic planning and the strategy design process.

BENEFITS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS

Partners can explore what roles they (and their organizations) can take to pursue the shared priorities.

What are the steps for carrying out a regional system assessment?

The regional system assessment process can be carried out using the following steps. Hubs will go through these steps at different speeds depending on their experience and membership. See the following ELD Deliverables Timeline to see how the regional system assessment process lines up with other Hub activities.

Step 1

The Hub takes stock of:

- What they already know and still need to learn about their selected RUO objective
- Which ecosystem conditions are most relevant to explore related to the RUO objective

Step 2

The Hub plans out how to gather the information it needs by:

- Identifying perspectives and data sources that answer their questions
- Selecting or adapting culturally responsive methods to gather this information
- Launching these methods along with gathering short cycle feedback to keep things on track.

Step 3

The Hub makes sense of the assessment information they have gathered by:

- Sorting the assessment data to find key themes and insights
- Visually summarizing the themes to understand the big picture
- Prioritizing themes to focus on in the strategic plan
- Exploring ways to engage assessment participants in continuing learning and action opportunities within the Hub.

WHAT ROLES CAN HUB PARTNERS TAKE IN CARRYING OUT THESE STEPS?

The following are example roles Hub partners can take in carrying out the regional system assessment.

Design the Assessment	Engage in discussions about how to design the regional system assessment, including what questions to ask and what feasible, culturally responsive methods to use in the region.
Gather Information	Gather input directly from regional partners and/or partner with others (e.g., local organizations, staff, families) to gather this input on your behalf. You can also connect with partners who can provide access to other data sources that can help to answer the regional system assessment questions.
Make Sense of Findings	Engage with regional partners in mapping out themes from the regional system assessment and prioritizing targets for change to include in the system strategic plan.

Tips for Taking It Live

The following are some tips for helping regional partners understand the regional system assessment process and their potential roles.

Hub and Partner Organization Engagement

See the *Example Hub Meeting Schedule* on page 42 for ideas on how to introduce the regional system assessment purpose and process with regional partners during a Hub meeting. Alternatively, you could send them a link to a recording of Erin Watson's introduction to the Regional System Assessment (see the ELD's YouTube channel for link) and have a discussion about the assessment at the next Hub meeting.

You could use the Overview Slides and Overview Handout to provide an introduction to regional partner organizations who don't attend Hub meetings, or send them the recorded video link referenced above with follow-up communication.

Bounding the Regional System Assessment Process

Before beginning the regional system assessment, Hubs should reflect on the benefits they would most like to get out of the process and the resources they have available to support the it. The combination of desired benefits and available resources can help the Hub strategically decide how to design their regional system assessment, including what intensity level they want to use for each step of the process.

Overview

This section describes how to determine an intensity level for the regional system assessment process that fits with your Hub's desired benefits and available resources. This boundary informs how the Hub will carry out each of the step of the regional system assessment process.

What benefits does the Hub most want out of the regional system assessment process?

Ask your Hub what benefits they would most like to bring about through the assessment process given your regional context (see page 4 for details). The following questions can help guide this discussion:

Build Critical Consciousness and Buy-In

To what extent does the Hub want regional partners (e.g., cross-sector staff/leaders, families, community members, etc.) to…

- Gain a deeper understanding of how regional conditions are contributing to current inequities in early childhood outcomes?
- Build buy-in and motivation to take action?

Develop Shared Data Resources

To what extent does the Hub want…

- A more comprehensive array of qualitative and quantitative data about regional conditions to guide decision-making and systems change strategies/actions?
- Integration across new and existing data sources?

Expand Engagement and Relationships

To what extent does the Hub want the Hub to…

- Expand the range of cross-sector partners and families (especially those experiencing the greatest inequities) engaged our efforts?
- Deepen the engagement of current partners

Generate Shared Priorities for Action

To what extent does the Hub want regional partners (e.g., cross-sector staff/leaders, families, community members, etc.) to…

- Identify shared priorities for action to guide the Hub's strategic planning?
- Build understanding of what roles they can take to pursue the shared priorities?

What resources does the Hub have to carry out the regional system assessment?

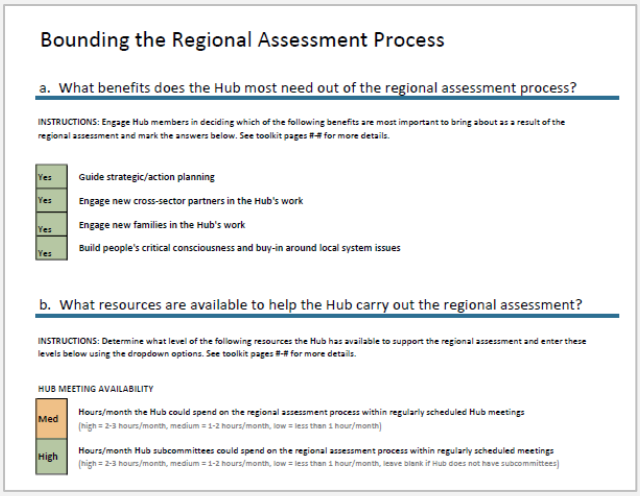
Each Hub will have different resources available to support the regional system assessment process. The following are some typical types of resources at low, medium, and high levels.

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Hub Meeting Availability Hours/month the Hub (and/or subcommittees) could spend on the regional system assessment process *within regularly scheduled meetings*	Less than 1 hour/month	1-1.5 hours/month	1.5+ hours/month
Hub Staff and Partners The availability of backbone staff, regional partners, and/or consultants to support the regional system assessment process. Includes these individuals' knowledge and skills in qualitative and quantitative data methods and analysis.	Backbone staff (combined) can devote 1-3 hours/week 1-3 regional partners who can support the assessment Limited qual/ quant data skills	Backbone staff (combined) can devote 4-6 hours/week 4-8 regional partners who can support the assessment Moderate qual/ quant data skills	Backbone staff (combined) can devote 7+ hours/week 9+ regional partners who can support the assessment Strong qual/quant data skills
Regional Connections The connections and access Hub partners have to cross-sector leaders/staff and diverse families in the region.	Limited connections	Moderate connections	Strong connections

Electronic Workbook

Reference tab 1 in the Electronic Workbook to record what benefits your Hub is most interested in getting out of the regional system assessment and what resources the Hub has available to support the process.

The workbook will automatically generate recommendations based on your responses.



Bounding the Regional Assessment Process

a. What benefits does the Hub most need out of the regional assessment process?

INSTRUCTIONS: Engage Hub members in deciding which of the following benefits are most important to bring about as a result of the regional assessment and mark the answers below. See toolkit pages #-# for more details.

Yes	Guide strategic/action planning
Yes	Engage new cross-sector partners in the Hub's work
Yes	Engage new families in the Hub's work
Yes	Build people's critical consciousness and buy-in around local system issues

b. What resources are available to help the Hub carry out the regional assessment?

INSTRUCTIONS: Determine what level of the following resources the Hub has available to support the regional assessment and enter these levels below using the dropdown options. See toolkit pages #-# for more details.

HUB MEETING AVAILABILITY

Med	Hours/month the Hub could spend on the regional assessment process within regularly scheduled Hub meetings (high = 2-3 hours/month, medium = 1-2 hours/month, low = less than 1 hour/month)
High	Hours/month Hub subcommittees could spend on the regional assessment process within regularly scheduled meetings (high = 2-3 hours/month, medium = 1-2 hours/month, low = less than 1 hour/month, leave blank if Hub does not have subcommittees)

How can a regional system assessment be carried out at different intensity levels?

Regional system assessments can be carried out at different intensity levels. Your Hub can mix and match intensity levels across the assessment steps given your resources and desired benefits.

	Decision-Point	LOW INTENSITY	MEDIUM INTENSITY	HIGH INTENSITY
Step 1: Decide what to learn	# of ecosystem conditions to explore in the assessment *(see page 14)*	4-5 conditions	6-7 conditions	7-9 conditions
Step 2: Gather needed information	Which perspectives to gather input from *(see page 20)*	Families, direct service providers and leaders from small # of sectors.	Families, direct service providers, leaders, and community members from moderate # of sectors.	Families, direct service providers, leaders, and community members. No limits on the # of sectors.
	# of methods to use *(see page 22)*	Use 1-2 less resource intensive methods.	Use 2-4 less to moderate resource intensive methods.	Use any type of methods.
	What type of existing data sources to use *(see page 21)*	Only sources that have already been analyzed.	Sources already analyzed or requiring minimal analysis.	Any type of data source.
Step 3: Make sense of information	How extensively to clean the qualitative notes *(see page 29)*	Minimal cleaning	Moderate cleaning	Heavy cleaning
	How to theme or make sense of the regional system assessment findings *(see page 30)*	Engage the backbone staff or an evaluator in theming all the assessment information behind the scenes. Get regional partners' input on themes and modify as needed.	Engage a small group of regional partners and/or assessment participants in theming some or all of the information. Backbone staff or evaluator can theme any remaining information and get input from Hub.	Engage many regional partners and/or assessment participants in theming some or all of the information. Backbone staff or evaluator can theme any remaining information and get input from the Hub and/or participants.
	How to visually summarize the assessment findings *(see page 32)*	Outline	Hybrid outline/ system map	System map

HIGHER THE INTENSITY = MORE POTENTIAL BENEFITS (SEE P. 4)

Step 1: Determine what the Hub knows and still needs to learn about the selected RUO objective

Overview

Step 1 of the regional system assessment helps the Hub determine what they already know about the selected RUO objective, and what they still need to learn. This informs what information to gather in step 2.

What objective is most relevant to focus on for the assessment?

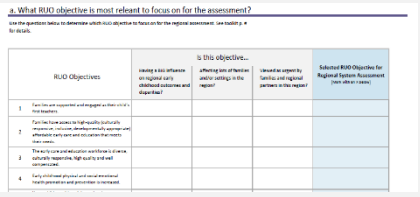
The regional system assessment is grounded in the objectives highlighted in the Raise Up Oregon (RUO) early learning plan. Each Hub will select one RUO objectives to focus on for the assessment.

Ask Hub partners to reflect on the following questions to select which RUO Objective to focus on for this regional system assessment.

Which objective is having a big influence on regional early childhood outcomes/disparities?	Help regional partners review recent and disaggregated (i.e., broken out by relevant demographic categories) regional data on child and family outcomes and disparities highlighted in the Theory of Change. See this data guide for examples. Ask Hub partners to identify which RUO objectives they see as having a big impact on the gaps and disparities in these early childhood outcomes.
Which objectives are affecting lots of regional families and/or settings?	Engage regional partners in identifying RUO objectives that are affecting a large number of families and/or relevant settings (e.g., early care and education settings) in the region. Encourage partners to refer to relevant data and personal experience to inform this decision.
Which objectives are viewed as an urgent priority by regional families and Hub partners?	Identify which RUO Objectives are seen as urgent by families from priority groups and Hub partners in the region. Refer to recent reports (e.g., ECE Sector Plan), community conversations, town halls, and staff meetings notes to guide this process.

Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 1a in the Electronic Workbook to record which RUO Objective to focus on for the assessment.


a. What RUO objective is most releant to focus on for the assessment?

Use the questions below to determine which RUO objective to focus on for the regional assessment. See toolkit p. # for details.

	RUO Objectives	Is this objective...			
		causing a big influence on regional early childhood outcomes and disparities?	affecting lots of families and/or settings in the region?	Viewed as urgent by families and regional partners in this region?	Selected RUO Objective for Regional System Assessment (max three cases)
1	Families are supported and engaged as their child's first teachers.				
2	Families have access to high-quality culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate and affordable early care and education that meets their needs.				
3	The early care and education workforce is diverse, culturally responsive, high quality and well compensated.				
4	Early childhood physical and social-emotional health promotion and prevention is increased.				

What does the Hub already know and still need to learn about the state of the selected objective in the region?

DEFINE YOUR SELECTED OBJECTIVE

There are different ways to define and measure each RUO objective, and your Hub can select what makes the most sense for their region.

For example, take RUO Objective 2: families have access to high-quality (culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate) affordable early care and education that meets their needs. Here are some things your Hub could consider when defining this objective:

- What does "culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate" early care and education include or look like? What evidence would you use?
- What should be considered affordable – and to whom?
- What types of settings should be included in the term "early care and education"? Should it include unregulated settings?

Tips for defining the objective:

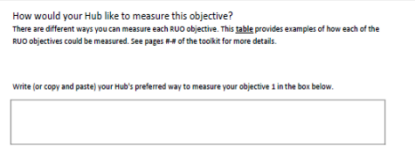
Refer to strategies under each RUO Objective for ideas on how define aspects of the objective.

Refer to the early childhood literature for examples of how others have defined certain terms within the objective.

Consider what is most important to know about the objective given your regional context and current disparities.

Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 1a in the Electronic Workbook to describe how your Hub wants to define the objective.


How would your Hub like to measure this objective?
There are different ways you can measure each RUO objective. This table provides examples of how each of the RUO objectives could be measured. See pages #-# of the toolkit for more details.

Write (or copy and paste) your Hub's preferred way to measure your objective 1 in the box below.

IDENTIFY WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THE OBJECTIVE

What data do regional partners *already have* that describes the state of the objective in the region? Drawing on your definition of the objective, look for quantitative and qualitative data that is recent (generally within the last 2 years), local (about your region vs. state-wide), and disaggregated in ways that are relevant for your region (e.g., intersections of race/ethnicity, gender, location, income level, etc.).

The following are several types of data sources to explore – see the data guide for ideas.

Public Databases (e.g., U.S. Census, Quality Rating Systems, County Health Rankings, etc.)	Local Organizations' Databases (e.g., CCRR, Health Department, etc.)	Evaluation Reports (e.g., evaluations of programs or initiatives, foundation reports, etc.)	Regional Perspectives (e.g., what regional partners have learned about the objective through prior efforts)

How to Explore Data about the State of your Objective

As you explore existing data, pull out information about current and historical trends related to the following 3 questions:

QUESTION 1: To what extent is this objective in place within the region?

QUESTION 2: To what extent are families from priority populations being reached or affected?

QUESTION 3: To what extent are families from priority populations getting their needs/preferences met?

Remember, some data measures will better capture what you really want to know about the objective than others. For example, research has shown that some subscales (e.g., teacher/child interactions) within child care quality ratings systems are more related to positive outcomes for children than the overall rating scale (i.e., taking the average across all the sub-scales).[1] Research reports can be a good source to inform your decisions about what types of measures to draw on to understand the objective.

Consider other deliverables you are developing as part of your Hub work to find this information. For example, most of the information you need to describe the state of Objective 2 is in the Early Childhood Service Analysis (formerly referred to as the ECE Sector Plan).

Electronic Workbook

Summarize your data in the "Data on State of Objective" tab in the Electronic Workbook.

IDENTIFY WHAT YOU STILL NEED TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR SELECTED OBJECTIVE(S)

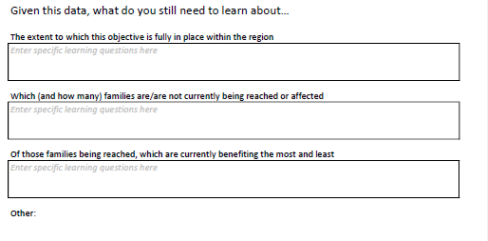
Reflect on the information you summarized on the selected objective and determine what specific follow-up assessment questions you still need to ask about the state of the objective in your region. These follow-up questions will inform what regional perspectives and additional data sources you gather in step 2.

The table below provides guidance on how to identify specific follow-up questions based on your review of the data you already have on the objective:

Guidance for Identifying Specific Follow-Up Questions for the Assessment	
QUESTION 1: To what extent is this objective in place within the region?	Do you have data on the different aspects included in how your Hub defined the objective (see page 11)? If no, what follow-up questions could you ask in the assessment to help fill in these gaps? Is it clear what criteria of success should be used in the region for this objective? Is there a need to ask specific follow-up questions to gather additional input on this criteria?
QUESTION 2: To what extent are families from priority populations being reached or affected?	Do you have disaggregated reach data for all of your priority family populations? If no, what follow-up questions could you ask in the assessment to help fill in these gaps? Do you have disaggregated reach data for all the different aspects included in how your Hub defined the objective? If no, what follow-up questions could you ask in the assessment to help fill in these gaps?
QUESTION 3: To what extent are families from priority populations getting their needs/preferences met?	Do you have data on the full range of families' needs and preferences related to this objective? If no, what follow-up questions could you ask in the assessment to help fill in these gaps? Do you have data on the extent to which local settings (e.g., ECE settings) and processes are meeting families' needs and preferences in the region? If no, what follow-up questions could you ask in the assessment to help fill in these gaps?

Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 1a in the Electronic Workbook to record what still need to learn about your selected objective(s).


Given this data, what do you still need to learn about...

The extent to which this objective is fully in place within the region

Enter specific learning questions here

Which (and how many) families are/are not currently being reached or affected

Enter specific learning questions here

Of those families being reached, which are currently benefiting the most and least

Enter specific learning questions here

Other:

What does the Hub need to learn about ecosystem conditions affecting the objective?

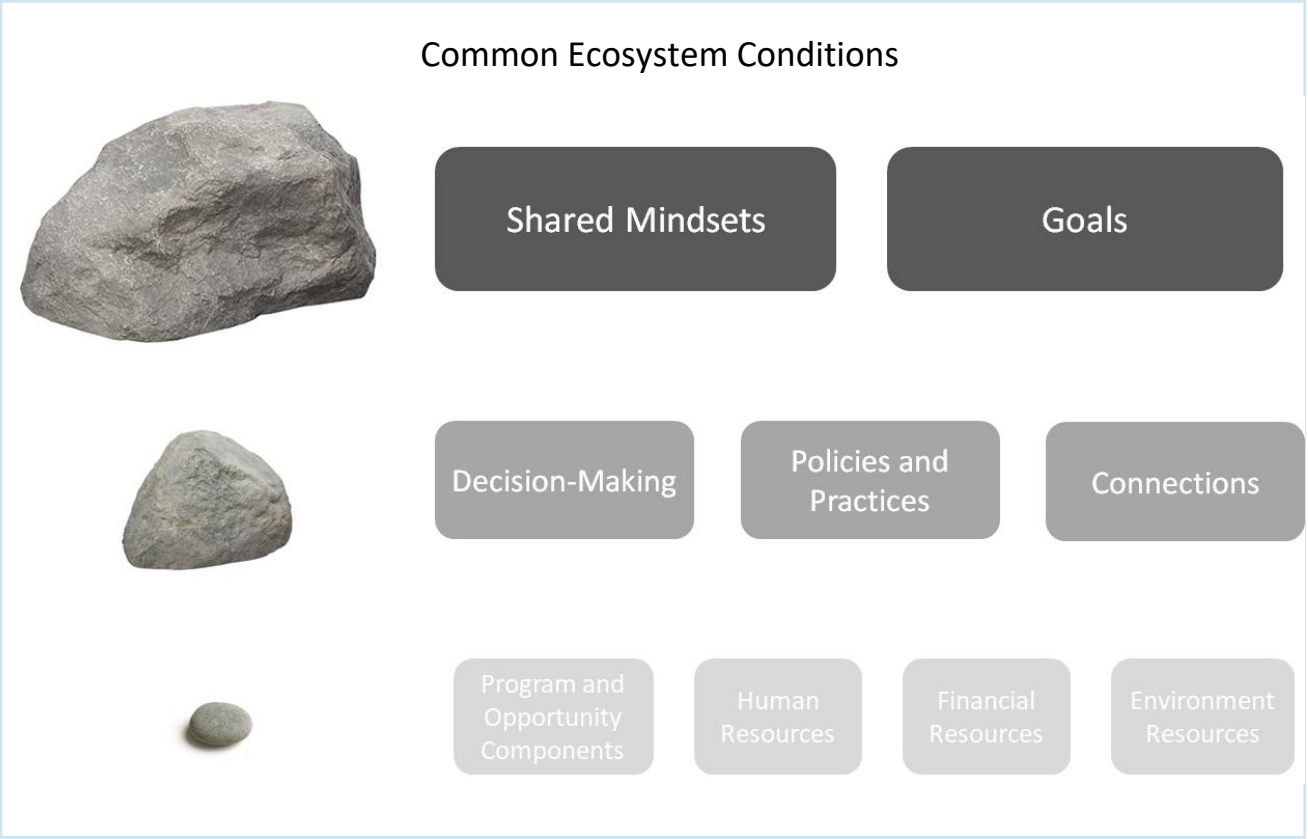
Ecosystem conditions are characteristics within organizations, service delivery systems, and communities that are helping and/or hindering the RUO objective(s) in your region. Systems thinkers have identified several ecosystem conditions that tend affect most objective areas – see image below.

Ecosystem conditions fall into high, medium, and low *leverage point* categories. A system leverage point is a place within an ecosystem where a change in one condition (e.g., a goal) can trigger rippling effects on multiple other conditions (e.g., policies, connections, resources, etc.) because of its direct and indirect influence across the ecosystem.[2]

- Higher leverage point conditions often create more sustainable changes than lower leverage point conditions. Higher leverage points are like boulders that create a big ripple effect when changed.

- Lower leverage point conditions often create less sustainable changes that do not reverberate across the system. These lower leverage point conditions are like smaller pebbles.

Hubs can strategically focus their efforts on shifting higher leverage points to create more transformative systems change in their region. For example, helping technical colleges adopt new goals that ensure their early childhood curriculum includes a focus on equity will lead to more sustainable change than putting on a one-time equity training for current early care and education staff).



WHICH ECOSYSTEM CONDITIONS ARE MOST RELEVANT FOR EACH OBJECTIVE?

The table below summarizes common ecosystem conditions related to higher, medium, and lower leverage points. The table also includes regional system assessment questions you could use to explore these conditions as well as example data points.

Engage your Hub in determining which ecosystem conditions are most relevant and important to explore related to your selected objectives. Consider conditions that are both getting in the way of the objective and conditions that are helping to bring about the objective. The latter is especially important to build upon the positive systems changes the Hub is already starting to bring about.

Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 1b in the Electronic Workbook to record which ecosystem conditions the Hub wants to explore in the assessment.

HIGHER LEVERAGE POINTS		
Ecosystem Conditions	Regional System Assessment Questions	Example Data Points
Shared Mindsets Beliefs, values, narratives assumptions, priorities, and attitudes that create a way of viewing reality for people who share them.	What shared beliefs, attitudes, values, or assumptions are helping and hindering this objective in the region - and in what ways? Can ask follow-up questions about things like: implicit biases, attitudes about local organizations, attitudes about local families, assumptions about why the objective is not yet fully in place in the region and how to improve the situation, etc.	Many believe child care is just babysitting instead of an opportunity to build healthy brains and improve lifelong outcomes. This mindset makes leaders and policy makers less likely to support systematic efforts to improve child care quality.
Goals Stated and unstated aims, outcomes, targets, and purpose within organizations, agencies, initiatives, and systems.	How are the goals and targeted outcomes (or lack thereof) within regional organizations, agencies, and initiatives helping and/or hindering this objective? Ask follow-up questions about things like: goals and outcome represented within strategic plans, action plans, logic models or theories of change, budgeting plans, mission statements, etc.	The local health department has formally prioritized outcomes around reducing racial/ethnic disparities in children's health. This is helping to align their work with the goals of the Hub.

MEDIUM LEVERAGE POINTS		
Ecosystem Conditions	Regional System Assessment Questions	Example Data Points
Decision-Making How decisions are made, and who is included/ excluded from these processes.	How are decisions made about this objective within organizations, agencies, collaboratives, and communities? Who is engaged in/excluded from these decision-making processes? How is this situation helping and/or hindering this objective in the region? Can ask follow-up questions about: to what extent families experiencing the greatest disparities in early childhood outcomes have influence over decisions and are authentically engaged in co-designing solutions.	School districts do not engage ECE providers or diverse families in decision-making processes about how to structure state-subsidized 4K preschool slots.
Policies and Practices Formal and informal policies, practices, procedures, protocols, laws, standards, and norms	How are policies, practices, procedures, protocols, standards, regulations, and laws within local organizations, cities, counties, and beyond helping and hindering this objective in the region? Can ask follow-up questions about things like: hiring policies, outreach practices, licensing regulations, quality standards, eligibility rules, funding requirements, etc.	Some quality rating standards are not culturally responsive to the diversity of ECE providers in the region, especially providers from indigenous and Asian cultures.
Connections Exchanges and flows of information and resources between people and organizations	How are current flows and exchanges of information, resources, and referrals between people and organizations helping and hindering this objective in the region?	Local clinics are referring children flagged in developmental screenings to appropriate early intervention services.

LOWER LEVERAGE POINTS		
Ecosystem Conditions	Regional System Assessment Questions	Example Data Points
Program/Opportunity Components The array, accessibility, and quality of programs (e.g., Head Start, WIC), services (e.g., healthcare, public transit), and opportunities (e.g., jobs).	How is the current array, accessibility, character, and/or quality of programs (e.g., Head Start), services (e.g., healthcare, public transit), and opportunities (e.g., jobs) helping and hindering this objective in the region?	There are not enough high-quality, affordable child care slots available to meet the needs of families in the region.
Financial Resources Money and capital.	How is the availability, amount, or allocation of money, profits, and capital helping and hindering this objective in the region?	Significant financial resources are being allocated to address gaps in the early care and education through the ARPA funds.
Human Resources People and their skills and knowledge.	How is the availability of people (e.g., staff, family leaders, etc.) and their skills and knowledge helping and hindering this objective in the region? Can ask follow-up questions about things like: to what extent do families have the skills and knowledge they need to use and benefit from available opportunities (e.g., opportunities to engage in regional decision-making processes, living wage jobs, etc.) and/or supports (e.g., literacy skills needed to use and benefit from books sent home to read with their children); to what extent do staff and leaders have the skills and knowledge they need to carry out their roles effectively?	Many within the early care and education workforce need additional skills in cultural responsivity and trauma-informed care.
Environment Resources Aspects of the natural (e.g., land, water) and built (e.g., buildings, roads, internet) environment.	How is the character and quality of the natural (e.g., land, soil, water, etc.) and built (e.g., buildings, roads, technology/ internet, etc.) environment helping and hindering this objective in the region? Can ask follow-up questions about things like: character and quality of parks and outdoor spaces where children can play and get exercise, buildings where relevant activities take place, internet access, etc.	There is not broadband internet access within many rural communities in the region.

Tips for Taking It Live

The following are some tips for carrying out step 1 of the regional system assessment process.

Hub and Partner Engagement

HUB MEETINGS: See the *PowerPoint Slides* and *Example Meeting Process* on page 42 for ideas on how to use Hub meetings to engage members in this phase of the process.

PARTNER MEETINGS: You (or someone on your behalf) can also replicate some or all of the facilitation processes outlined in the *Example Meeting Process* with partner organizations and groups during their upcoming meetings (e.g., staff meetings, collaborative meetings, etc.).

GENERAL FACILITATION TIP: Before engaging regional partners in reviewing the summary of existing data about the objective, look through the data and identify questions you can ask to help them identify and reflect on the patterns and inequities in the data.

Family Engagement

FAMILIES' PERSPECTIVES: Consider engaging families in reflecting the summary of existing data about the objective and identifying additional questions to ask in the regional system assessment. Consider creating a simple 1-page handout that summarizes key points from existing data sources to support this discussion.

EXISTING MEETINGS: As much as possible, engage families through existing groups (e.g., Head Start parent group, play groups, etc.) to make this process feasible. You can either facilitate the discussion directly, or if more appropriate ask the leader of the group to facilitate the discussion on your behalf and send you the notes.

Data

RELUCTANCE TO SHARE: Sometimes regional partners can hesitate to share their data due to fear of what others will think or how the data could be weaponized against them. Here are a few ideas for how to address this tension:

- If they don't already exist, develop group norms or mutual agreements for how the Hub will work together to share and use data.
- If needed, develop more formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to clarify agreements and processes for sharing and using data.
- Meet with concerned regional partners behind the scenes to fully understand their concerns and talk about ways to address them.

COACHING: If your regional partners have more limited experience with data, consider engaging an ELD data coach to support the Hub's data needs related to this step of the regional system assessment process or even help facilitate aspects of your meetings.

Step 2: Gather needed information from diverse perspectives and data sources

Overview

Step 2 of the regional system assessment is focused on figuring out which perspectives and data sources can answer the assessment questions the group identified in step 1. It also involves determining which methods are the most relevant and feasible for engaging these perspectives and accessing the data sources, and initiating those methods in combination with short cycle feedback. This step helps to gather the information needed to map out assessment priorities in step 3 of the assessment process.

Does the Hub want to continue engaging participants *after* the assessment?

Before getting into methods, it can be helpful to decide if and how your Hub wants to continue engaging regional system assessment participants *after* the initial assessment process is over.

Why? Because regional system assessment processes can be a powerful way to help people in your region gain a deeper understanding or "critical consciousness" of systemic conditions contributing to local early childhood outcomes/disparities *and the motivation* to take actions around improving these conditions.[3] The Hub can channel people's growing awareness and motivation into action to address identified issues.

Making the decision early on about whether and how the Hub wants to continue engaging regional system assessment participants gives you the chance to intentionally ask participants about their interest in different engagement opportunities within the Hub and get their contact information.

This table provides some options for your Hub could continue engaging assessment participants after the assessment is over. Engage your Hub in determining what makes the most sense for your goals and context.

Record your Hub's preference in Step 2a (rows 3-14) in the Electronic Workbook.

Minimal Engagement	OPTION 1: Providing participants with summary of regional system assessment findings.
	OPTION 2: Everything above *and* inviting participants to engage in future (TBD) opportunities to help the Hub continue learning and strategizing around how to improve the regional early childhood system.
High Engagement	OPTION 3: Everything above *and* engaging participants to become more formal members of a parent council or Hub committee.

Which perspectives and data sources can help answer your questions?

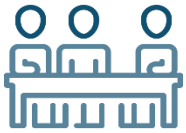
To answer your regional system assessment questions, consider talking with people representing diverse perspectives and accessing existing (or potential) data sources. Both of these options are described below.

PERSPECTIVES

One of the best ways to deeply understand ecosystem conditions contributing to targeted outcomes and objectives is through gathering rich qualitative "conversation" data from diverse perspectives.

Why? Because asking open ended questions (with strategic follow-up questions) with individuals representing diverse perspectives can help to illuminate a more comprehensive array of conditions affecting your selected objectives. It can also ensure you get enough detail to move to action.

Four different perspective groups are particularly relevant to engage in the regional system assessment process: families, direct service providers, leaders, and community members. The following table describes these perspectives in more detail.

			
Regional families representing intersections of relevant demographics (e.g., race/ethnicity, age, gender, geographic location, etc.). Particular focus on families experiencing the greatest inequities related to early childhood outcomes and the selected objective.	**Direct service providers** from cross-sector organizations working to address families' needs related to the selected objective. Examples of sectors include early care and education, K-12 education, health, housing, human services, economic development, transportation, etc.	**Leaders and Funders** within cross-sector organizations and entities working to address families' needs related to the selected objective. Consider leaders across multiple organizational levels (e.g., directors and mid-level supervisors). Also consider local elected officials.	**Community Members** with a relevant perspective on what is helping and hindering the selected objective in the region. Consider community members representing faith-based groups, businesses, neighborhood associations, peer networks, community leaders, etc.

Ask your Hub to identify which specific perspectives within these four categories are most relevant to help answer your assessment questions. Recognize that some questions will be more relevant for certain perspective groups than others (e.g., questions about policies are often more relevant for leaders, while questions about barriers to service access are often more relevant for families and service providers).

DATA SOURCES

Consider existing *and potential* data sources that could help answer your assessment questions.

Existing data sources have already been collected and compiled, they just need to be accessed (and potentially analyzed). Regional partners can often use their connections to access existing databases.

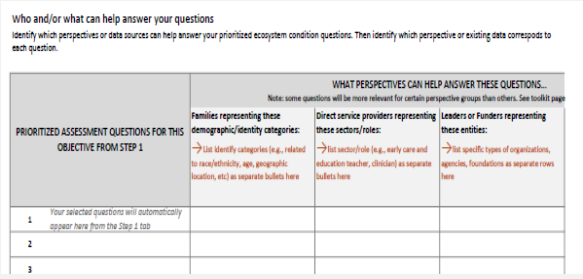
Potential data sources refer to data that could be gathered and/or compiled through simple modifications to current data gathering processes. These modifications could be made to internal data systems (e.g., add a function into an organization's existing data system to extract information from staff members' monthly documentation records about the number and type of referrals they are making to external organizations) or to current or planned data collection processes (e.g., add a few questions to an upcoming community health needs assessment survey or community town hall forum).

The following are several common types of data sources your Hub could consider to help answer your regional system assessment questions.

Public Databases (e.g., U.S. Census, Quality Rating Systems, County Health Rankings, etc.)	**Local Organizations' Databases** (e.g., CCRR, Health Department, etc.)	**Evaluation Reports** (e.g., evaluations of programs or initiatives, foundation reports, etc.)	**Conversation Records** (e.g., from prior Hub meetings, staff meetings, community town halls, etc.)

Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 2b in the Electronic Workbook to record which perspectives and data sources are most important to help answer the regional system assessment questions you identified in step 1.



Who and/or what can help answer your questions

Identify which perspectives or data sources can help answer your prioritized ecosystem condition questions. Then identify which perspective or existing data correspods to each question.

PRIORITIZED ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS FOR THIS OBJECTIVE FROM STEP 1	WHAT PERSPECTIVES CAN HELP ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS... Note: some questions will be more relevant for certain perspective groups than others. See toolkit page		
	Families representing these demographic/identity categories: →List identify categories (e.g., related to race/ethnicity, age, geographic location, etc) as separate bullets here	Direct service providers representing these sectors/roles: →list sector/role (e.g., early care and education teacher, clinician) as separate bullets here	Leaders or Funders representing these entities: →list specific types of organizations, agencies, foundations as separate rows here
1 *Your selected questions will automatically appear here from the Step 1 tab*			
2			
3			

Which methods are most relevant and feasible to gather the information we need?

Determine feasible *and* culturally responsive methods to gather input from the identified perspectives and develop needed protocols and materials. Also identify methods to gather needed data sources.

METHODS FOR GATHERING INPUT FROM PERSPECTIVE GROUPS

Engage your Hub in developing feasible *and* culturally responsive methods for engaging your identified perspectives in helping to answer your assessment questions. See the examples below for ideas. Consider how to reimburse families for their time and effort related to these different methods.

Natural Touch Points Ask a few questions (directly or through a host) at naturally occurring meetings, service visits, or interactions through conversation or by giving out a survey.	**Peer Data Gatherers** Prepare families and/or staff to ask questions in conversation or by giving out a survey with their peers and report back what they learn.	**Online Survey** Send out questions through an online survey; consider people's technology constraints with this method.	**Interviews/Focus Groups** Set up a separate one-on-one or group conversation (in person or video call). Tip: this method is especially relevant for certain leaders/funders who expect this form of engagement.	**Photovoice**[4] Participants take pictures to answer the questions and then come together in groups to describe the meaning of their images (both the images and group narrative are your data).

The below table shows how these example methods could be used with different perspective groups.

METHOD	Families	Service Providers	Leaders/Funders	Community Members
Natural touch point conversations or surveys	Ask questions at service visits, during play groups, after worship services, in waiting rooms, etc.	Ask questions at staff meetings, supervisor meetings, professional networks, etc.	Ask questions at collaborative meetings, professional networks, etc.	Ask questions at local events, association meetings, etc.
Peer data gatherer conversations or surveys	Equip families to ask questions with other families.	Equip staff to ask questions with other staff.	Equip leaders to ask questions with their peers.	Equip individuals to ask questions with their peers.
Online survey	Send out link through relevant list-serves, group contact lists, social media, etc.			
Interviews/focus group conversations	Use phone/video calls or in-person conversations at accessible locations like libraries, churches, parks, etc.	Use phone/video calls or in-person conversations at service providers' organization.	Use phone/video calls or in-person conversations at leaders' organization.	Use phone/video calls or in-person conversations at accessible locations like libraries, churches, parks, etc.
Photovoice	Tailor the Photovoice process to unique cultures and needs of perspective groups.			

MATERIALS AND PROCESSES TO PREPARE FOR PERSPECTIVE GROUP METHODS

Each of the example methods described on the prior page relies on gathering data through either conversations, surveys (print or online), or the Photovoice process. Your hub will need to develop some materials to get ready to launch the particular methods you have selected.

The below table summarizes materials needed across the different types of methods. Make sure to consider how to make these materials culturally responsive and accessible to all perspective groups.

Materials Needed to Launch	Preparation Processes
Conversations	

Conversation guide for people asking assessment questions that provides:
• **Name**: a space for the person asking the questions to put their name and organization (if relevant).
• **Introduction**: talking points to describe the purpose of the conversation and how the information will be used to take action on the RUO Objective. Define the region referenced in the questions.
• **Questions**: list of questions with space to write notes.
• **Conclusion**: talking points to thank the person for their time and describe any next steps.
• **Instructions for Sending in the Data**: clear instructions for how to send in conversation notes to the backbone.
 	
See the Example Conversation Guide.
	Pilot materials with relevant groups and make needed revisions (see p. 27 for details).
	
	Meet with any individuals who will be asking questions on your behalf to talk through how to:
	• Use and fill out the conversation guide
	• THIS IS CRITICAL!! Ask follow-up questions to get detailed, actionable responses from participants so someone who wasn't part of the conversation would know exactly what needs to change. Here are examples:
	  ○ What would that **look like**?
	  ○ Can you **tell me more** about __?
	  ○ Could you **explain what you mean** by __?
	  ○ Can you **give me an example**?
	  ○ **Who** does that involve? **When** does it happen? **Where**? **How**? **Why?**
	  See the Cheat Sheet for Getting Detailed Information.
	• Return conversation notes to the backbone

Surveys	
Printed or electronic survey that provides: • **Introduction**: brief description of the purpose of the survey and how the information will be used to take action on the RUO Objective. Define the region referenced in the questions. • **Questions**: laid out in a simple format. • **Conclusion**: brief text thanking the person for their time and describing relevant next steps. See the Example Survey.	Pilot materials with relevant groups and make needed revisions (see p. 27 for details). Make sure to work with organizations distributing printed surveys on your behalf to come up with processes for keeping surveys confidential (e.g., locked box) and a process for how to get completed surveys to the backbone (e.g., send them in, have Hub member come and get them, etc.).
Photovoice	
There are many guides available online to help develop Photovoice materials and processes. Pilot materials with relevant groups and make needed revisions (see p. 27 for details).	

WORDING OF QUESTIONS FOR PERSPECTIVE GROUP METHODS

In addition to developing methods, your Hub should also tailor the wording of each regional system assessment question to meet the needs of different perspective groups. Consider engaging representatives from each perspective group to help co-design this wording or at least provide feedback.

The following table shows examples of how regional system assessment questions could be worded across perspective groups.

Assessment Questions	Example wording for families and community members	Example wording for service providers and leaders/funders
What conditions are helping and hindering the objective in the region? *TIP: It can sometimes be helpful to start out conversations with these high-level questions to build rapport and then ask the specific condition questions listed below.*	What have you seen that is helping [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? What have you seen that is getting in the way of [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region?	What have you seen that is helping [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? What have you seen that is getting in the way of [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region?
SHARED MINDSETS: What shared beliefs, worldviews, attitudes, values, or assumptions are helping and hindering this objective in the region - and in what ways?	Which shared beliefs or attitudes are making it easier to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? Which are making it more difficult? In what ways?	Which shared beliefs or attitudes are making it easier to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? Which are making it more difficult? In what ways?
GOALS: How are the goals and targeted outcomes (or lack thereof) within regional organizations, agencies, and initiatives helping and/or hindering this objective in the region?	Think about local organizations and agencies working on [*insert simple description of selected objective]*. What goals are they trying to accomplish? Which of these goals do you think are helping to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? Which are getting in the way? In what ways?	What goals are driving local organizations and agencies working on [*insert simple description of selected objective]*. Which are helping to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? Which are getting in the way? In what ways?
DECISION-MAKING: How are decisions made about this objective within organizations, agencies, collaboratives, and communities? Who is engaged in/excluded from these decision-making processes? How is this situation helping and/or hindering this objective in the region?	Have any organizations in this region ever asked for your input or help with addressing [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? What was that experience like? Did you feel you had any influence over the final decisions being made about this issue?	How are decisions currently being made about how to address [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? Who is involved in these decisions – who is not involved? How is this affecting our ability to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]*?

Assessment Questions	Example wording for families and community members	Example wording for service providers and leaders/funders
POLICIES: How are current policies, practices, protocols, standards, regulations, and laws (within organizations, communities, cities, states, etc.) helping and hindering this objective in the region?	Have you ever experienced any policies within local organizations or agencies that got in the way of [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? If yes, which ones? How did they get in the way?	Which [*insert most relevant of these: policies, practices, standards, regulations, and/or laws]* are helping to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? Which are getting in the way? In what ways?
CONNECTIONS: How are current flows and exchanges of information, resources, and referrals between people and organizations helping and hindering this objective in the region?	To what degree do you see local organizations and agencies coordinating and working together to address [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? Why do you think this is or isn't happening?	To what extent are local organizations and agencies working together to address [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? This could include things like exchanging information, sharing resources, or making referrals. Why do you think this is or isn't happening?
PROGRAM AND OPPORTUNITY COMPONENTS: How is the current array, accessibility, character, and/or quality of local programs (e.g., Head Start), services (e.g., healthcare, public transit), and opportunities (e.g., jobs) helping and hindering this objective?	Think about all the programs in this region related to [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? How well are they meeting families' needs *(ask them for details)*? How easy are these programs to get when you need them? What programs if any are missing?	Think about all the programs in this region related to [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region. To what extent are these programs meeting local families' needs? Accessible? Of high quality? What's affecting this situation?
FINANCIAL RESOURCES: How is the availability, amount, or allocation of money, profits, and capital helping and hindering this objective in the region?	What's your sense of whether local organizations and initiatives in this region have enough funding to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]*?	To what extent are there enough financial resources allocated or available to address [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? What's affecting this situation?
HUMAN RESOURCES: How is the availability of people and their skills and knowledge helping and hindering this objective in the region?	How well do you think people in this region have the skills and knowledge they need to [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? What skills are still needed?	To what extent are there enough people hired or engaged to bring about [*insert simple description of selected objective]* in this region? To what extent do these people have the skills and knowledge they need to improve [*insert simple description of selected objective]*? What skills are still needed?
ENVIRONMENT: How is the character and quality of the natural (e.g., land, soil, water, etc.) and built (e.g., buildings, roads, internet access, etc.) environment helping and hindering this objective in the region?	How is the natural physical environment in this region – things like water quality, green spaces, air quality - affecting [*insert simple description of selected objective]?* How is the built environment in this region – things like buildings, roads, and internet access - affecting [*insert simple description of selected objective]?*	How is the natural physical environment in this region – things like water quality, green spaces, air quality - affecting [*insert simple description of selected objective]?* How is the built environment in this region – things like buildings, roads, and internet access - affecting [*insert simple description of selected objective]?*

TRANSLATION

If there is a need to translate assessment questions for any perspective group, consider contracting with local partner organizations (at a respectable compensation rate) to help with translating the materials. Going through local partner organizations ensure that the final translated versions are also responsive to the local regional context. If local partner agencies are unable to directly contract with the Hub for the translation, ask these organizations which translation service companies they would recommend you hire to provide the best and most responsive translations for the region.

METHODS FOR ACCESSING EXISTING OR POTENTIAL DATA SOURCES

Consider the following ideas to help your Hub access existing and potential data sources to answer their regional system assessment questions.

Existing Data Sources	Identify who in the Hub has any connections with entities that could provide the data source. Support these individuals in making these connections by providing them with needed talking points about the why the Hub is requesting the data and how it will be used within the assessment.
Potential Data Sources	Identify which regional entities could potentially provide a data source through simple modifications to current data processes. Support regional partners and/or backbone staff to meet with these entities about the opportunity to help gather data for the assessment.

SCHEDULING WHEN TO ROLL OUT YOUR METHODS

Work with regional partners to schedule how to roll out your assessment methods, including piloting (see p. 27). Design this schedule to fit with people's availability, mesh with any other methods happening in the region, and leverage events and opportunities to naturally gather data.

Your methods can also inform each other. For example, you can take what you are learning from the conversations with different perspective groups and use it to guide what questions to ask in future surveys.

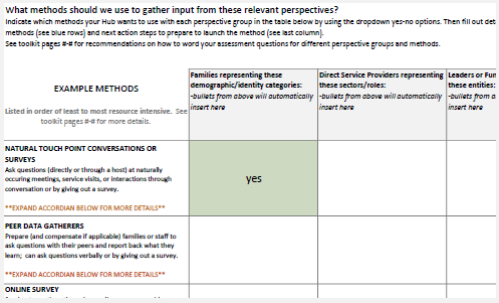
USEFUL TIP

Ask a few assessment questions at a time *over time* to keep this feasible.

EXAMPLE: ask 3 assessment questions during natural touchpoints for one month, and 3 more questions during natural touchpoints the next month.

Electronic Workbook

Record which methods your Hub plans to use in the assessment in Step 2c(1) of the Electronic Workbook, and Step2c(2) to plan out the schedule for how your Hub wants to roll these methods out.


What methods should we use to gather input from these relevant perspectives?
Indicate which methods your Hub wants to use with each perspective group in the table below by using the dropdown yes-no options. Then fill out det
methods (see blue rows) and next action steps to prepare to launch the method (see last column).
See toolkit pages #-# for recommendations on how to word your assessment questions for different perspective groups and methods.

EXAMPLE METHODS Listed in order of least to most resource intensive. See toolkit pages #-# for more details.	Families representing these demographic/identity categories: -bullets from above will automatically insert here	Direct Service Providers representing these sectors/roles: -bullets from above will automatically insert here	Leaders or Fun these entities: -bullets from a insert here
NATURAL TOUCH POINT CONVERSATIONS OR SURVEYS Ask questions (directly or through a host) at naturally occuring meetings, service visits, or interactions through conversation or by giving out a survey. **EXPAND ACCORDIAN BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS**	yes		
PEER DATA GATHERERS Prepare (and compensate if applicable) families or staff to ask questions with their peers and report back what they learn; can ask questions verbally or by giving out a survey. **EXPAND ACCORDIAN BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS**			
ONLINE SURVEY			

How can the Hub gather short cycle feedback on these methods?

No matter how well you plan out and prepare for your regional system assessment methods, unanticipated implementation issues or opportunities can always emerge. For example, you may discover some of the people asking questions on your behalf are not gathering detailed enough responses from participants. This implementation issue would require an immediate response (i.e., providing additional training to people on how to ask follow-up questions) to avoid getting stuck with a lot of unusable assessment data.

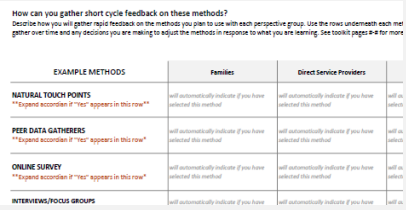
It is *always* a good idea to try out or "pilot" each of your methods with a small group of participants (e.g., 2-3 people from each perspective group being engaged with the method) and gather some quick feedback before launching the methods full scale. That way the Hub can quickly identify any issues or opportunities and immediately adapt the methods or questions.

After launching, the Hub can also continue to gather periodic feedback over time (e.g., monthly or bi-weekly) to identify emerging issues and opportunities over time. The following are some types of feedback your Hub may want to gather on its methods and how to address emerging implementation issues.

Example feedback to gather about your methods	What to do if issues emerge
DETAIL: Are participants providing detailed enough responses in conversation methods? Remember, you want enough detail so someone who wasn't part of the conversation would know exactly what needs to change or be addressed. Example of a response WITHOUT enough detail: *My family needs more support.* Example of a response WITH enough detail: *My family needs more support with finding and navigating available child care options in my area, including accessing financial supports.*	Pinpoint which individuals asking the assessment questions are not getting enough detailed responses. Meet with these individuals, kindly bring up the issues you are seeing, and provide some additional training to help them ask the right follow up questions to get the detail you need. You could review the Cheat Sheet for Getting Detailed Information handout with these individuals as well.
UNDERSTANDING: Are participants understanding the questions – or are they giving responses showing they are confused about what the question is asking?	Pinpoint which questions are not making sense for which perspective groups. Work with some representatives of these perspective groups to revise the questions.
INACTION: Are people tasked with asking questions on your behalf remembering to actually ask the questions?	Pinpoint who is experiencing this issue and work with them and their organization to insert reminders into protocols and staff meetings.

Electronic Workbook

Reference the step 2d in the Electronic Workbook to plan out how to gather short cycle feedback during the assessment.


How can you gather short cycle feedback on these methods?
Describe how you will gather rapid feedback on the methods you plan to use with each perspective group. Use the rows underneath each met
gather over time and any decisions you are making to adjust the methods in response to what you are learning. See toolkit pages 8-9 for more

EXAMPLE METHODS	Families	Direct Service Providers	
NATURAL TOUCH POINTS **Expand accordian if "Yes" appears in this row**	will automatically indicate if you have selected this method	will automatically indicate if you have selected this method	will a select
PEER DATA GATHERERS **Expand accordian if "Yes" appears in this row*	will automatically indicate if you have selected this method	will automatically indicate if you have selected this method	will a select
ONLINE SURVEY **Expand accordian if "Yes" appears in this row*	will automatically indicate if you have selected this method	will automatically indicate if you have selected this method	will a select
INTERVIEWS/FOCUS GROUPS	will automatically indicate if you have	will automatically indicate if you have	will a

Tips for Taking It Live

The following are some tips for carrying out step 2 of the regional system assessment process.

Hub and Partner Engagement

HUB MEETINGS: See the *PowerPoint Slides* and *Example Hub Meeting Schedule* on page 42 for ideas on how to use Hub meetings to engage members in this phase of the process.

PARTNER MEETINGS: You (or someone on your behalf) can also replicate some or all of the facilitation processes outlined in the *Example Hub Meeting Schedule* with partner organizations and groups during their upcoming meetings (e.g., staff meetings, collaborative meetings, etc.).

Family Engagement

DEVELOPING METHODS AND QUESTIONS: Consider engaging a small group of families to help develop what methods and questions the Hub should use with families in the regional system assessment. Make sure to compensate these families for their time and provide needed engagement supports (e.g., childcare, transportation, meals, etc.).

SUPPORTING FAMILIES AS PARTICIPANTS: Regardless of the methods your Hub decides to use to engage families in the regional system assessment, make sure to anticipate and address any barriers to participation (e.g., childcare, timing of meetings, transportation, technology/computer/internet access, literacy, language, etc.) and provided needed supports.

Data

IMMEDIATELY WRITE UP CONVERSATION NOTES: Encourage anyone asking assessment questions through conversation methods to try and write/type up their notes shortly (within 24 hours) after holding a conversation. This will help them to fill in more details from the conversation while their memory is still fresh, and if necessary give them a chance to check back with the individuals they spoke with to clarify their comments.

COACHING: If backbone staff and regional partners have more limited experience with data, consider engaging an ELD data coach to support the Hub's data needs related to this step of the assessment process or even help facilitate aspects of your meetings.

Step 3: Make sense of data to inform strategies and action

Overview

Step 3 is focused on making sense of the qualitative and quantitative data gathered through the assessment process. It also involves visually summarizing the main themes from the data to identify priority areas for the strategic plan. The following sections provide details on how to carry out step 3.

How can you compile and organize assessment data on a rolling basis?

You will gather regional system assessment data throughout the time you are carrying out your methods. The following are ideas for how to compile and organize different types of assessment data as you go.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Enter comments gathered from conversations or open-ended survey questions *as you receive them* into the "Objective Data Summary" tab or the appropriate ecosystem tables in Step 3a of the Electronic Workbook. Add the perspective group (e.g., clinic staff, family in rural area, etc.) that provided each comment into these tables as well.

Use these tips to "clean" qualitative comments as you enter them so they are ready for sense-making. See the Data Cleaning Tips for more details.

TIP 1: Separate out different topics within the same comment	People often talk about multiple issues *within the same comment.* It's important to separate out these different ideas and issues during the assessment because they often require very different strategies.
TIP 2: Ensure comments are detailed enough to inform action	Sometimes comments are vague and don't include enough detail to make them actionable. If this is the case, follow up with the person who gathered the data so they can clarify the comment either from their note or with the appropriate participant.
TIP 3: Make comments easy to read	Sometimes people go off into tangents or ramble a bit when they verbally answer questions. You can clean up and simplify the wording (*not the meaning*) of these comments to make it easier for others to quickly read and understand.
TIP 4: Transfer strategy ideas to a parking lot	People sometimes propose strategy ideas as they describe regional conditions (e.g., *"we should launch a parent-led network to build the skills of local parent leaders"*). Hubs can revisit these strategy ideas after prioritizing issues from the assessment to focus on in the strategic plan. If someone mentions a strategy when describing regional conditions, put a copy of the entire comment into a parking lot to use later in the strategy design process. Then, remove the strategy idea from the data point (the bit about parent-led networks) so it is just about conditions (*"some parents need additional skills to engage in leadership roles within the early childhood system"*).

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Analyze any quantitative data (e.g., multiple choice survey, rating scales used in observations, inter-organizational referral tracking, etc.) you gathered or accessed to answer your regional system assessment questions. Also pull out any key findings from analyses that have already been done on existing databases.

Enter each main analysis finding (e.g., 55% of families actively seeking child care need after-hours care) as separate rows in the appropriate objective or ecosystem tables in Step 3a(1) of the Electronic Workbook. Make sure to include which survey each data point came from in these tables as well.

What themes are you finding in the data?

Make sense of the regional system assessment data *on a rolling basis* to identify insights and themes so you don't get stuck with a lot of work at the very end. Making sense of the data on a rolling basis also allows you to figure out whether to adapt your questions over time given what you are learning. The following describes the sense-making process in more detail.

DETERMINE *WHO* WILL THEME THE DATA

Who the Hub engages in making sense of the assessment data depends on how much they want to help build local "critical consciousness" of local issues and buy-in for action. Consider the following options:

LEAST EFFECT ON CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS	OPTION 1: Engage backbone staff or an evaluator in theming all the regional system assessment data behind the scenes. Get regional partners' input on findings and modify as needed.
	OPTION 2: Engage a *small number* of regional partners and/or regional system assessment participants in theming some or all of the assessment information. Backbone staff or evaluator can theme any remaining information behind the scenes and get input from regional partners and/or assessment participants.
GREATEST EFFECT ON CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS	OPTION 3: Engage a *large number* of regional partners and/or regional system assessment participants in theming some or all of the assessment information. Backbone staff or evaluator can theme any remaining information behind the scenes and get input from regional partners and/or assessment participants.

IDENTIFY *WHEN* TO ENGAGE THESE INDIVIDUALS

Regardless of who will be making sense of the regional system assessment data, try to leverage existing meetings as much as possible to engage these individuals. If needed, plan for several meetings with different groups (e.g., regional partners, families, etc.) or with the same group over time.

DECIDE *HOW* TO ENGAGE PEOPLE IN THEMING THE DATA

Once you identify *who* will be theming the regional system assessment data and *when*, decide *how* to engage these individuals in the theming process. The following describes two ways to plan out this process.

If backbone staff or an evaluator is theming the data…

- SUMMARIZE DATA ON OBJECTIVE. Review the data gathered about the objective (summarized in the "Objective Data Summary" tab of the Electronic Workbook) and create an overall assessment of the objective by answering the questions in step 3b(1) from the Electronic Workbook.
- SORT AND THEME DATA ON ECOSYSTEM CONDITIONS. Start with one of the ecosystem data tables related to this objective in Step 3a(2) in the Electronic Workbook. Copy and paste data points about similar issues into "theme" tables in Step 3b(2). Create a theme heading for each cluster of data that is descriptive enough to stand on its own. See these Theming Tips for details. Repeat this process for all the data tables in Step 3a(1).
- GET FEEDBACK. Get feedback from Hub partners and/or assessment participants on the overall summary of the objective and ecosystem themes.

If regional partners and/or assessment participants are theming the data…

- PLAN OUT MEETING SMALL GROUPS. Estimate how many people will be attending a given meeting to make sense of the assessment data, and figure out how many small groups of about 3-5 people you can form out of this number. Pull up the Electronic Workbook and assign each small group an objective question from step 3a(1) or an ecosystem condition from step 3a(2). If there are too many groups, have 2 groups theme the same data and compare their results to come to a shared set of themes.
- PRINT DATA. Print out the data tables related to each questions from the "Objective Data Summary" tab and put them in separate labeled envelopes – one for each question. Then, print out the data tables in step 3a(2) and cut out each row as separate strips of paper. Put the data strips related to each ecosystem condition in labeled envelopes. *OPTION: use markers to put a colored dot on each perspective group's data strips (e.g., data strips from families get a green dot, data strips from service providers get an orange dot, etc.) so stakeholders can easily see patterns when they sort the data.*
- SMALL GROUPS SORT AND THEME DATA STRIPS. Have each small group sort their assigned data strips into clusters of similar ideas, problems, or issues and create a "theme" heading for each cluster that is descriptive enough to stand on its own. See these Theming Tips for details.

How can you visually summarize the assessment insights and themes?

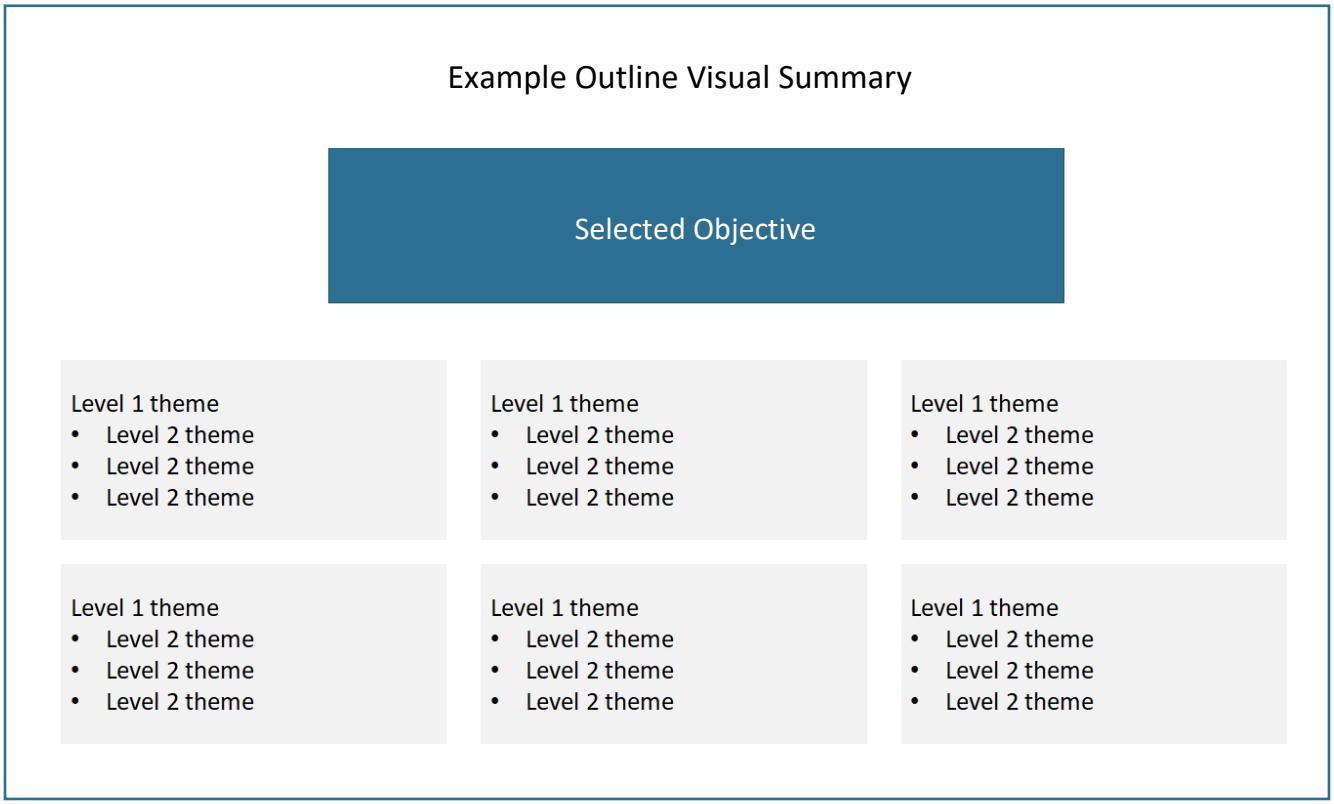
One way to help people understand the regional system assessment findings is to create a visual summary of the main themes. This visual can help to communicate the findings and to select which themes to prioritize for the strategic plan. There are different ways to create this visual. The following describes processes you can use to create visual summaries at low, medium, and high levels of intensity.

LOW INTENSITY VISUAL: OUTLINE

The simplest way to visually summarize the regional system assessment findings is to create an outline of nested themes emerging from the data. This outline can make it easier for regional partners to prioritize what to focus on for the strategic plan.

The following is an example of a process to create an outline of the regional system assessment themes.

1. INSERT THE OBJECTIVE: Put the selected objective in a box at the top of the page.
2. IDENTIFY LEVEL 1 THEMES: Identify the 5-7 assessment themes that are having the most powerful and direct effect on the objective. Put each of these themes in their own box.
3. IDENTIFY LEVEL 2 THEMES: Look across the remaining themes and identify which if any are directly affecting each of these level 1 themes. Consider these "level 2" themes. Insert these level 2 themes as nested bullet points under the level 1 theme in each box.



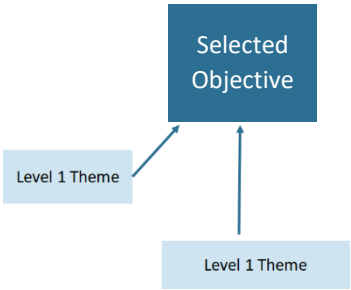
MEDIUM INTENSITY VISUAL: HYBRID SYSTEM MAP AND OUTLINE

Another way to visually summarize the regional system assessment findings is to create a hybrid system map and outline of the main themes emerging from the data. A system map can often be more helpful in determining which themes to prioritize for the strategic plan because it shows how different issues are working together to help and hinder the objective.

Here is an example process to create a hybrid system map and outline of the assessment themes.

1. INSERT THE OBJECTIVE: Put the objective in a box somewhere on a landscape document (e.g., PowerPoint slide).

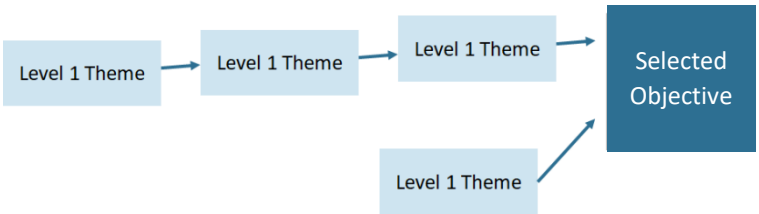
2. ADD IN LEVEL 1 THEMES: Ask what theme or themes are having the most powerful and direct effect on the objective. Put these themes in boxes with arrow connecting them with the objective. See example to the right.



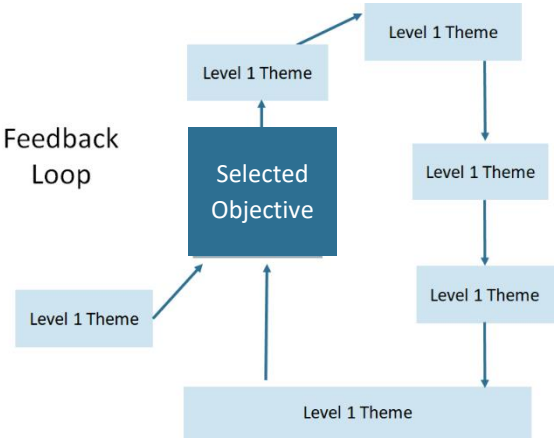
   Then, identify other themes that are having the most direct effect on this first theme or themes. Put these new themes in separate boxes with arrows connecting them to the first theme(s). Continue this process until you have identified a sequence of themes that are playing the most direct role in creating or maintaining the objective.

   NOTE: Sometimes it makes more sense to lay out this sequence of themes in a straight linear flow. Other times the sequence of themes will create a feedback loop – see below for examples.

Linear Flow

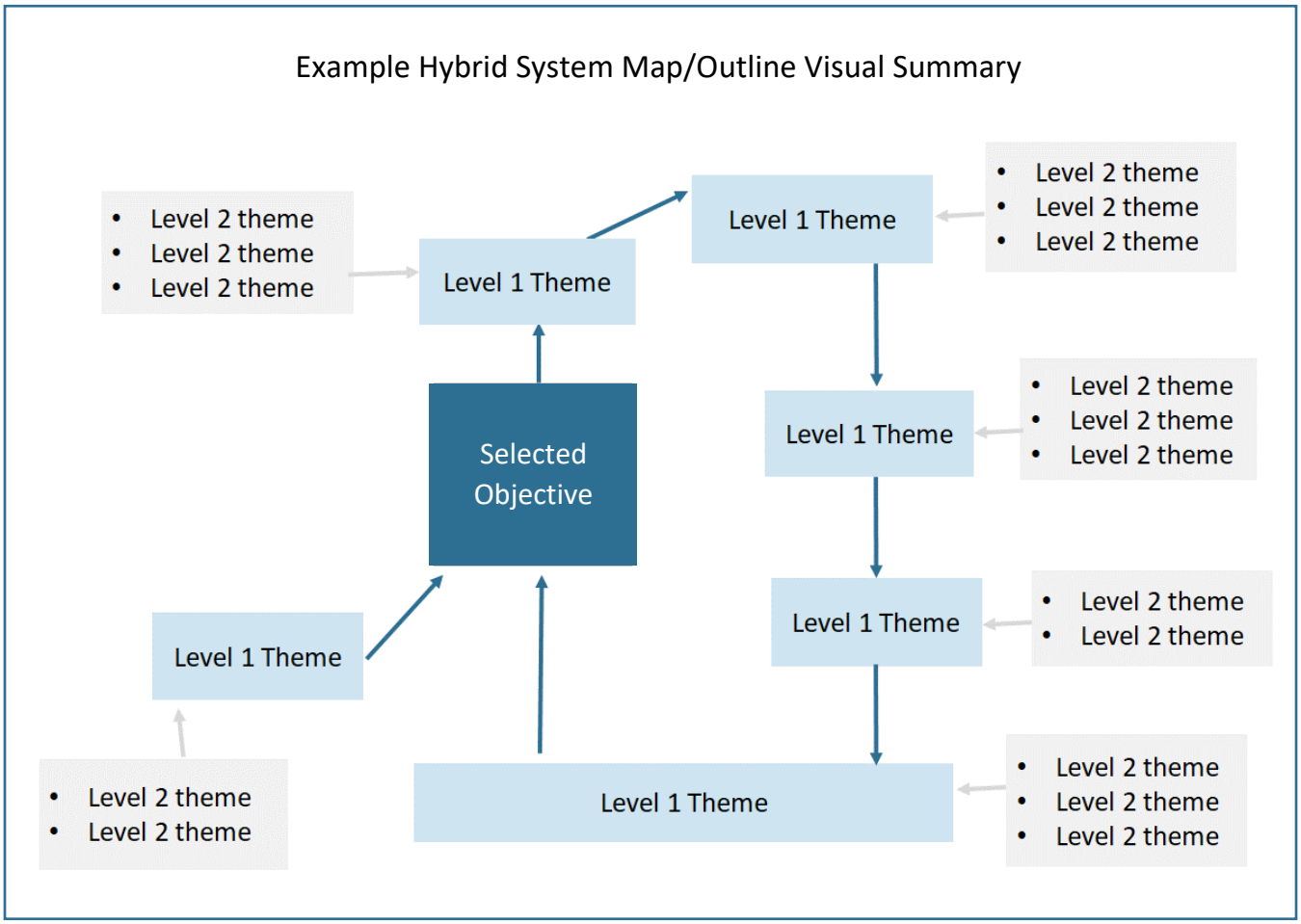


Feedback Loop



3. ADD IN LEVEL 2 THEMES: Select a level 1 theme. Look across the remaining assessment themes and identify which if any are directly affecting this level 1 theme. Put these level 2 themes as bullet points in a boxes and put in an arrows connecting it to the level 1 theme.

   Repeat this process for the remaining level 1 themes. Note – not every level 1 theme will necessarily have level 2 themes.



HIGH INTENSITY VISUAL: SYSTEM MAP

A third way to visually summarize the assessment findings is with a more detailed system map of the main themes. A system map can often be more helpful in determining which themes to prioritize for the strategic plan because it shows how different issues are interacting to help and hinder the objective.

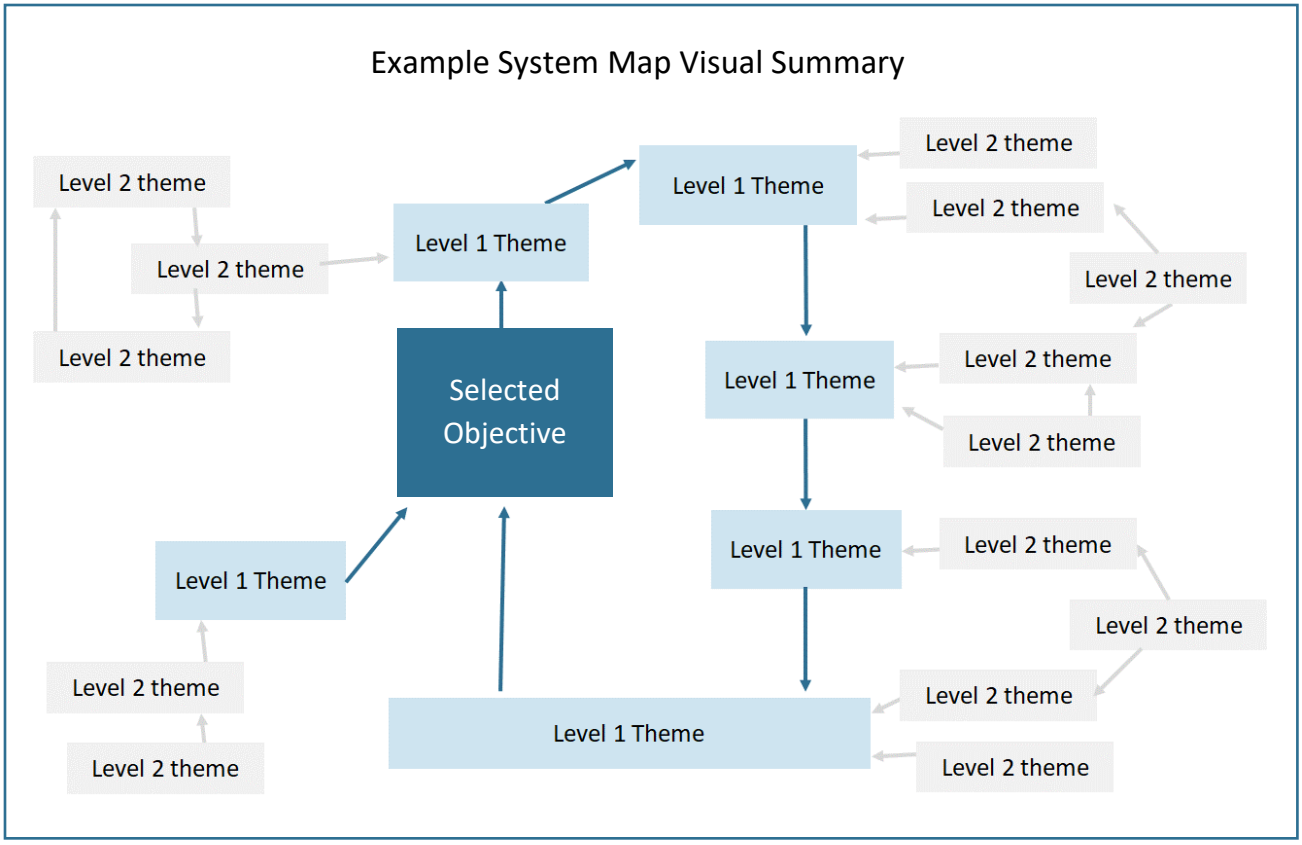
Here are the steps to create a more detailed system map of the assessment themes:

1. INSERT THE OBJECTIVE: This step is the same as the Medium Intensity instructions on page 33.

2. ADD IN LEVEL 1 THEMES: This step is the same as the Medium Intensity instructions on page 33.

3. LEVEL 2 THEMES: Select a level 1 theme. Look across the remaining assessment themes and identify which if any are directly affecting this level 1 theme. Put these level 2 themes in their own boxes and put in arrows to show how they are affecting the level 1 theme and potentially each other. NOTE: in some cases, you may have a few layers of level 2 themes affecting each other.

   Repeat this process for all level 1 themes. Remember, not every level 1 theme will necessarily have level 2 themes.



GETTING ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVES

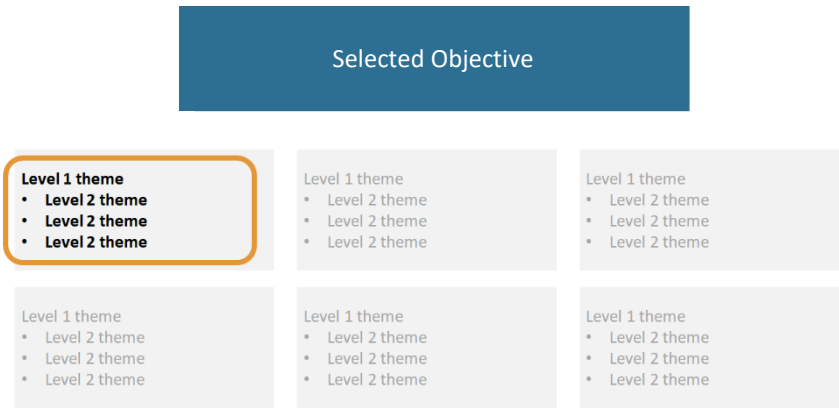
Consider showing your visual summary of the regional system assessment themes to other partners and families in the region to get their feedback. Specifically, you can ask whether the visual aligns with their understanding of the situation surrounding the selected objective and if there are any missing details or issues that should be added into the visual. Revise your system map as needed in response to this input.

Which theme pathways should you prioritize for change?

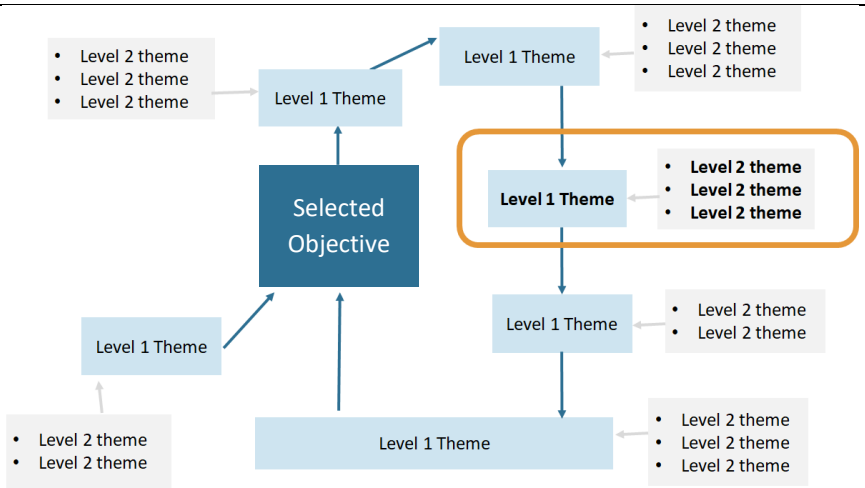
Once you created a visual summary of the assessment themes, engage your Hub and potentially other regional partners and families in prioritizing "theme pathways" to target within the strategic plan.

A theme pathway is a group of themes that work together to affect the objective. These pathways will look slightly different depending on which visual summary you have created. See below for examples.

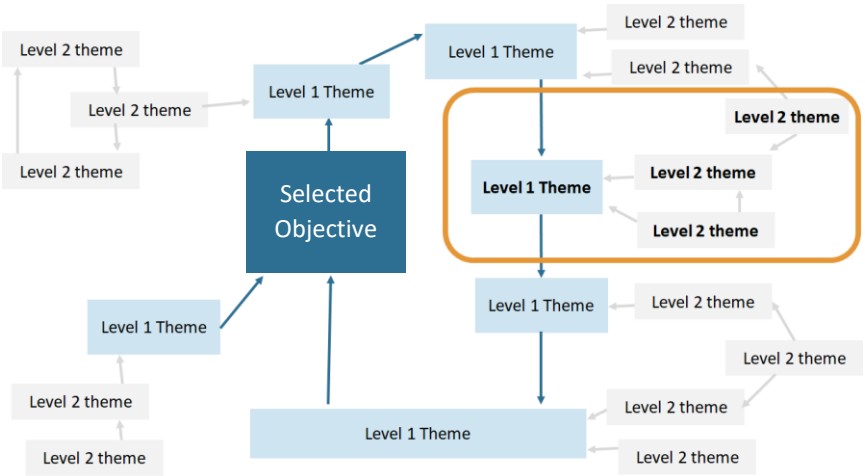
Example of a Theme Pathway for Low Intensity Visuals (Outline)



Example of a Theme Pathway for Medium Intensity Visuals (Hybrid System Map/Outline)



Example of a Theme Pathway for High Intensity Visuals (System Map)



PRIORITZING CRITERIA

First, ask regional partners how many theme pathways they would like to prioritize for the strategic plan, knowing they can sequence how they address these priorities over time. This number should be based on the Hub's current scope of work and level of engagement from regional partners.

After determining the number of priorities to select, help individuals use criteria to select which theme pathways to focus on for their strategic plan. The following is an example of prioritizing criteria you could use or build on for this prioritizing process.

PRIORITIZING CRITERIA

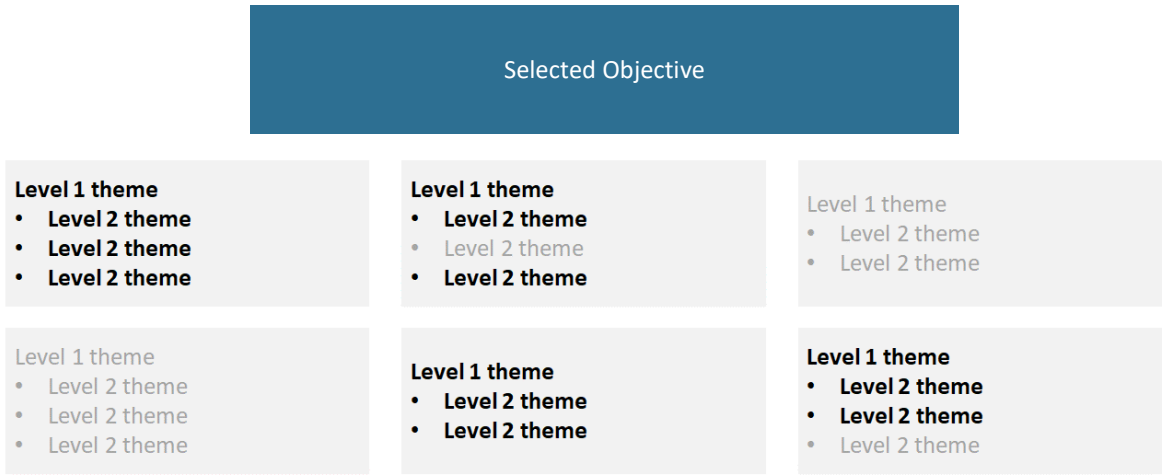
Ask individuals to identify regional system assessment theme pathways that:

- Have a big influence on the situation affecting the objective and related disparities
- Affect many people and/or settings in the region
- Are seen as urgent by families and partners
- Include at least 1 theme related to the "higher leverage point" ecosystem conditions including mindsets, goals, decision-making, policies, and connections.

The facilitation process you use for this prioritizing step will depend on the type of visual summary you created. The sections below describe process ideas to use with low, medium, and high intensity visuals.

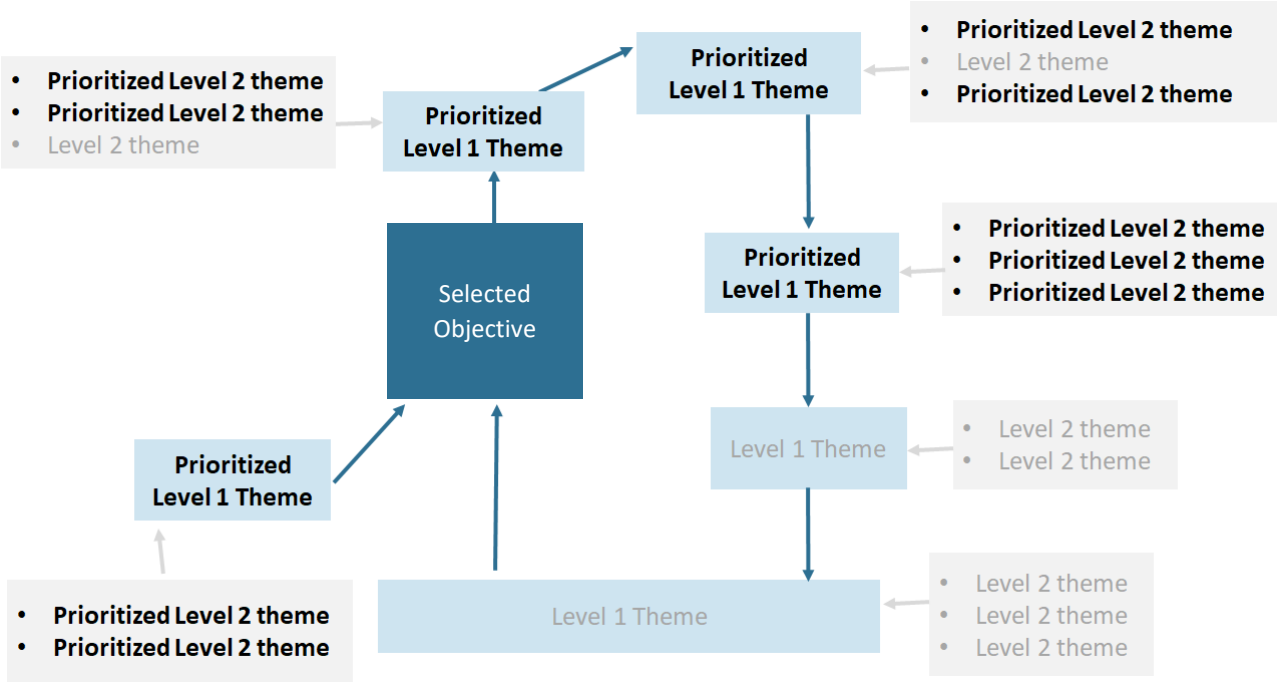
PRIORITIZING PROCESS FOR AN OUTLINE VISUAL

1. Describe the visual outline of the assessment themes to individuals engaged in the prioritizing process. Consider giving the visual out as a handout.
2. Describe the above prioritizing criteria and see if individuals want to add any additional criteria.
3. Ask individuals to vote for the 3-5 most powerful **level 1 themes** using the criteria.
4. Remind the group of the number of theme pathways they decided to prioritize for the strategic plan. Have the group prioritize this many of the top voted level 1 themes.
5. Then, for each of the prioritized level 1 themes, ask individuals to identify the 1-3 most powerful **level 2 themes** affecting the level 1 theme using the same criteria. See example below.



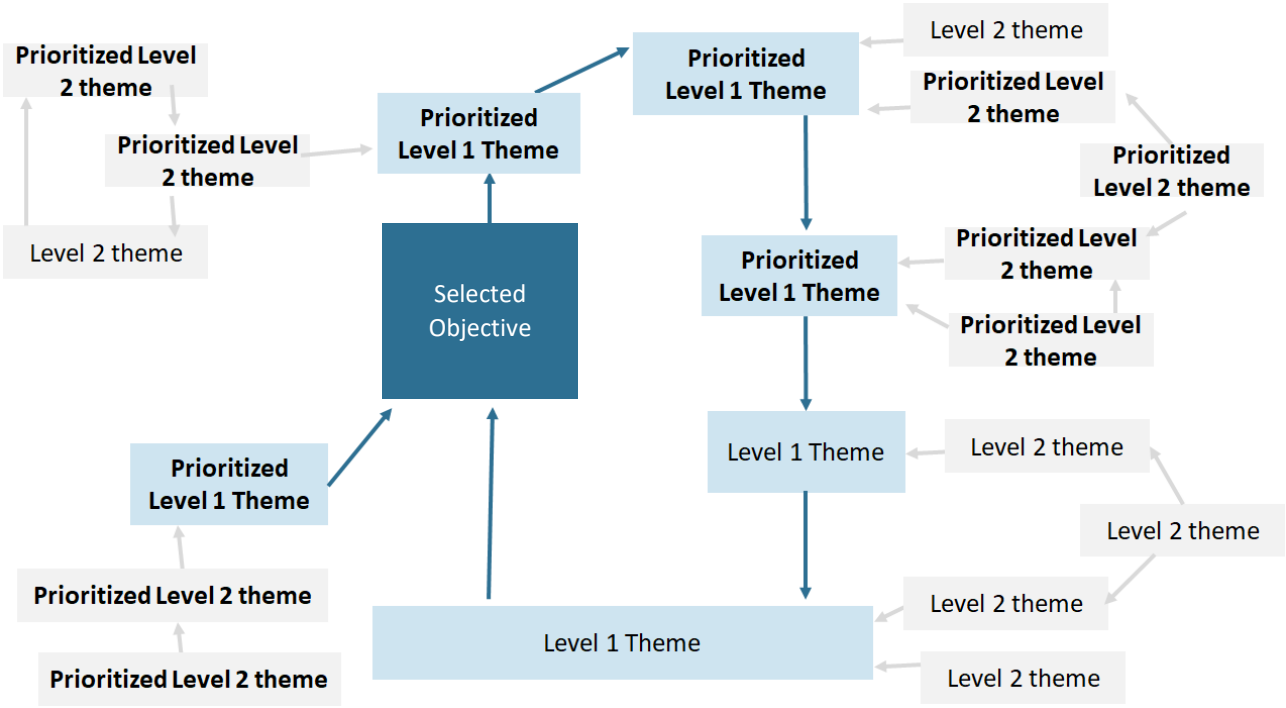
PRIORITIZING PROCESS FOR MEDIUM INTENSITY VISUAL SUMMARY

1. Describe the visual hybrid system map and outline of the assessment themes to individuals engaged in the prioritizing process. Consider giving the visual out as a handout.
2. Describe the prioritizing criteria shown in the orange box on page 37 to individuals. See if they want to add any additional criteria.
3. Ask individuals to vote for the 3-5 most powerful **level 1 themes** using the criteria.
4. Remind the group of the number of theme pathways they decided to prioritize for the strategic plan. Have the group prioritize this many of the top voted level 1 themes.
5. Then, for each of the prioritized level 1 themes, ask individuals to identify the 1-3 most powerful **level 2 themes** affecting the level 1 theme using the same criteria. See example below.



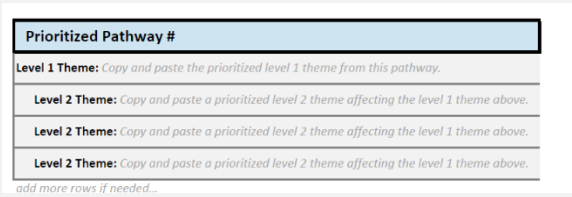
PRIORITZING PROCESS FOR HIGHER INTENSITY VISUAL SUMMARIES

1. Describe the visual system map of the assessment themes to individuals engaged in the prioritizing process. Consider giving the visual out as a handout.
2. Describe the prioritizing criteria shown in the orange box on page 37 to individuals. See if they want to add any additional criteria.
3. Ask individuals to vote for the 3-5 most powerful **level 1 themes** using the criteria.
4. Remind the group of the number of theme pathways they decided to prioritize for the strategic plan. Have the group prioritize this many of the top voted level 1 themes.
5. Then, for these prioritized level 1 themes, ask regional partners to identify the 1-3 most powerful **level 2 theme**s that are affecting the level 1 theme using the same criteria. See the example below.



Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 3c in the Electronic Workbook to record your Hub's prioritized theme pathways.



Prioritized Pathway #
Level 1 Theme: *Copy and paste the prioritized level 1 theme from this pathway.*
Level 2 Theme: *Copy and paste a prioritized level 2 theme affecting the level 1 theme above.*
Level 2 Theme: *Copy and paste a prioritized level 2 theme affecting the level 1 theme above.*
Level 2 Theme: *Copy and paste a prioritized level 2 theme affecting the level 1 theme above.*

add more rows if needed...

How can the Hub leverage the regional system assessment process to expand its infrastructure?

Even before you finish up the regional system assessment process, you can start to prepare opportunities for assessment participants to engage with the Hub.

Your Hub made some decisions about how they wanted to engage assessment participants after the assessment process was finished. This decision most likely fell into one of the following 3 levels:

Minimal Engagement	OPTION 1: Providing participants with summary of regional system assessment findings.
	OPTION 2: Everything above *and* inviting participants to engage in future (TBD) opportunities to help the Hub continue learning and strategizing around how to improve the regional early childhood system.
High Engagement	OPTION 3: Everything above *and* engaging participants to become more formal members of a parent council or Hub committee.

As the regional system assessment activities are winding down, the Hub can begin putting new engagement opportunities in place, along with any needed supports (e.g., child care, compensation for families, etc.).

One of the first action steps is to contact regional system assessment participants who indicated they were interested in these opportunities and invite them to work with the Hub to help *design* the engagement opportunities. This design process could involve asking participants what types of specific leadership roles they would like to play and what types of support they would need to fully engage in these roles.

Electronic Workbook

Reference Step 3d in the Electronic Workbook to track how your Hub is reaching out to assessment participants who indicated they were interested in future engagement opportunities with the Hub.

FAMILIES interested in engagement opportunities	
Name	Email/Phone #

DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS interested in engagement opportunities	
Name/title/organization	Email/Phone #

Tips for Taking It Live

The following are some tips for carrying out step 3 of the regional system assessment process.

Hub and Partner Engagement

HUB MEETINGS: See the *PowerPoint Slides* and *Example Hub Meeting Process* on page 42 for ideas on how to use Hub meetings to engage members in this phase of the process.

PARTNER MEETINGS: You (or someone on your behalf) can also replicate some or all of the facilitation processes outlined in the *Example Hub Meeting Schedule* with partner organizations and groups during their upcoming meetings (e.g., staff meetings, collaborative meetings, etc.).

Family Engagement

PROVIDE CAPACITY BUILDING: Provide some intentional training and coaching to families *before* they engage in any theming or sense-making processes to ensure they have the skills and confidence they need to engage as full partners.

USE SEPARATE MEETINGS/GROUPS FOR FAMILIES IF NEEDED: Depending on the skills and confidence of organizational leaders and staff to authentically and respectfully engage families as partners in these processes – it may make sense to organize separate meetings or small groups for families (while leaders and staff are building their own skills). Take care to ensure these separate meetings or groups are given the same power and legitimacy as those of organizational leaders and staff.

Data

COACHING: If backbone staff and regional partners have more limited experience with data, consider engaging an ELD data coach to support the Hub's data needs related to this step of the assessment process or even help facilitate aspects of your meetings.

Case Study

See the following Regional System Assessment Workbook Case Study for an example of what the assessment plans, data, and themes could look like.

Facilitation Materials

PPT Slides

The following are two sets of PowerPoint slides to help engage your Hub in regional system assessment process. The presentations provide a series of high-level slides that cover the main points, *and* a series of optional (hidden) slides with more detail presenters can use if they want to "zoom in" on specific elements.

- Overview Slides for Regional Partners. Use these slides to give an overview of the regional system assessment purpose and process during Hub meetings and with regional partners.
- Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides. Use these slides to facilitate the regional system assessment steps (plus the initial bounding phase) with regional partners.

Example Hub Meeting Processes and Backbone Activities

The following table provides an example of how a Hub could use their Hub meetings (e.g., Governance Council meetings, Regional Stewardship Committee meetings, Parent Leadership Council, etc.) to carry out the regional system assessment steps. The table also describes the activities backbone staff would need to carry out behind the scenes to support this process. This process draws from the slides listed above.

Hub Meetings	Agenda Items and Activities

Meeting 1
 	
NOTE: This would be good for a Governance Council meeting.
	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items:
	• 20 minutes to give interactive overview of regional system assessment process, including having Hub partners identify desired benefits from the process and available resources to support the process. Consider giving out this Overview Handout.
	• 20 minutes for regional partners to determine how they would like to define the objective for the assessment. See pages 11 for details.
	• *Use remaining time to cover other hub business*
	• REVIEW ACTION ITEMS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS AFTER THIS MEETING:
	  ○ Send in recent quantitative or qualitative data sources they have about the selected objective given how they decided to measure the objective.
	  ○ Read through this Common Ecosystem Conditions Handout.

Hub Meetings	Agenda Items and Activities
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 1	• Follow up with regional partners about completing the action items. • Summarize relevant information from the data sources regional partners submit into the "Objective Data Summary" tab in the Electronic Workbook. See pages 12 for details. • Copy and paste the "Objective Data Summary" tab into new excel document and send to regional partners to read prior to meeting 2.
Meeting 2 NOTE: This would be good for a subcommittee meeting.	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 30 minutes for partners to divide up into 3 small groups to reflect on the data under the 3 topics in the Objective Data Summary and identify what questions they still need to ask in assessment (includes large group debrief). See page 13 for details. • 10 minutes to describe ecosystem conditions on page 14 to partners. Refer to the Common Ecosystem Conditions Handout. • 15-20 minutes for partners to identify which ecosystem conditions are most important to explore for the objective. (idea: split group into pairs to discuss this question, and then share recommendations in large group) • REVIEW ACTION ITEMS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS AFTER THIS MEETING: ○ Ask regional partners to identify relevant perspectives and data sources that could help answer the questions about the objective and selected ecosystem conditions using this handout.
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 2	• Get feedback from any Hub partners who weren't at meeting 2 about the proposed questions to include in assessment. • Follow up with regional partners to ensure they complete the action items. • Create an integrated list of the recommended perspectives and data sources and copy and paste it into the slides.
Meeting 3 **THIS NEEDS TO BE A 90 MINUTE MEETING** NOTE: this would be good for a Governance Council meeting.	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 10 minutes for the Hub to determine how to engage assessment participants after the assessment process is finished. See page 19. • 20 minutes for the Hub to identify different perspective groups and data sources to engage in assessment (e.g., 10 minute for pairs to share brainstormed lists, 10 minutes for full group to share and create integrated list). See pages 20-21. • 60 minutes for regional partners to: 1) select which methods make the most sense for their prioritized perspective groups; 2) determine who from Hub can help with carrying out the methods and when; and 3) plan how to engage a small number of families to review any proposed survey/conversation questions for families (if applicable). See page 22. • REVIEW ACTION ITEMS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS AFTER THIS MEETING:

Hub Meetings	Agenda Items and Activities
	○ If applicable, take next steps to access needed data sources. ○ If applicable, help with engaging a small number of families to review any proposed survey/conversation questions for families (if applicable). ○ Begin using the regional system assessment methods they volunteered to carry out or support (e.g., through a partner organization), sending the data to the backbone on a rolling basis.
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 3	• Support action steps the Hub came up with for engaging a small number of families to review proposed survey/conversation questions for families. Make relevant edits proposed by families to the materials. • Follow up with regional partners who have connections to recommended data sources and plan out how to access the data. • Develop and send any materials regional partners need for the methods they volunteered to carry out. See toolkit page 23. • Develop process to gather rapid/short cycle feedback. Enter these plans and any short cycle feedback that is collected into step 2d in the Electronic Workbook. See toolkit page 27 for details. • Enter assessment data that is sent into the backbone into Step 3a in the Electronic Workbook. See toolkit pages 29 for details.
Meeting 4 NOTE: This would be good for a subcommittee meeting. You could delay this meeting to give Hub partners time to start gathering data.	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 30 minutes to check in on data collection progress (can share any rapid/short cycle feedback gathered to date on the methods), suggest any tips people have developed when using their methods, troubleshoot implementation issues as a group • 30 minutes to reflect on what is being learned from the regional system assessment data gathered so far. • Review action items below. • REVIEW ACTION ITEMS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS AFTER THIS MEETING: ○ Continue using the assessment methods they volunteered to carry out or support (e.g., through a partner organization), sending the data to the backbone on a rolling basis.
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 4	• Check in and support regional partners in carrying out their selected methods. • Enter assessment data that is sent into the backbone into Step 3a in the Electronic Workbook. See toolkit pages 29 for details. • Organize materials to engage regional partners (and potentially local partners and/or families) in theming a subset of the regional system assessment data to date. See page 31 for details.

Hub Meetings	Agenda Items and Activities
Meeting 5 NOTE: This would be good for a subcommittee meeting.	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 35 minutes for regional partners to work in small groups to theme a subset of assessment data gathered *to date* and reflect on implications for questions moving forward. (Eliminate this agenda item if you decide to have backbone do the theming behind the scenes) • 25 minutes for small groups to share their themes and insights with the large group (if backbone is doing theming behind the scenes, backbone presents themes to group) with discussion about whether to shift or add any questions based on what is being learned so far. • REVIEW ACTION ITEMS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS AFTER THIS MEETING: ○ Finish gathering final data and send into the backbone who will then incorporate additional data into the themes the group developed today.
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 5 NOTE: You could delay meeting 6 if the group needs more time to wrap up data collection.	• Check in and support regional partners in carrying out their selected methods. • Enter assessment data that is sent into the backbone into the Electronic Workbook Step 3 tab. Do any additional theming behind the scenes. • Organize materials to engage Hub partners (and potentially families) in creating a system map from themes and prioritize themes to target in the strategic plan. See pages 32-39 for details.
Meeting 6 NOTE: This would be good for a subcommittee meeting.	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 60 minutes for regional partners to map out how themes are working together to affect the objective.
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 6	• Engage any additional partners and/or families in mapping out the assessment themes. Integrate their perspectives into the notes.
Meeting 7 NOTE: This would be good for a Governance Council meeting.	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 25 minutes to review and discuss the mapped out Regional System Assessment findings (developed at meeting 6). • 15 minutes to review/co-create prioritizing criteria • 20 minutes for regional partners to prioritize which ecosystem conditions to target in the strategic plan for this objective.

Hub Meetings	Agenda Items and Activities
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 7	• Engage any additional partners and/or families in identifying priorities. Integrate their perspectives into the notes. • Finalize visual of the mapped out themes. See toolkit pages 32-35 for details. • Organize prioritized assessment themes into your strategic plan and begin moving to action planning. See pages 37-40 for details.

FUTURE REGIONAL SYSTEM ASSESSMENT CYCLES

If the Hub decides to explore an RUO objective other than Objective 2 in future regional system assessments, use the following agenda for meeting 1 and then follow the rest of the meeting processes outlined above starting from meeting 2.

Hub Meetings	Agenda Items and Activities
Meeting 1	See the Regional System Assessment Facilitator Slides for ideas on how to facilitate these agenda items: • 15 minutes reminder overview of regional system assessment process, including having Hub identify desired benefits from the process and available resources. Consider giving out this Overview Handout. • 25 minutes to break partners up into small groups to select which RUO objective to focus on for this assessment (includes talking people through how to use handout on early childhood outcomes/disparities to inform this decision) • 20 minutes for Hub members to determine how they would like to define their selected objective for the assessment. • Review action items below. ACTION ITEMS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS AFTER THIS MEETING: • Send in recent quantitative or qualitative data sources they have about the selected objective given how they decided to measure the objective. • Read through this Common Ecosystem Conditions Handout.
"Behind the scenes" Hub staff activities after Meeting 1	Follow up with Hub members to ensure they complete the action items. Summarize relevant information from the data sources Hub members submit into the tables in Step 1a in the Electronic Workbook. Send the table out (copy and paste into new excel document) to Hub members to read prior to the next Hub meeting.

References

1. Burchinal, M., Howes, C., Pianta, R., Bryant, D., Early, D., Clifford, R., & Barbarin, O. (2008). Predicting child outcomes at the end of kindergarten from the quality of pre-kindergarten teacher–child interactions and instruction. *Applied Development Science*, *12*(3), 140-153.
2. Meadows, D.H. (2008). *Thinking in systems: A primer*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing.
3. Martin, Jacqueline, Brendan McCormack, Donna Fitzsimons, and Rebecca Spirig (2014). The Importance of Inspiring a Shared Vision." *International Practice Development Journal,* 4(2).
4. Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health education & behavior*, *24*(3), 369-387.