Delivering on the promise of high-quality early education requires delivering on high-quality facilities.
INVESTMENTS

Research and Advocacy
Low facility quality and limited supply are endemic problems, but the research on these problems is limited. Lack of data helps to perpetuate the status quo. Additional research can inform advocacy to make the child care facilities problem tangible to politicians, funders, and families.

Political Support
Investment in educational facilities requires substantial political backing because it is perhaps the most capital-intensive piece of the quality puzzle. This is in addition to dimensions more commonly associated with program quality, such as curriculum, pedagogy, staff-child ratios, and teacher training.

Funding Availability
The Low Income Investment Fund estimates that at least $10 billion—twice the size of the current federal Child Care and Development Block Grant—is needed nationwide to upgrade facilities to a standard that better promotes learning. Community Development Financial Institutions like LIIF, with experience in early childhood facilities finance, can suggest and guide implementation of funding programs that effectively leverage both public and private capital.

Business Management Expertise
Business technical assistance training for child care business owners—in topics such as financial and facilities planning, human resources, and marketing—will strengthen the operations of child care businesses, helping these businesses become more efficient and effective. Organizations potentially well-suited to partner to provide this training include Community Development Financial Institutions with early childhood facilities experience, the Small Business Administration, and colleges and universities with early childhood education programs.

Real Estate Development Expertise
Real estate development technical assistance training for child care business owners or staff will bolster the execution of child care center renovation and construction projects. Community Development Financial Institutions are key providers of this type of technical assistance. Additionally, continuing education opportunities for construction industry professionals will help to disseminate the unique expertise required to design and develop high-quality early childhood facilities.
Sustained support in the five investments can transform makeshift spaces into high-quality facilities.
SOCIETAL OUTCOMES

Children’s Learning and School Readiness
High quality pre-Kindergarten programs teach children critical knowledge and skills that improve their readiness to succeed in Kindergarten and beyond.

Criminal Justice
High-quality early care and education for low-income children can dramatically improve children’s life outcomes and deliver a 7 to 10 percent annual return on investment to society, primarily from cost savings to the criminal justice system.

Public Health
High quality early care and education has been shown to reduce the prevalence of metabolic syndrome in low-income individuals. Metabolic syndrome is associated with greater risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.

Employee Productivity
Family-friendly workplaces, including those with employer-sponsored child care, have been associated with benefits including increased productivity and retention, while absenteeism resulting from child care issues costs businesses nearly two full work weeks per parent each year.

Gender Equity
Access to high-quality child care has been shown to support women’s participation in the labor force, thus furthering gender equity and bolstering family income.