



# **QUALITY BY DESIGN:** A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE CQI SYSTEM

# INTRODUCTIONS

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# TODAY'S GOAL

Leave with tools to inform your agency's current continuous quality improvement (CQI) system – identifying its key strengths and areas where improvement is needed.



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Identify the three key components** of an effective quality improvement system in human services organizations.
- **Apply a CQI assessment framework** to assess your current organizational QI system and identify specific areas for improvement.
- **Develop practical strategies** to strengthen organizational commitment, leadership support, and governance structures for continuous improvement.
- **Utilize real-world examples** and evidence-based practices to overcome common barriers to implementing sustainable QI systems.



# AGENDA

- Role of CQI in Human Services
- Overview of CQI Framework
- Applying the Framework in Practice
- Q&A and Closing





# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (CQI)?



CQI systematically identifies problems, tests solutions, and drives organizational learning through revision and implementation.<sup>1</sup>

## Key Requirements:

- **Proactive culture** supporting continuous learning
- **Mission-aligned** approach grounded in agency values
- **Data & evidence** collected and analyzed to inform decisions
- **Inclusive participation** from all stakeholders—staff at every level, children, youth, families, and community partners

<sup>1</sup>Administration on Children, Youth and Families. (August 27, 2012). Establishing and Maintaining Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Systems in State Child Welfare Agencies [ACYF-CB-IM-12-07].

# UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR CQI SYSTEMS

## Why CQI is important

A strong CQI system provides **insight into how agency practices are performing in service to outcomes**, provides an **early warning system** for performance trending in the wrong direction, and results in **cultural transformation** using data and evidence.

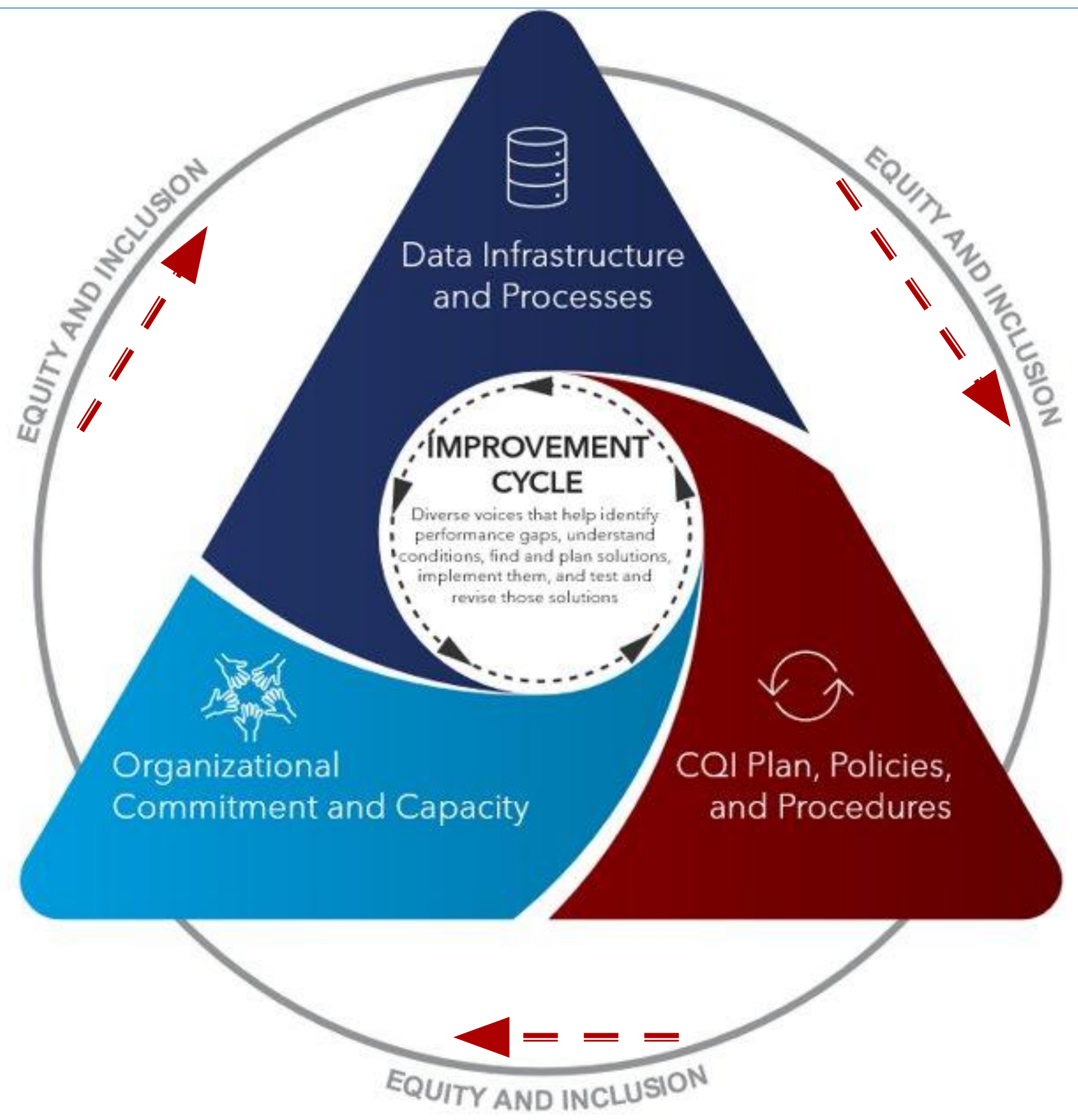
## Common Challenges

Agencies often struggle to complete a feedback loop or integrate evidence and diverse voices. **Strengthening the overall CQI system** should be the priority—not just the improvement cycle.

## Foundation for Success

A strong CQI system is the **foundation for lasting improvement**. This webinar and its materials offer tools to help agencies identify and address system gaps to strengthen this foundation.

# COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL CQI SYSTEM



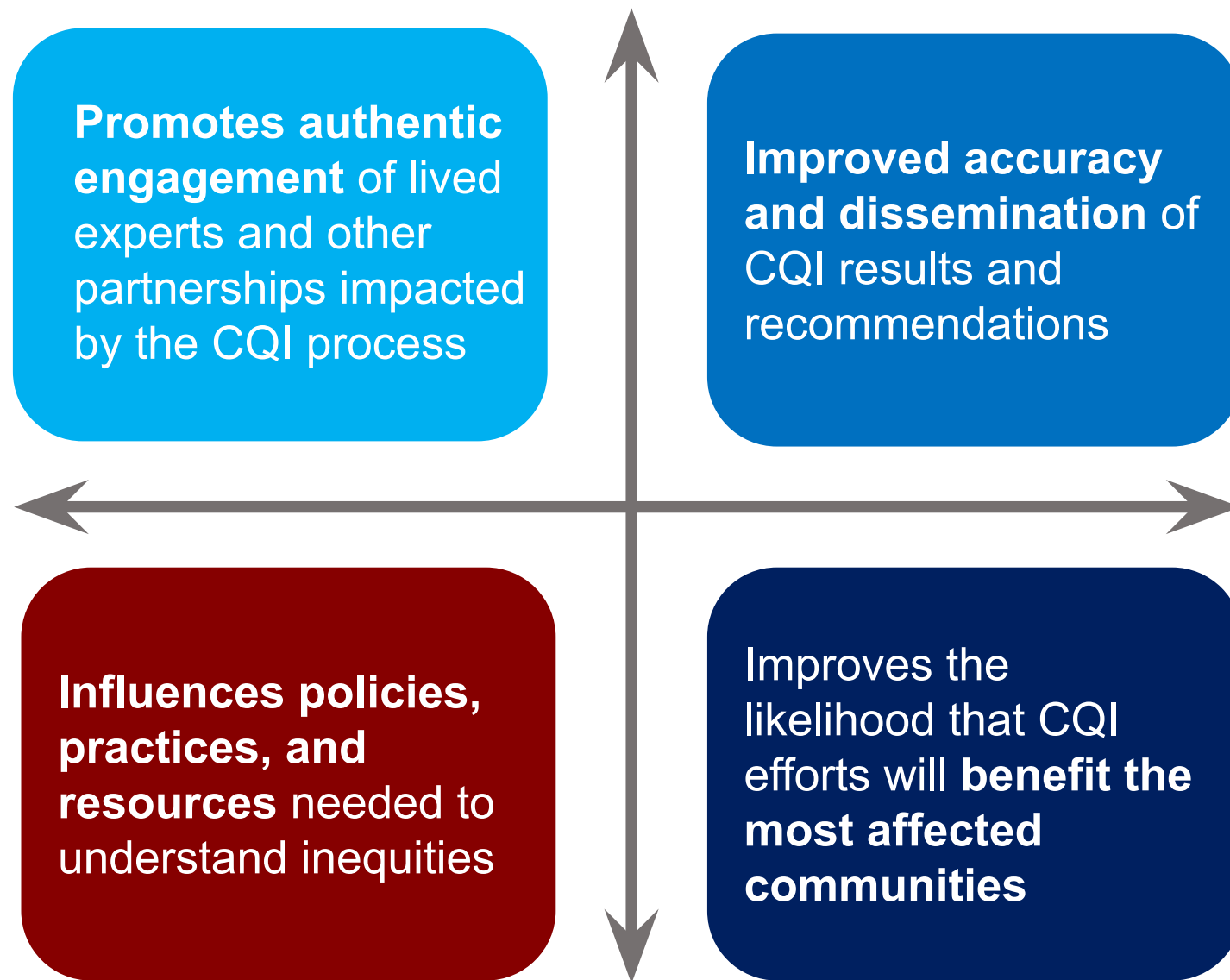




## **EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN CQI**

Equity and inclusion must be a fundamental principle embedded in all continuous quality improvement initiatives. Without explicitly focusing on equity and promoting inclusivity, efforts risk perpetuating or even amplifying existing disparities in outcomes, access, and experiences across different populations.

# CENTERING EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN CQI







## ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND CAPACITY



Continuous  
learning



Governance  
structure



Strategic priorities

# ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND CAPACITY



**Continuous Learning** – An environment that fosters innovation, evidence-based decisions, collaboration, and support through change.



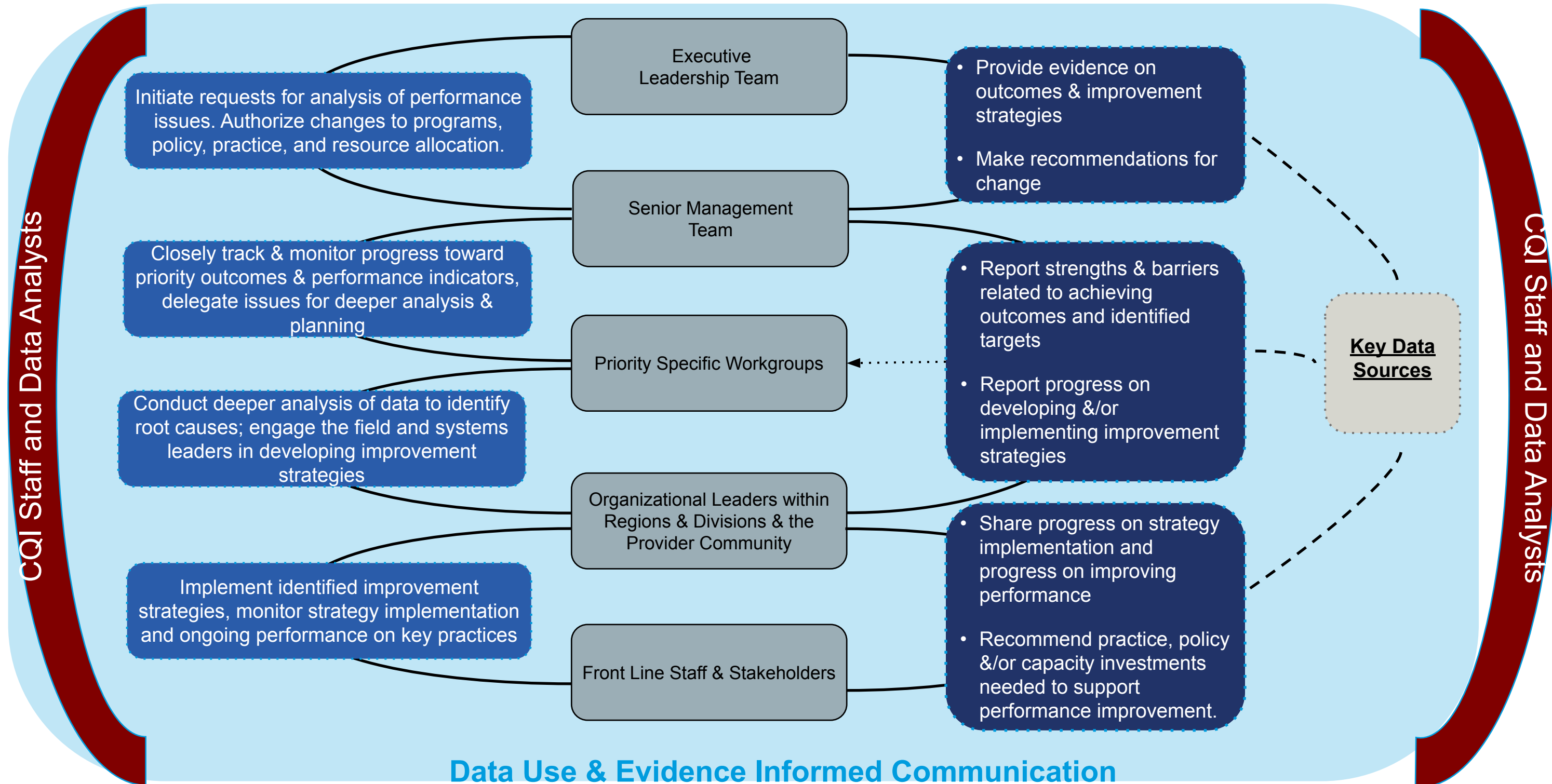
**Governance Structure** – Clear outline of roles and responsibilities for CQI activities across the organization, including oversight, inclusion, communication pathways and feedback loops.



**Strategic Priorities** – Agency-wide outcomes that align to standards and establish shared goals for improvement.



# Flow of Information & Activities within the CQI Process





**Organizational  
Commitment & Capacity**

# MENTIMETER ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY





## DATA INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESSES



Collection & Storage



Analysis



Reporting

# DATA INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESSES



**Collection and storage** – A trusted and secure system that can integrate quantitative and qualitative data across sources.



**Analysis** – Appropriate methods with clear quality standards to ensure findings are reliable and actionable.



**Reporting** – Accessible, clear, and equity-focused reports that drive meaningful action.



# EXAMPLE: APPROVED FOSTER HOMES

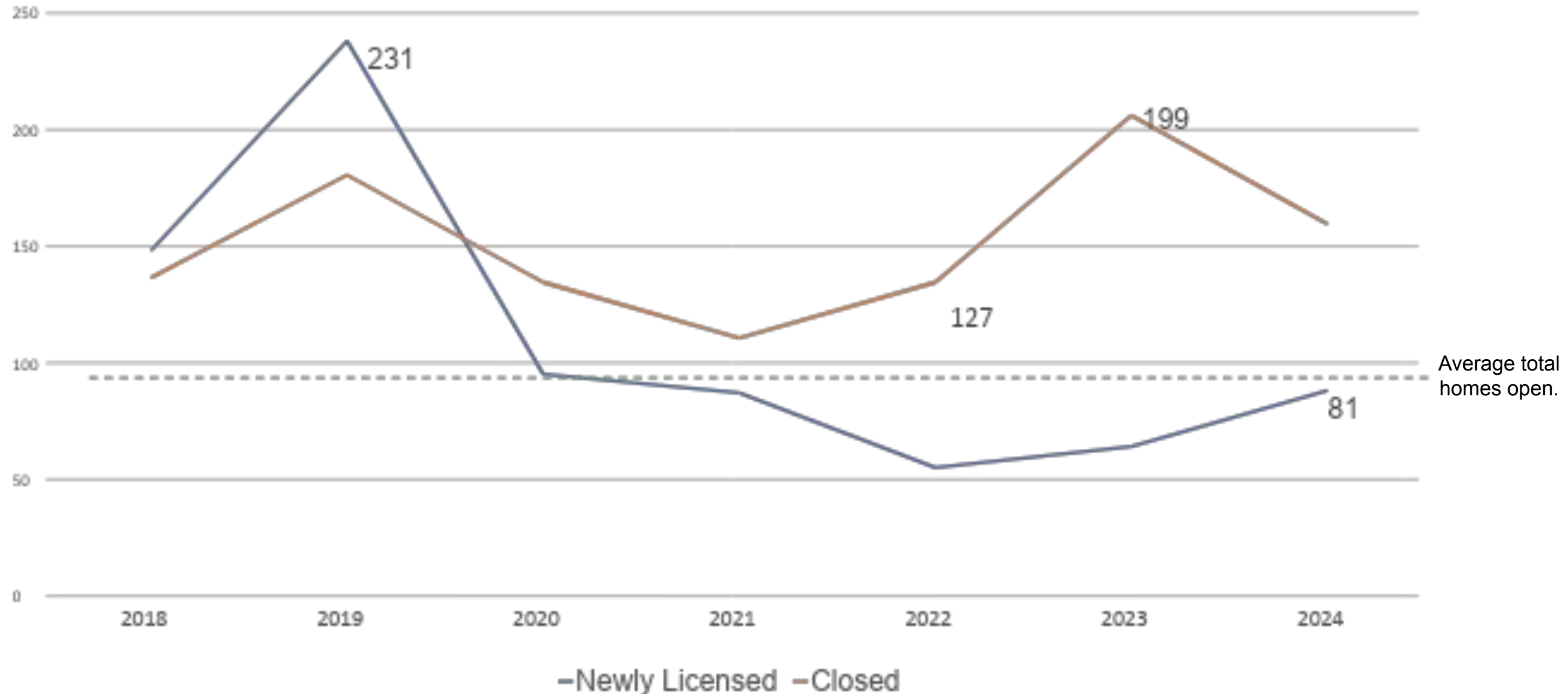
**Licenses**

- 81 Issued this year
- 152 closed this year

Year	Licensed	Closed
2018	141	129
2019	231	173
2020	88	127
2021	95	103
2022	48	127
2023	57	199
2024	81	152

# HOMES NEWLY LICENSED VS. CLOSED\*

The number of newly licensed homes are **less** than the number of homes closing.



\*Numbers collected from closing.xlsx log on June 5, 2025 for core homes (excludes CPA).





**Data Infrastructure &  
Processes**

# MENTIMETER ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

# PERSPECTIVE EXCHANGE (10 MIN.)

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## Form groups

Get into small groups of 2-4 people.

## Draw a question

Pull one paper from the container on your table.

## Discuss

Choose one question from the paper to discuss as a group. Focus on generating fresh ideas and exploring different perspectives.

## Share your insights

We will be asking for 1-2 volunteers to share their takeaways.





## CQI PLAN, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES



CQI Plan



Resources



Trainings



# CQI PLANS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



**CQI Plan** – Documentation of clear procedures and tools that guide consistent improvement and align staff efforts.



**Resources** – Tools that define responsibilities and provide the time and support needed to carry out CQI practices.



**Training** – Resources that build data literacy, process improvement methods, and facilitation skills to empower inclusive CQI participation.



# CQI PLAN OUTLINE

1. Introduction and Philosophy
2. Stakeholder Involvement
3. Structure
4. Model of Change/Quality Improvement Methodology
5. The Process
6. Measures
  - Impact, quality, management/operations, external review processes



**CQI Plans Policies &  
Procedures**

# MENTIMETER ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY



# IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

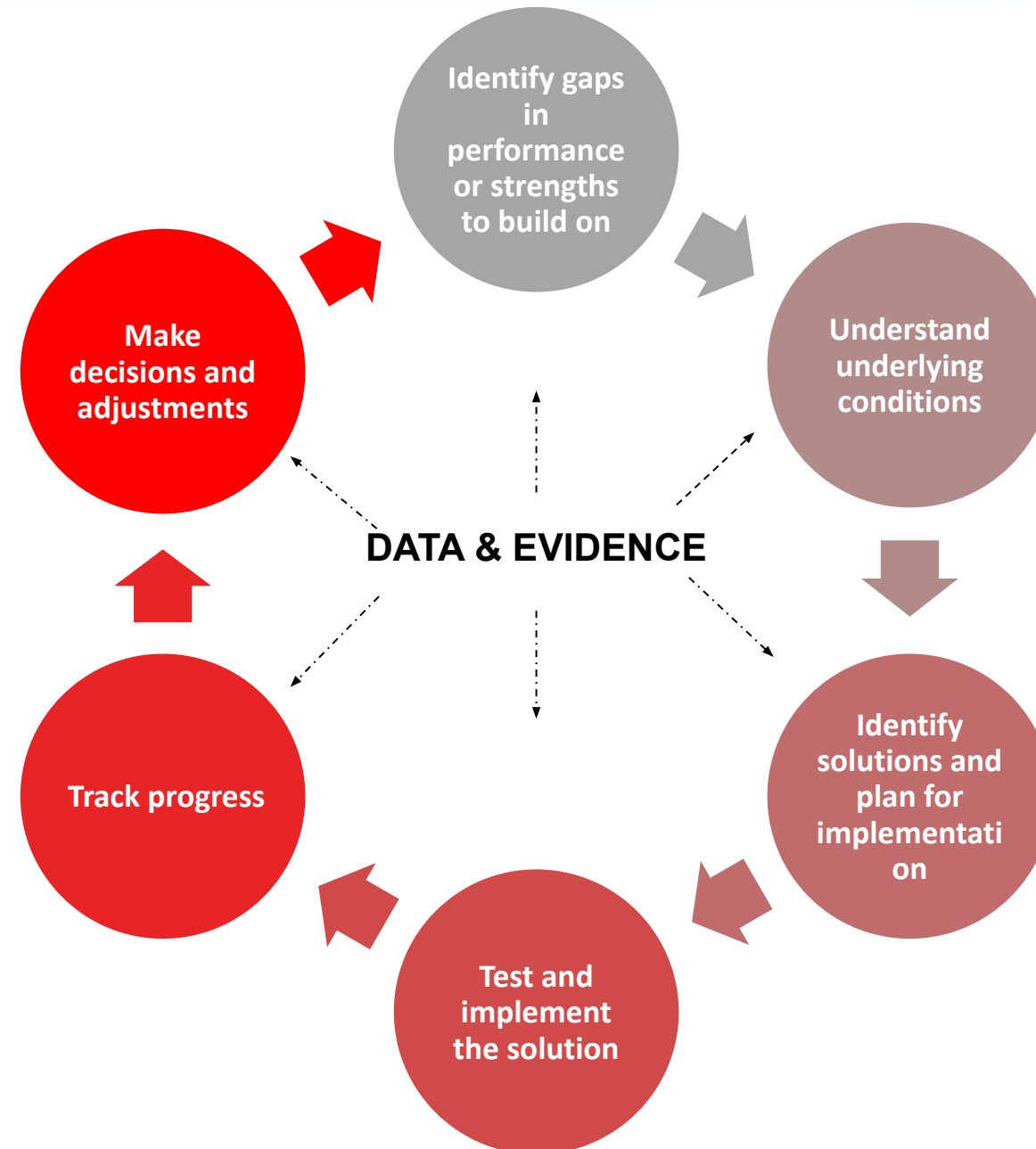
To improve outcomes for children and families, agencies need a structured approach to assess and strengthen practices. This requires incorporating diverse perspectives and using evidence to identify root causes, design solutions, and evaluate effectiveness.



# BASIC DEMANDS OF AN IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

## Quality Improvement Methods & Approaches

- ✓ Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)
- ✓ Define-Measure-Analyze-Improve-Control (DMAIC)
- ✓ Results Based Accountability (RBA)
- ✓ LEAN Six Sigma
- ✓ 4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX)
- ✓ Total quality Management (TQM)
- ✓ Data Driven Decision-Making (DDDM)





**Improvement Cycle**

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# QUESTIONS



# RESOURCES

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CQI brief, rubric, and directional  
guide.

**[tinyurl.com/CQIBrief](https://tinyurl.com/CQIBrief)**



Additional resources and action  
planning guide.

**[tinyurl.com/CQIResources](https://tinyurl.com/CQIResources)**



THANK YOU