

THE WORK OF SYSTEM BUILDING:  
INFUSING HEALTHY EATING AND  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO STATE EARLY  
CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) SYSTEMS

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## HKHF TAP EVALUATION YEAR 2

This year's evaluation is looking at:

- How states are using HKHF TAP to make systems change
- The reach of the project (how many child care facilities and children reached)
- The impact of the coronavirus on project work

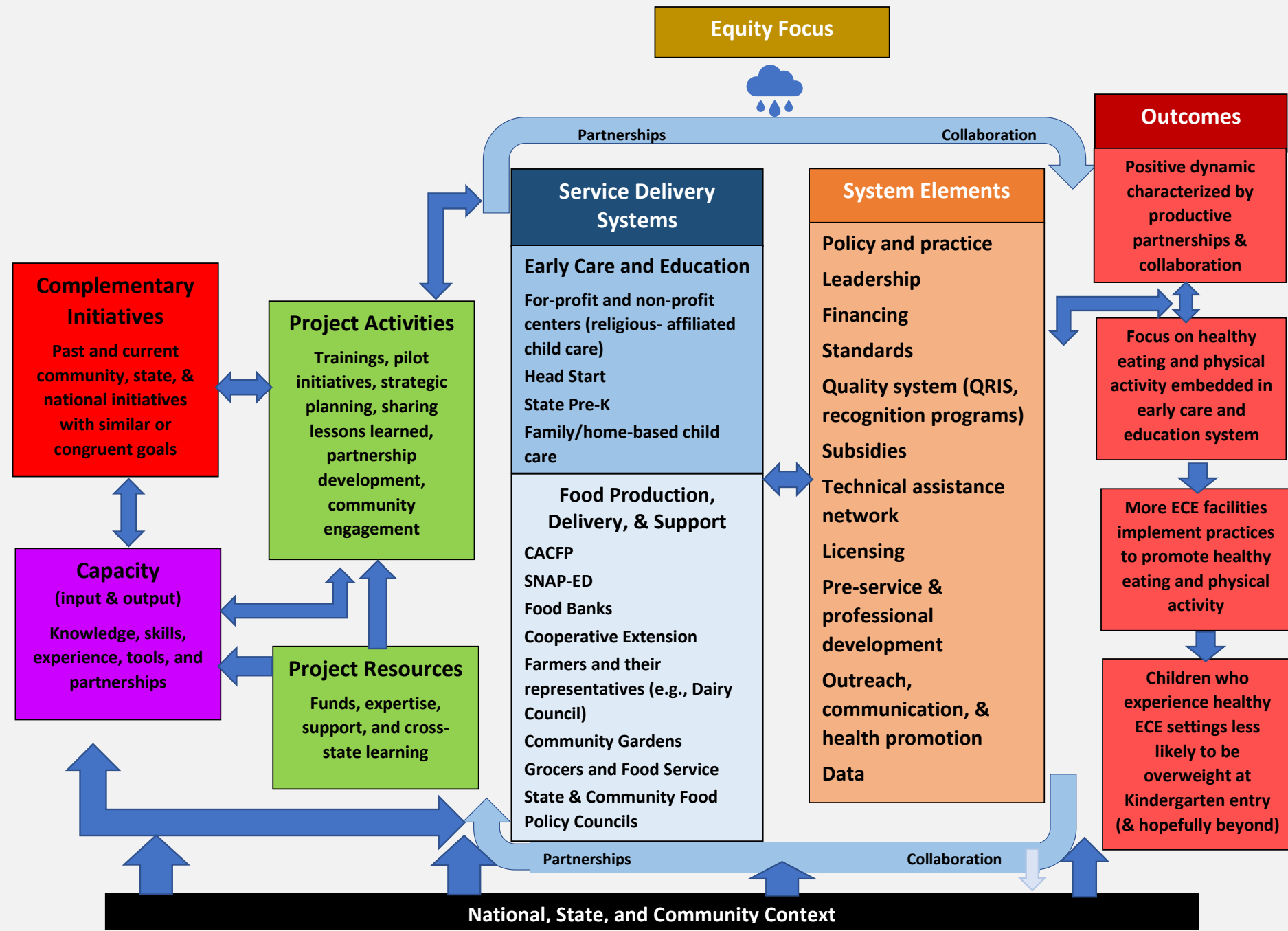


TODAY'S  
FOCUS

How states are using HKHF TAP to make systems change with an analysis based on:

- Two year's of key informant interviews, project reports, and data related to project activities (reach, state evaluations, state materials developed)
- Experience conducting multiple system change evaluations

Theory of Change for Building a Focus on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity into the Early Care and Education System



# CAPACITY: INPUT AND OUTPUT

## Complementary Initiatives

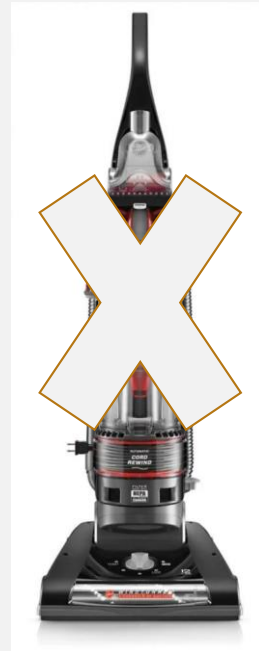
Past and current community, state, & national initiatives with similar or congruent goals



## Capacity

(input & output)

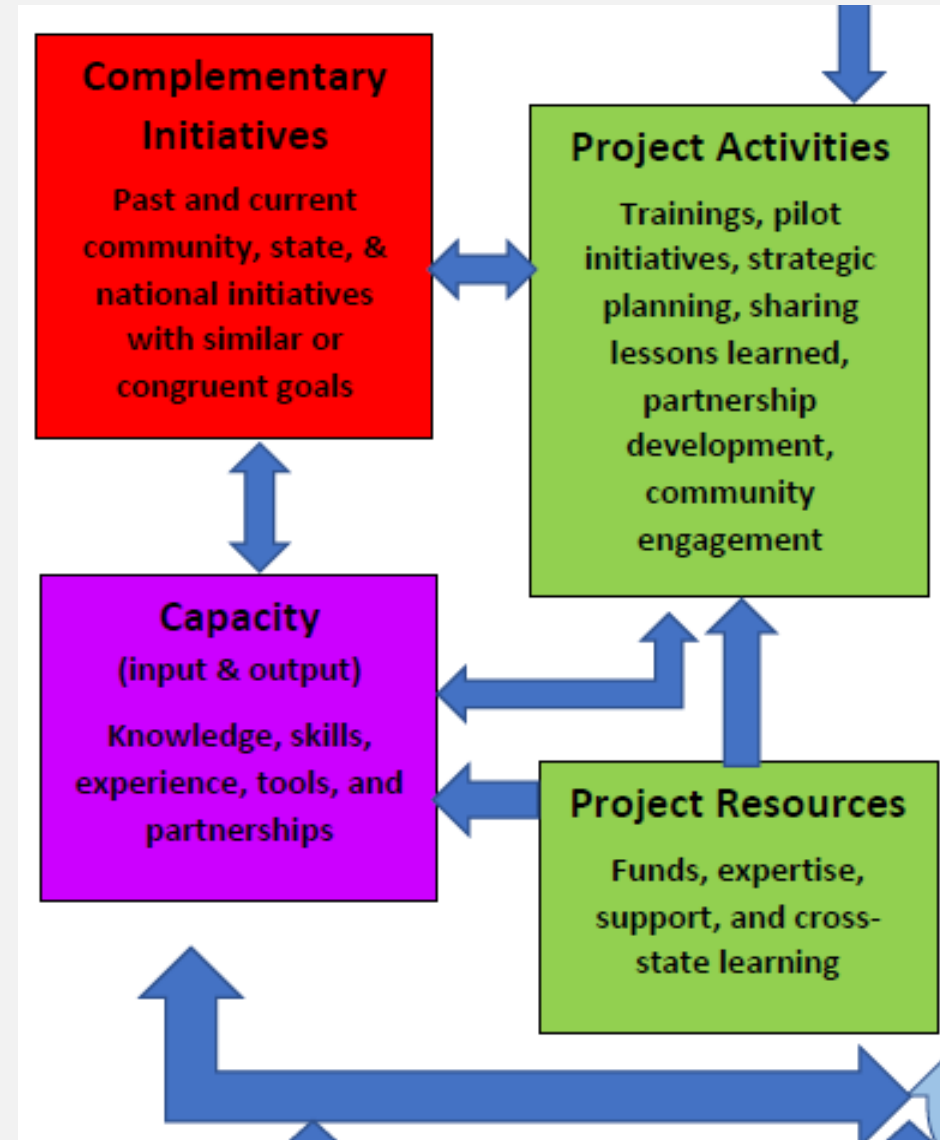
Knowledge, skills, experience, tools, and partnerships



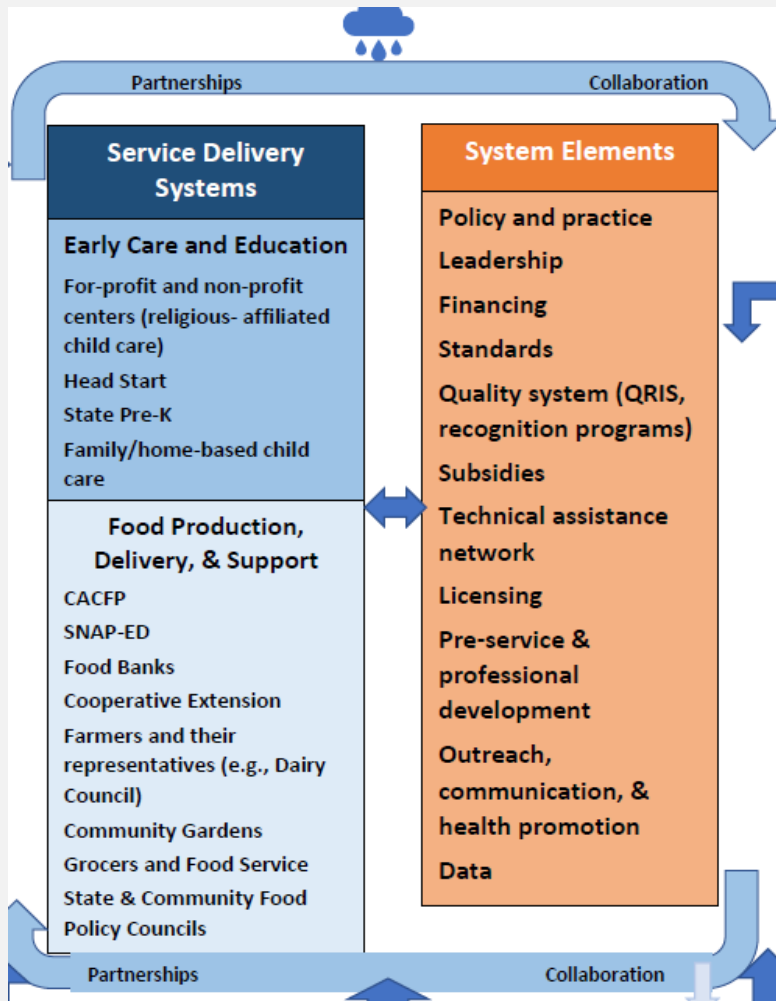
- States bring varying levels of capacity to system change projects
- That capacity is partially the product of past and current initiatives with similar or congruent goals
- Capacity serves as both an input for system building initiatives and an output because experience with current system building projects will shape how future work is carried out

## PROJECT RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES

- HKHF TAP provided states with resources to help them change systems to encourage a focus on healthy eating and physical activity in ECE
- These included funds, support, and the opportunity for cross-state learning
- States that undertook a variety of activities using these resources and their existing and enhanced capacity
- The activities were shaped by and shaped complementary initiatives



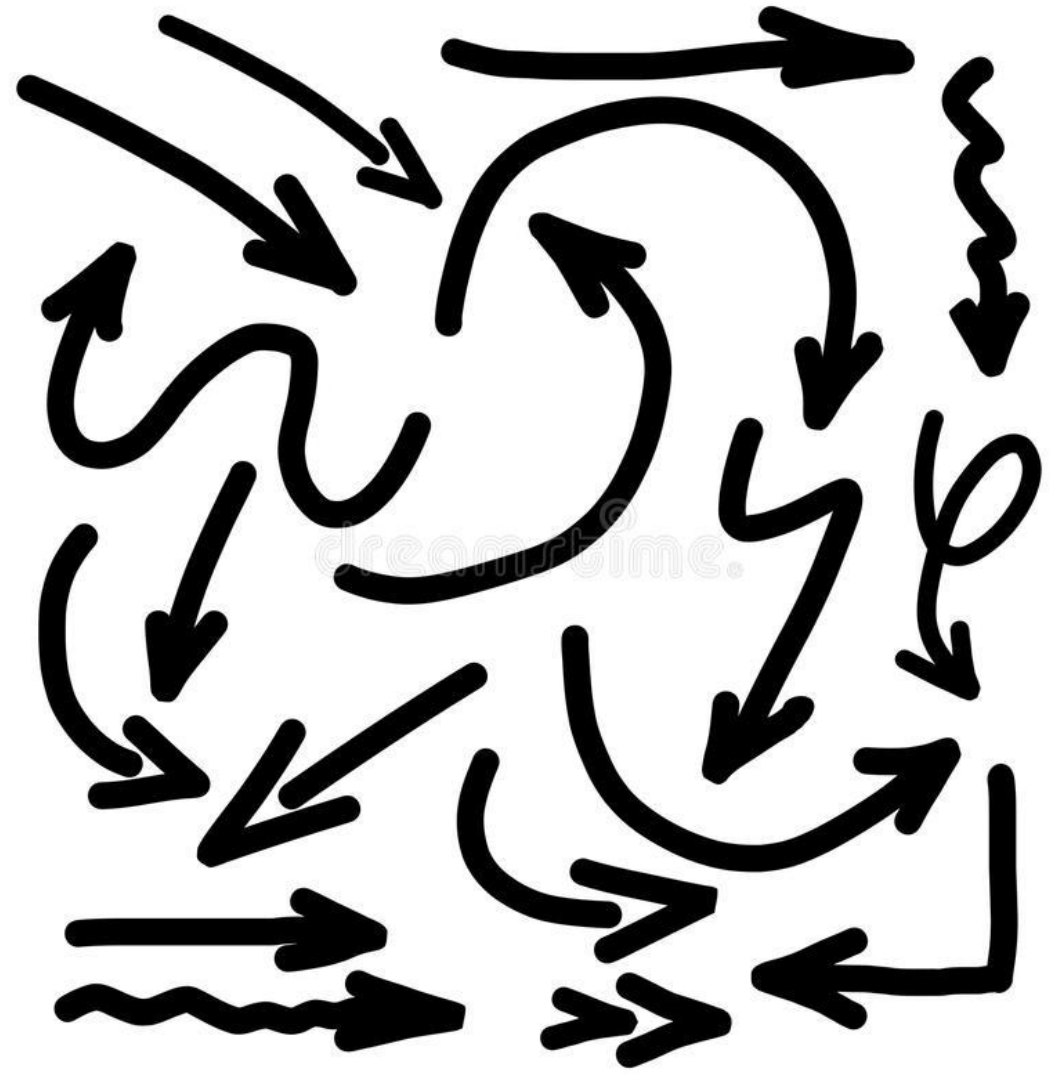
# THE HEART OF SYSTEMS CHANGEWORK



- Is partnerships and collaborations that are designed to make changes in various system elements across (a) service delivery system(s)
- The main service delivery systems HKHF TAP engage are the ECE system and the Food Production, Delivery, & Support System
- The service systems are complex and diverse within and across states and communities
- The system elements listed here are a mix of more general and more specific

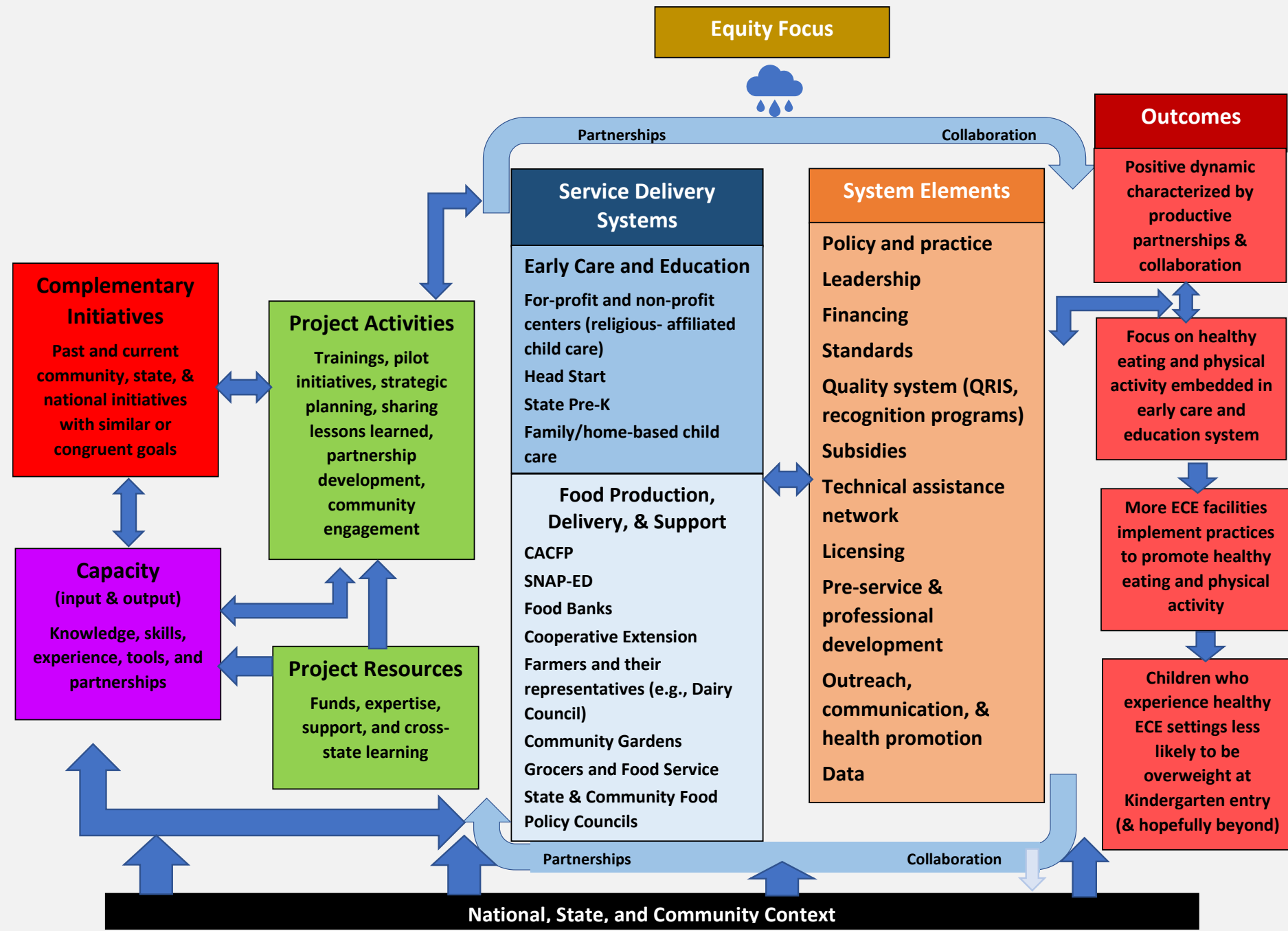
# WHAT IS WITH THE CRAZY ARROWS?

System change is complex and there are a lot of feedback loops

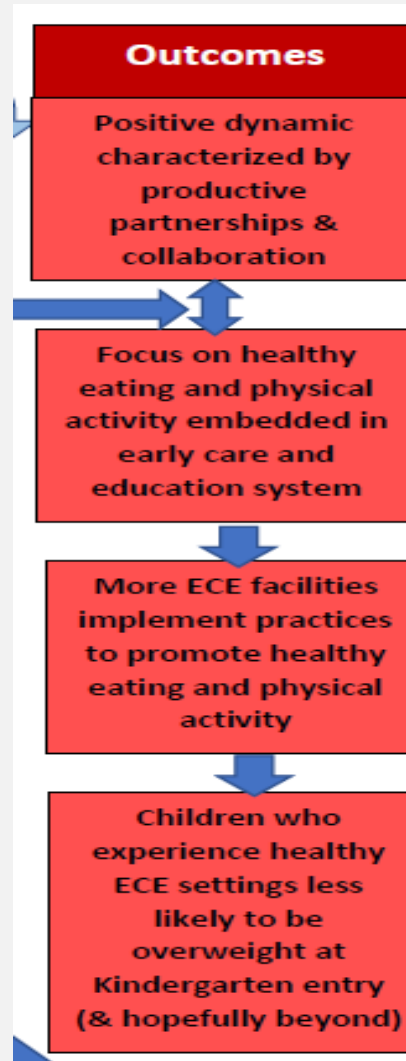




Theory of Change for Building a Focus on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity into the Early Care and Education System



# OUTCOMES



- Positive dynamics is a challenging concept to measure, but when partnerships and collaboration are fueled by effective leadership there seems to be a pattern that emerges that we might call a “cycle of success”
- The goal of the systems work being done in HKHF TAP is to embed a focus on healthy eating and physical activity (HEPA) in the ECE system because doing so effectively promotes healthy practices in ECE facilities
- Often hard to measure the ultimate outcomes for system change initiatives because of time lag, burden, and expense but it is always important to explain the what and how behind the ultimate outcomes

# INFUSING AN EQUITY FOCUS INTO SYSTEMS CHANGE WORK

## Equity Focus



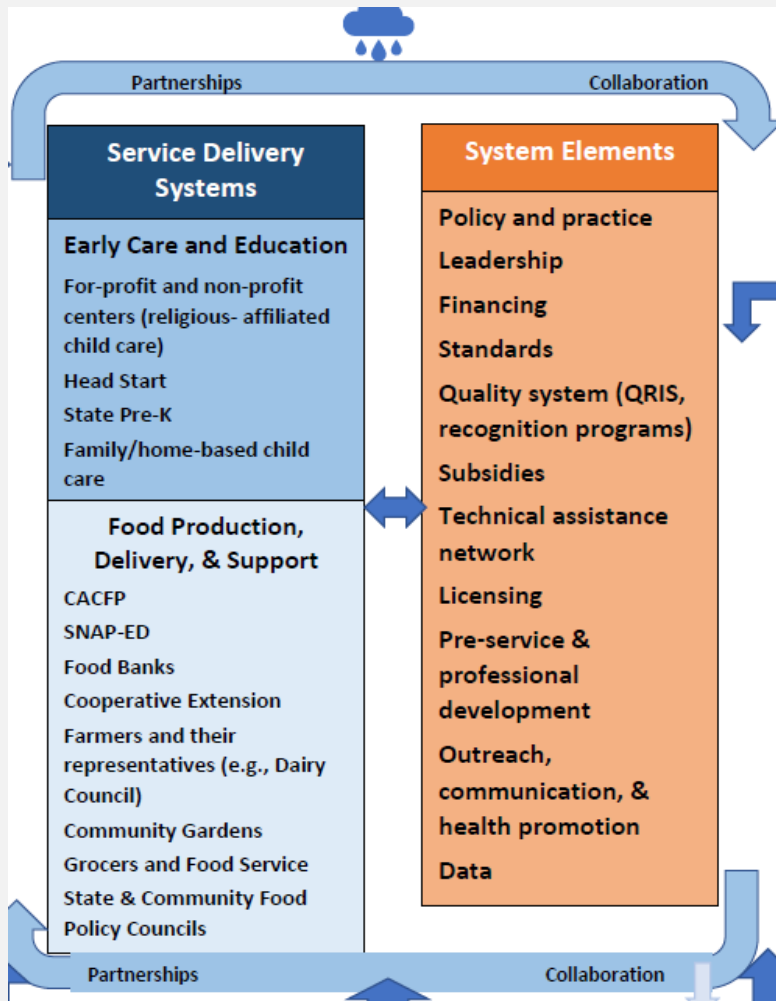
- The addition of an equity focus being infused into this work is partly a reflection of empirical reality and partly aspirational
- Youth obesity highest in populations experiencing inequities
- Training related to equity inspiring HKHF TAP partners
- Broadening effort to link promotion of HEPA and CACFP with outreach to child care facilities to encourage acceptance of subsidies for financially disadvantaged parents

# CONTEXT



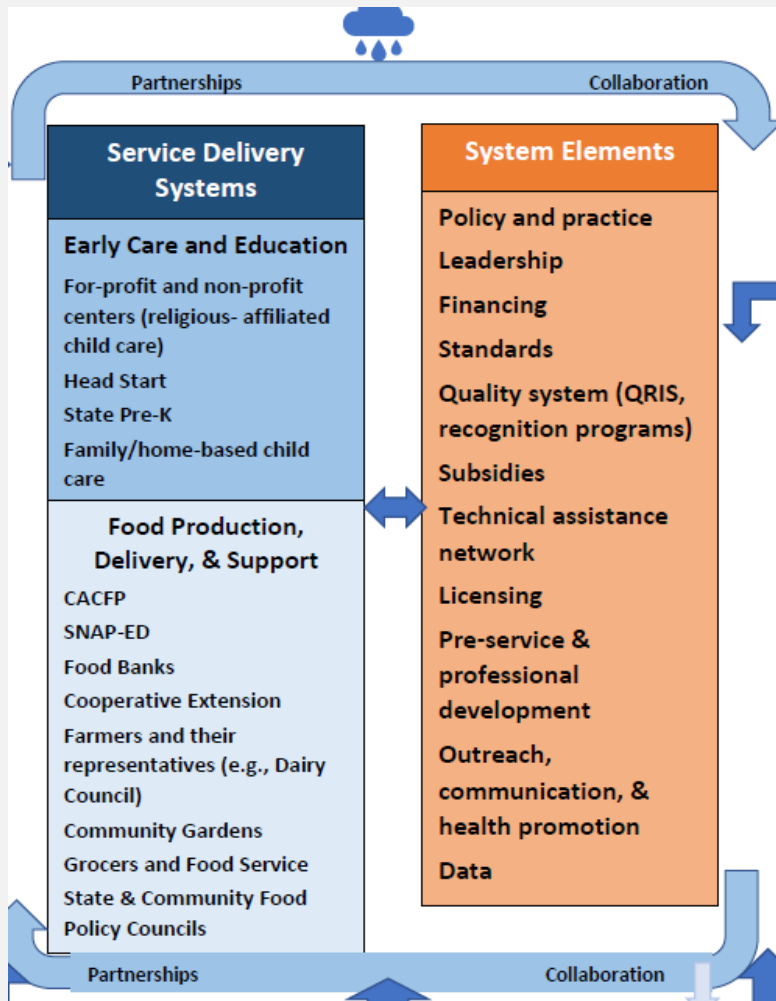
- Context is the economy, politics, history...
- COVID is context
- Context is powerful and mostly unidirectional, but sometimes....

# WHAT SYSTEMS CHANGE WORK LOOKS LIKE IN HKHF TAP



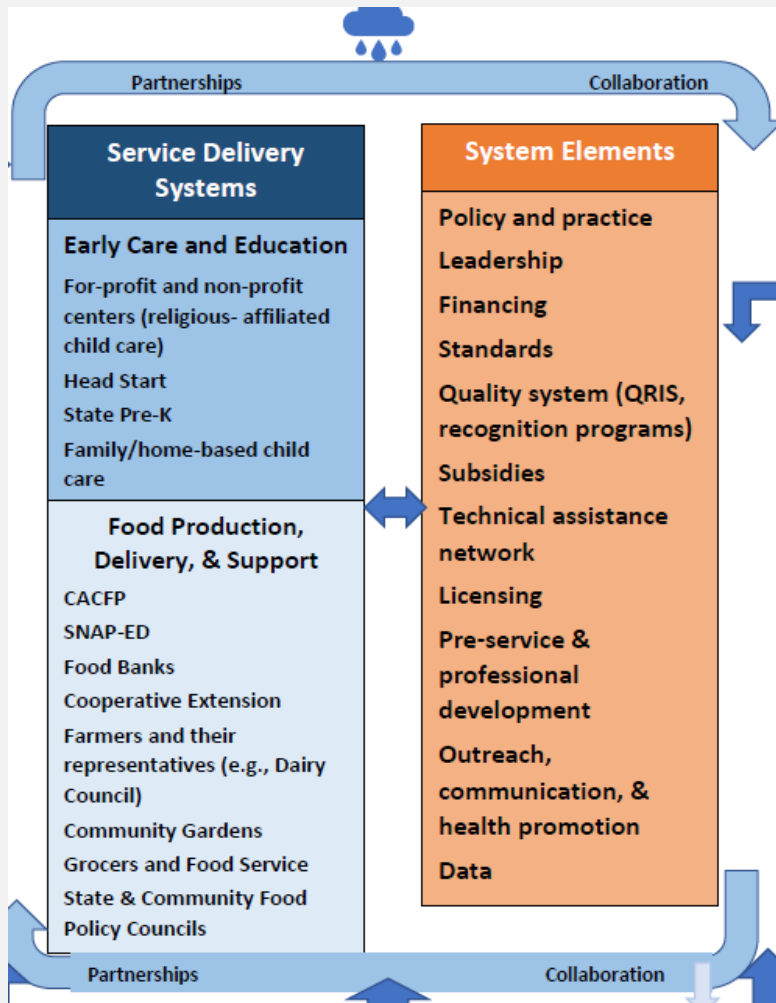
- All states have done some work related to standards (specifying particular practices to improve HEPA)
- This work has required leadership to try and strengthen standards in the quality and licensing system and to build support for these standards into the technical assistance networks and pre-service & professional development systems while trying to figure out financing for the system
- Outreach and communication is both a big part of this work both within the policy & practice realm and the service delivery realm

# WHAT SYSTEMS CHANGE WORK LOOKS LIKE IN HKHF TAP (CONTINUED)



- With inspiration from HKHF TAP peer sharing, Wisconsin reached out to its state Grocers Association (already a partner in food production delivery and support work with the state) about food shortages in child care resulting from COVID. Developed outreach materials to help child care facilities connect to their local grocers.
- Tremendous sharing across states around CACFP. Outreach material, tremendous interest in peer mentoring, support across states.

# WHAT SYSTEMS CHANGE WORK LOOKS LIKE IN HKHF TAP (CONTINUED)



- Virginia provided small grants to community-level system building partners for CACFP outreach. This led to the development of a relationship between the local food bank and child care. Because the food bank makes bulk purchases of many items such as large cans they can purchase at a discount and were able to do so for child care centers. Being able to save money like this is critical at a time when child care facilities are in such a precarious financial position because of COVID.



## SOME TAKEAWAYS

- System building is complex and dynamic
- Funders and support providers need to be flexible because of the dynamic nature of system change. Opportunities change as a result of context changes, but also as a result of system work.
- People tend to focus on their piece of the system rather than the whole, so support is needed for leadership focused on the whole.
- Peer learning is powerful, especially in areas that cross service-systems.
- The most effective system building work connects national, state, and community work.



# DISCUSSION