



# Data Systems Modernization Toolkit for CCDF Lead Agencies: Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Tool

This tool is part of the Data Systems Resource Suite for Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), a suite of complementary resources developed by the Child Care State Capacity Building Center (SCBC) to help CCDF Lead Agencies learn about, plan for, implement, and sustain data systems modernization initiatives.

## How Can This Tool Help You?

We designed this tool to help CCDF Lead Agencies develop and refine practices related to planning, implementing, and evaluating data systems modernization initiatives. We encourage you to use this tool as part of an ongoing process to continuously examine and strengthen planning, implementation, and evaluation practices related to this work.

For an overview of best practices and tips to support planning, implementation, and evaluation of your data systems modernization initiative, see SCBC's [Data Systems Modernization for CCDF Lead Agencies: A Practical Guide to Plan, Implement, and Evaluate](#).

### SCBC's Data Systems Resource Suite for CCDF Lead Agencies

- [A Practical Guide to Get Started](#)
- [A Practical Guide to Plan, Implement, and Evaluate](#)
- [Tips to Stay on Track and Sustain Your Efforts](#)
- [Data Systems Modernization Toolkit](#)
  - [Partner Engagement Tool](#)
  - [Technical Capacity Assessment Tool](#)
  - [Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Tool](#)

## Instructions

1. To use this tool, work with your data systems development team and partners to complete each of the four parts on the following pages:
  - Part 1. Prioritize Initiatives to Implement
  - Part 2. Develop Project Management Plan
  - Part 3. Design and Implement Initiatives
  - Part 4. Evaluate Success of Initiatives
2. Reflect on your responses. Use the **Action Items for Planning and Implementing Initiatives** section to determine and document action items for improvement.



## Part 1. Prioritize Initiatives to Implement

Agencies may often identify more enhancements than they can pursue at first, considering the time, funding, and resources available to support that work. Therefore, you must prioritize which initiatives to pursue based on the cost; level of effort; and potential impact of the initiatives on your agency’s mission, goals, and risk mitigation needs.

For each initiative you’re considering, collaborate with your data systems development teams and partners to complete table 1. This will help you estimate the impact and level of effort for each initiative. Then, using the results, place each initiative into the figure 1 to prioritize their level of importance.

### Key Terms

**Data systems modernization:** This is a continuous process of updating an organization's data systems applications, technology, and business processes to enhance your organization's ability to meet strategic goals.

**Data systems initiatives:** These are any initiatives that focus on data systems modernization or data integration, including systems development, enhancements, and maintenance. To support ongoing data system modernization, your agency will likely need to spread identified enhancements across several initiatives to make pragmatic progress within known funding, staffing, and resource constraints.

**Table 1. Estimate Impact, Cost, and Level of Effort Required for Potential Initiatives**

Initiative	What Is the Impact of the Initiative on Your Agency’s Mission and Ability to Meet Strategic Goals and Mitigate Risk? (high, low)	What Is the Cost Required to Implement the Initiative? (high, low)	What Is the Level of Effort Required to Implement the Initiative? (high, low)
Initiative 1.			
Initiative 2.			
Initiative 3.			
Initiative 4.			
Initiative 5.			



Figure 1: Data Systems Initiative Prioritization Matrix



## Part 2. Develop Project Management Plan

Effective implementation of data systems initiatives begins with a strong project management plan and strong leadership team that includes both program leadership and data systems team leadership for the programs and systems affected by the data systems initiative.

Work with your data systems team and partners to complete table 2 to develop and refine a project management plan for each data systems initiative that your team decides to pursue. **Note:** Complete parts 2, 3, and 4 for each data initiative you plan to implement.



**Table 2. Project Management Plan: Key Questions**

Component	Description
<b>Project Leadership: Team Responsibilities</b>	
	Describe the responsibilities of the project leadership team. This may include how project leaders will manage the data systems development process; engage systems users and other partners to provide input on the process and gain the support and resources needed from policymakers;
<b>Project Leadership Team: Program Leadership</b>	
	Identify the program or programs and organizations affected by the data systems initiative and list the staff who should be designated as members of the project leadership team.
<b>Project Leadership Team: Data Systems Leadership</b>	
	Identify the data systems team members who should be designated as members of the project leadership team. This may include project managers, software developers, business analysts, and user experience experts.
<b>Project Planning and Management</b>	
	Describe the process you will use for planning the initiative, including how you will develop a detailed project plan that defines the scope of work, required tasks and activities, key milestones, roles and responsibilities, implementation progress monitoring, and procedures that will support the development and implementation of the initiative over time.
<b>Coordinating the Project with Other Initiatives</b>	
	Describe the need (if any) to coordinate the team's work with other data systems initiatives within your agency with other state or partner agencies or other statewide data systems initiatives.



## Part 3. Design and Implement Initiatives

Multiple components are associated with the successful design and implementation of data systems initiatives. Critical components to successful initiatives include the following:

- Creating integrated, multidisciplinary project teams
- Developing detailed system requirements for the initiative upfront to support identified policy needs, data security requirements, business needs, and strategic goals.
- Implementing rigorous user acceptance testing, as well as training and support as the new system is put into operation
- Managing change and communication with systems users and partners

Work with your data systems development team and partners to complete table 3 to plan for the implementation of each data systems initiative.

**Table 3. Key Components to Design and Implement Initiatives**

Component	Description
<p><b>Creating Integrated Project Team</b></p> <p>Identify members of the project team who will participate in the development process to provide both the program and technical expertise required for successful development of the initiative. This may include business analysts, software developers, user experience experts, a project manager, developers, data managers, and subject matter experts.</p>	
<p><b>Defining Business Requirements Documentation</b></p> <p>Describe the process the team will use to define the business requirements for the initiative and how the team will engage critical partners to inform the requirements.</p>	
<p><b>Refining and Tracking Systems Requirements</b></p> <p>Describe the process the team will use to refine and track systems requirements throughout the development process for the initiative and how the team will engage critical partners to inform the requirements.</p>	
<p><b>Implementing User Acceptance Testing</b></p> <p>Describe the process the team will implement to test new systems or enhancements with users. Do this to determine if the systems meet the business requirements and correct any failures identified during the testing process.</p>	



Component	Description
<b>Providing User Training and Support</b>	Describe the process the team will implement to provide ongoing training and support to system users, including during the launch of new systems or systems enhancements.
<b>Managing Change</b>	Describe the process the team will use to manage the organizational change that will be needed to support the data systems initiative, including how the team will manage expectations for how the enhancements will work. This may mean including systems end users throughout the development process, conducting awareness campaigns, and addressing their needs and concerns along the way.
<b>Promoting Success</b>	Describe the process the team will implement to promote success stories that emerge from the initiative and underscore how it supports the agency's strategic goals.

## Part 4. Evaluate the Success of the Initiatives

After implementation, you should evaluate key performance metrics associated with the development and implementation process and the overall systems performance. Documenting success stories and lessons learned throughout the process is important. Collaborate with your data systems team and partners to complete table 4 to plan for evaluating the success of your data systems initiatives.

**Table 4. Key Components to Evaluate Success of Initiatives**

Component	Description
<b>Evaluate Implementation Success</b>	Describe the process the team will use to evaluate the success of the development and implementation process for the initiatives. This may include developing and measuring metrics related to cost, timeline, and user acceptance testing.
<b>Evaluate Impact on Strategic Goals</b>	Describe the process the team will use to evaluate the impact of the initiative on strategic goals over time and how results will be used to guide future changes to organizational strategy.



Component	Description
<b>Document Success Stories</b>	
	Describe the process the team will use to document and showcase how major initiatives have produced success stories. This may include video diaries and testimonials that illustrate how the initiatives have improved work, job satisfaction, service delivery, and client outcomes.
<b>Document Lessons Learned</b>	
	Describe the process that the team will use to document lessons learned from the initiative and leverage those lessons to inform future data systems initiatives.

## Action Items for Planning and Implementing Initiatives

After completing parts 1 through 4, maintain an ongoing list of action items for planning and implementing the data systems initiatives. Use table 5 to list action items.



**Table 5. Action Items for Planning and Implementing Initiatives**

Action Item	Assigned To	Due Date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

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

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