

# Adding a program evaluation lens to retrospective analysis

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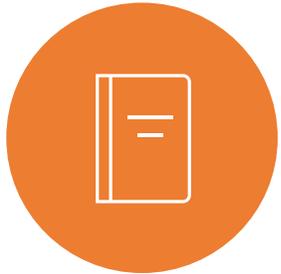


# Background

- Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 ([Evidence Act](#)) is bipartisan, bicameral legislation passed by the 115th Congress and signed on January 14, 2019.
- Provides a federal framework for agencies to work with stakeholders to promote a data-driven culture of evidence-building, evaluation use, continuous learning, and decision making using the best available evidence.
- Presidential Memorandum on [scientific integrity and evidence-based policymaking](#), affirms the Biden Administration's commitment to the Evidence Act. (Section 5)



# Agency deliverables



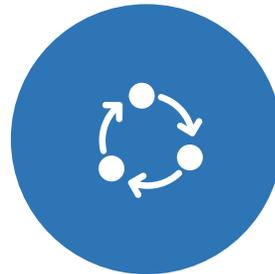
Agency Learning Agenda  
(EPA published 03/28/2022)



Capacity Assessment  
(EPA published 03/28/2022)



Annual Evaluation Plan  
(EPA will publish 04/04/2022)



Evaluation policy  
(signed 03/25/2022, posted soon)

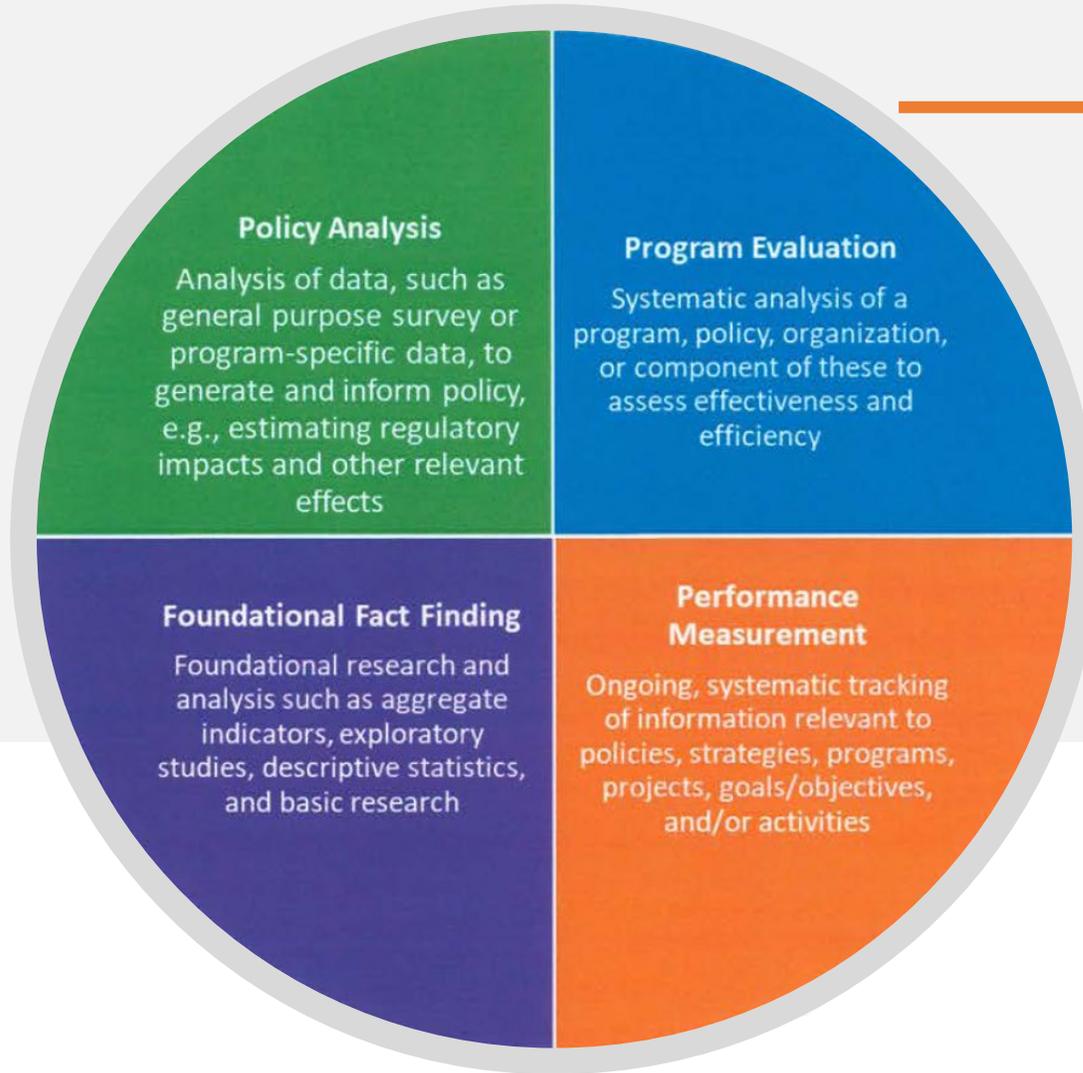


## Evidence Act expectations

- Improve day-to-day operations, program design, and policy outcomes
- Build agency infrastructure for program evaluation
- Produce data, share data, and use data
- Engage internal and external stakeholders in a cycle of learning
  - Build and advance an agency culture of evidence-building
  - Involve academics and other government researchers



# Components of Evidence

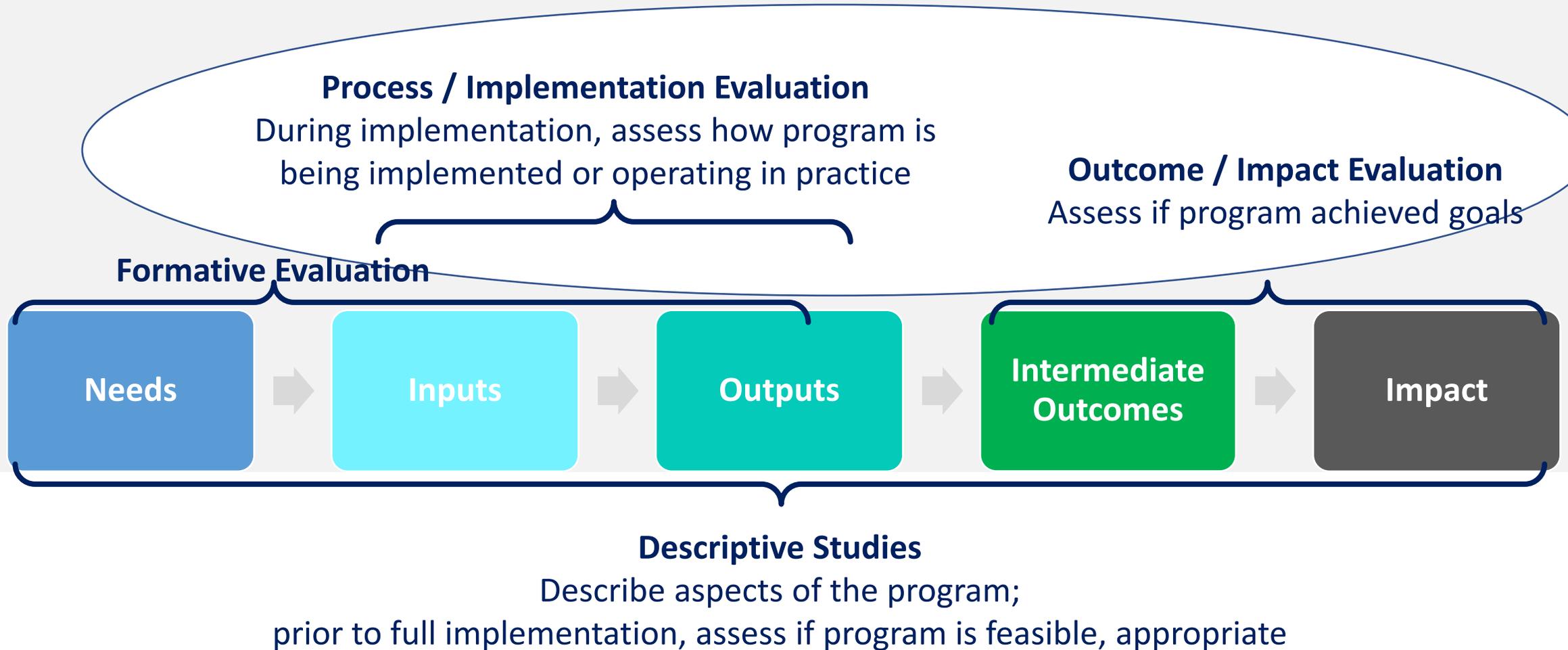


## Evaluation

“Systematic analysis of a program, policy, organization, or component of these to assess effectiveness and efficiency.”



# Where evaluation has a retrospective lens



Source: OMB M-20-12 (2020); CNCS. "How to Develop the Right Research Questions for Program Evaluation."

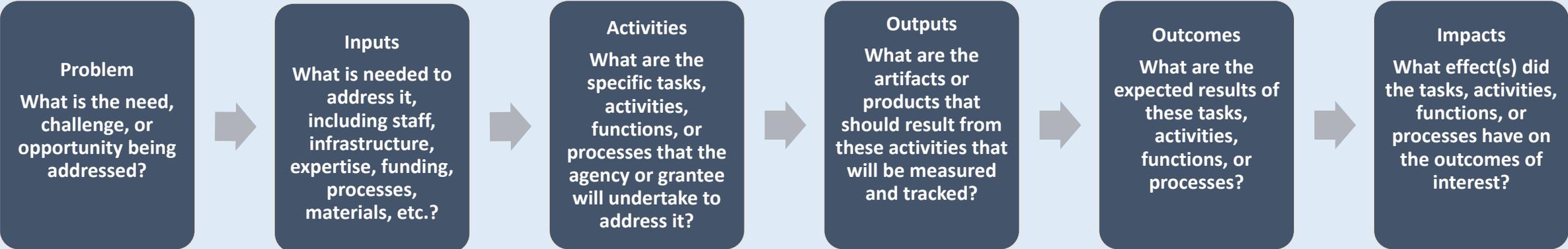


# Grappling with methodological challenges

- Inform new regulation with ex post learning about program and policy outcomes
- Plan for retrospective review at outset, e.g., rethink regulatory data schema to better anticipate ex post evaluation
- Design rules to allow natural experiments, and to allow for the intentional exploration of the relationship between programmatic mechanisms and regulatory outcomes
- Lay out theory of change
- Determine proper scope
- Measure causal relationship

# Equity and the Evaluation Lifecycle

## LOGIC MODEL



### Awareness

### Access and Distribution

### Outputs and Quality

### Outcomes and Impact

How do people become aware of the issue? Who frames the need or the challenge to be addressed?

Who has access to benefits? How are they designed, allocated, and distributed? How is eligibility defined?

## EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Who participates and who delivers the activities? How is the quality and consistency of the experience ensured?

Who benefits more or less? Were there unintended adverse consequences?

## ENGAGEMENT

Who was engaged and represented in each step of the process?

What did this engagement look like?

Where were opportunities for feedback loops?





# Appendix



# Relevant OMB guidance

- [OMB M-21-27, Evidence-Based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans](#)
  - This is follow-on guidance to the [January 27, 2021 Presidential Memorandum](#) on *Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking*.
- [OMB M-20-12, Phase 4 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Program Evaluation Standards and Practices](#)
  - [Practice 3: Establish, Implement, and Widely Disseminate an Agency Evaluation Policy](#)
  - [Evaluation Standards \(One-Pager Quick Reference\)](#)
  - [Evaluation Practices \(One-Pager Quick Reference\)](#)
  - [FAQs on OMB M-20-12](#)
- [OMB M-19-23, Phase 1 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Learning Agendas, Personnel, and Planning Guidance](#)
- [OMB M-14-06, Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines for Federal Departments and Agencies that Administer United States Foreign Assistance](#)