

Advancing State Capacity for Equitable and Sustainable EC Systems:

Early Childhood Governance and Finance Project

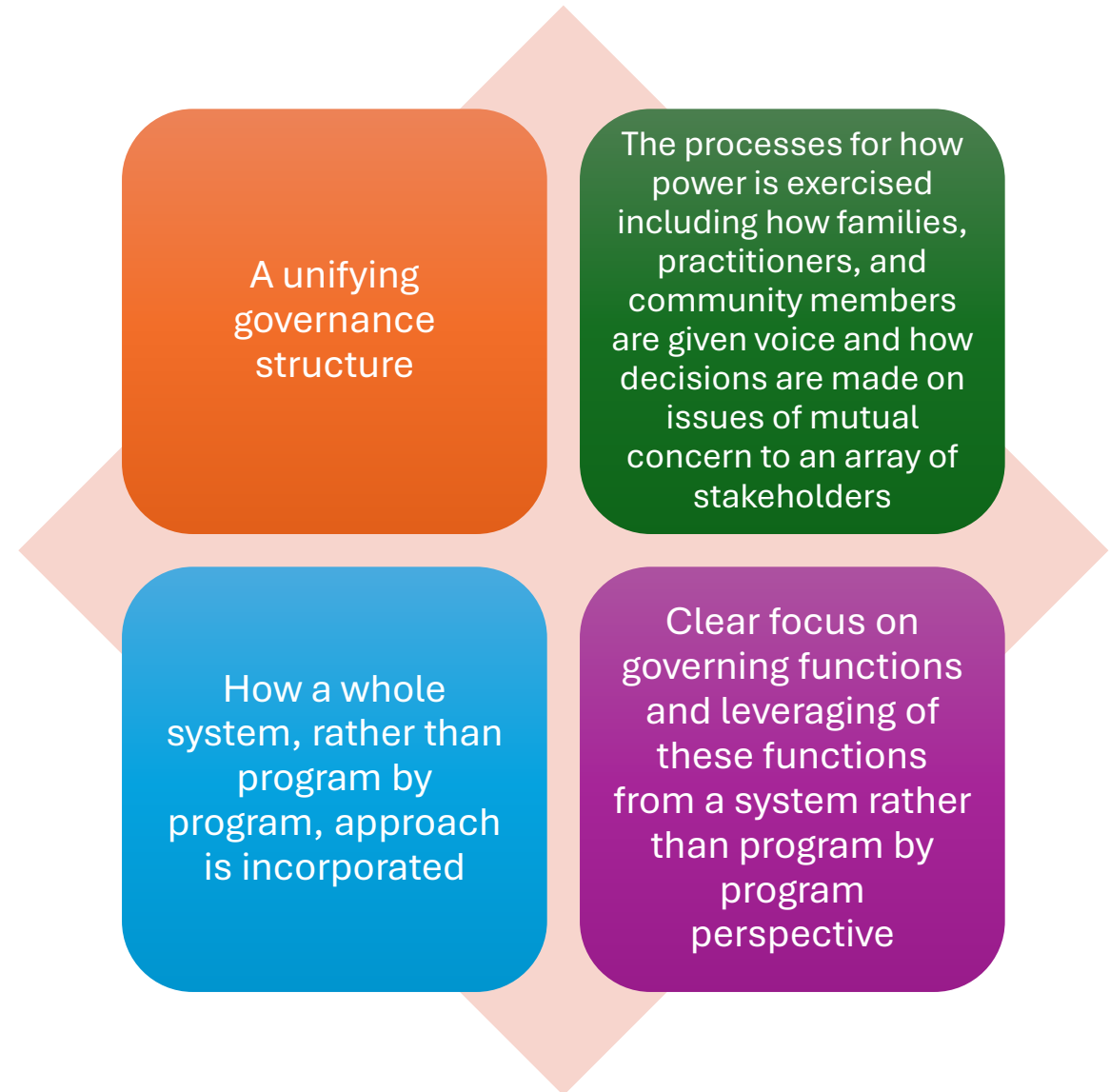
Webinar

September 18, 2025

Co-Hosts:



How We Define Governance



How We Define Finance

Funding that ECE programs receive to provide services to children

How funding is administered

Key elements, using the National Academies of Science approach:

- Consistent, high-quality standards and cost-based payments
- Access to ECE that does not depend on families' circumstances or parental employment
- Approaches to financing that work for both providers and families
- Coordination of funds from federal, state, and local sources
- Right-sized system infrastructure
- Revenue generation

ECGFP Strategies

Direct investment in states and territories- Invest in self-determined state and territory innovations for ECE finance and governance that concretely advance this work. We are supporting the leading-edge of the work in different places so context, culture, and values are key and so this varies depending on geography

Peer-to-peer learning and engagement opportunities- Peer-to-peer learning and engagement opportunities for state and territory grantees to creatively borrow from one another and to generate new strategies for their own work.

Build capacity to support the field- Enhance the capacity of national organizations that bring creative, deep expertise to bear in as they work directly in states and territories.

Knowledge development and dissemination- Encourage improved understanding of the vital role of governance and finance in ECE through knowledge products including evaluation, book development, and participation in conferences and convenings.

Early Learning System Vision

An inclusively governed, equitably funded early learning system that ensures accessible, high-quality care and education for all children, regardless of circumstances, while strengthening families, workforce, and communities.

Systems Improvement Strategies

Creating a strong early learning system requires three interconnected approaches: *Unified & Inclusive Governing* to align efforts and reflect family and workforce priorities; *Comprehensive & Equitable Financing* to ensure stability, fairness, and sustainability; and *Continuous Engagement & Improvement* to drive progress and sustain momentum.

Unified & Inclusive Governing	Comprehensive & Equitable Financing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Map the decision-makers. Assess who holds authority and responsibility for early learning programs¹ to understand how governing works and can be improved.▪ Align the people. Clarify roles and decision-making processes and strengthen cross-agency collaboration to build a unified system that supports families and workforce.▪ Grow accountability. Build transparent structures and processes that hold decision-makers responsible, foster trust, and ensure system adaptability and durability.▪ Make governing fair. Actively collaborate with families, workforce, and historically marginalized communities to ensure governing reflects their priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Map the money. Assess and understand financial resources available to support early learning at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels.▪ Align the dollars. Align funding to ensure resources flow strategically to key priorities like workforce support, quality improvements, and equitable access.▪ Grow investment. Expand and diversify funding to ensure a stable, sufficient, and reliable financial foundation for early learning.▪ Make financing fair. Distribute funding equitably, taking into account true costs and family needs, so that all children, regardless of circumstances, have access to quality programs.
Continuous Engagement & Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Know the needs. Understand the needs of families, workforce, and other partners, alongside system performance and funding gaps, to prioritize improvements effectively.▪ Engage partners. Collaborate with policymakers, philanthropy, businesses, families, workforce, and other partners to drive momentum and secure ongoing support for governing and financing improvements.▪ Grow public momentum. Build widespread understanding and commitment to early learning, emphasizing effective governing and adequate, reliable investment.▪ Monitor progress. Use data systems to track outcomes, ensure equitable access and quality outcomes, and support continuous improvement.	

Governing and Financing Outcomes and Ultimate Desired Impacts

Near-Term Outcomes (3-4 years)	Long-Term Outcomes (5-7 years)	Ultimate Desired Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>System understanding:</i> Progress clarifying governing processes, mapping financial resources, and identifying family and workforce priorities to guide improvements. ▪ <i>Governing improvements:</i> Clearer roles, stronger collaboration across agencies, and inclusive decision-making processes that reflect family and workforce voices. ▪ <i>Financing reforms:</i> Improvements in aligning, expanding, and distributing funding more equitably to enhance stability and address disparities. ▪ <i>Continuous engagement:</i> Enhanced strategies to grow public support, cultivate partners, and foster data-driven improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Unified:</i> A transparent and accountable system with clear roles and effective cross-agency collaboration to support unified goals and priorities. ▪ <i>Inclusive:</i> Governing that actively involves families and workforce and reflects their priorities. ▪ <i>Comprehensive:</i> A resilient financial foundation that ensures sufficient funding for early learning and long-term system sustainability. ▪ <i>Equitable:</i> Resources distributed fairly, addressing disparities and meeting the diverse needs of children, families, and workforce across all communities. ▪ <i>Adaptable:</i> A system supported by ongoing public and partner engagement, data-driven transparency, and flexibility to respond to emerging needs and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Children:</i> Improved developmental outcomes, health, and school readiness, fostering joy and a love of learning. ▪ <i>Families:</i> Greater economic stability, reduced barriers to care, and enhanced well-being and sense of support. ▪ <i>Workforce:</i> Increased job satisfaction and retention, living wages, access to professional growth, and reduced stress. ▪ <i>Communities:</i> Greater equity, social cohesion, and long-term economic benefits, with early learning systems that reflect and respond to local needs.



Commonwealth of Northern
Mariana Islands (CNMI)
System of Support for Home Based
Providers

Our CHALLENGE?

1. Child Care desert on the islands of Rota and Tinian. Families were qualifying for the Subsidy Program but had very little to no access to providers. Dec. 2019 launched of System of Support total of homebased programs CNMI wide = 5

2. Reliance heavily on CW 1 workers or non-resident workers in child care programs. This program will end in 2029. System of Support was to also address the exodus of CW 1 teachers by increasing the number of indigenous people in child care thereby building local capacity.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (UNITED STATES)

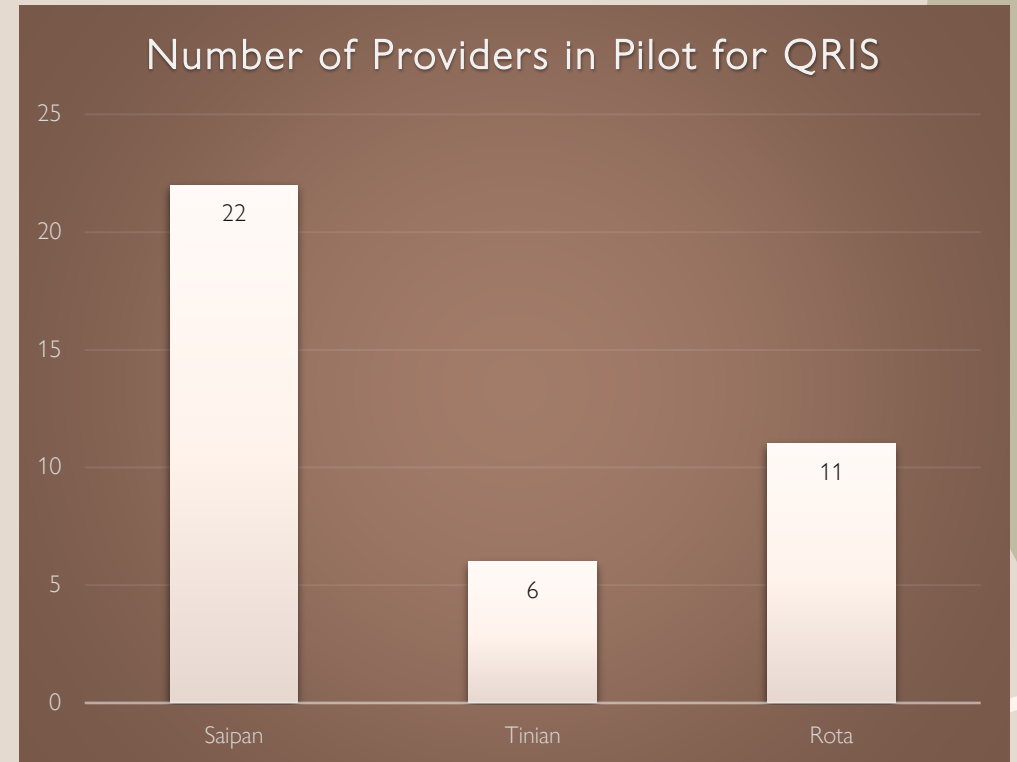
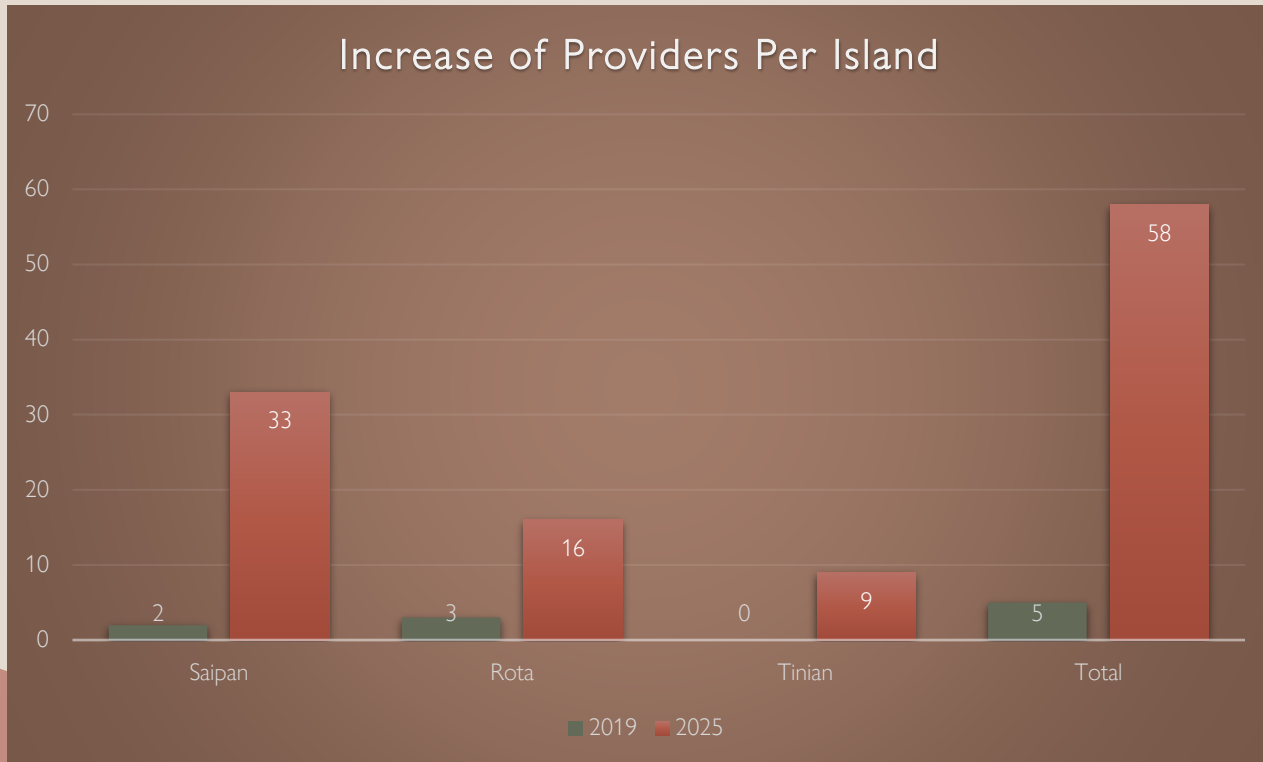


System of Support for Home Based Programs or FFN's

- Reimbursement of 1st year business expense (Business License, Police Clearance, Health Clearance,)
- Free training and Technical Assistance (12-Pre-service Training Topics and completion of annual training hours)
- Strengthening Business Practices Training
- Family and Community Engagement Specialists (FACES) Staff who speak native language therefore building close and trusted relationship with home-based providers.



Data on increase of homebased program



Why spend time on role of governing and financing as part of our community's ECE system building

- We have very limited resources and we want to be equitable in the distribution of these resources if we expect all of our children (subsidized or not) to have access to quality child care.
- Through the System of Support we were able to address a huge barrier that prospective providers identified-being able to pay for the initial business fees as well as access to free training and technical assistance and support.
- Opportunities for providers to share their comments and recommendations has been helpful in our initiative. Through their participation in our consultations with them, CCDF has been able to improve on the initiative that best support our providers.

THANK YOU



MARIBEL LOSTE

DIRECTOR

CHILD CARE AND
DEVELOPMENT FUND PROGRAM

COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS