



What do you mean by “evidence” and why should I care? Using evaluation & other data to improve your programs

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"My question is: Are we making an impact?"

Evaluation Is a Critical Agency Function? Really?

“Agencies should **use evaluation as a critical tool to learn and improve**, rather than more narrowly to demonstrate whether something works or not.

...

An orientation toward evaluation that **acknowledges failure and emphasizes learning and continuous improvement is essential** to meet the vision of an evidence-based government.”

OMB Memo M-21-27, June 2021

Evidence-Based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/M-21-27.pdf>

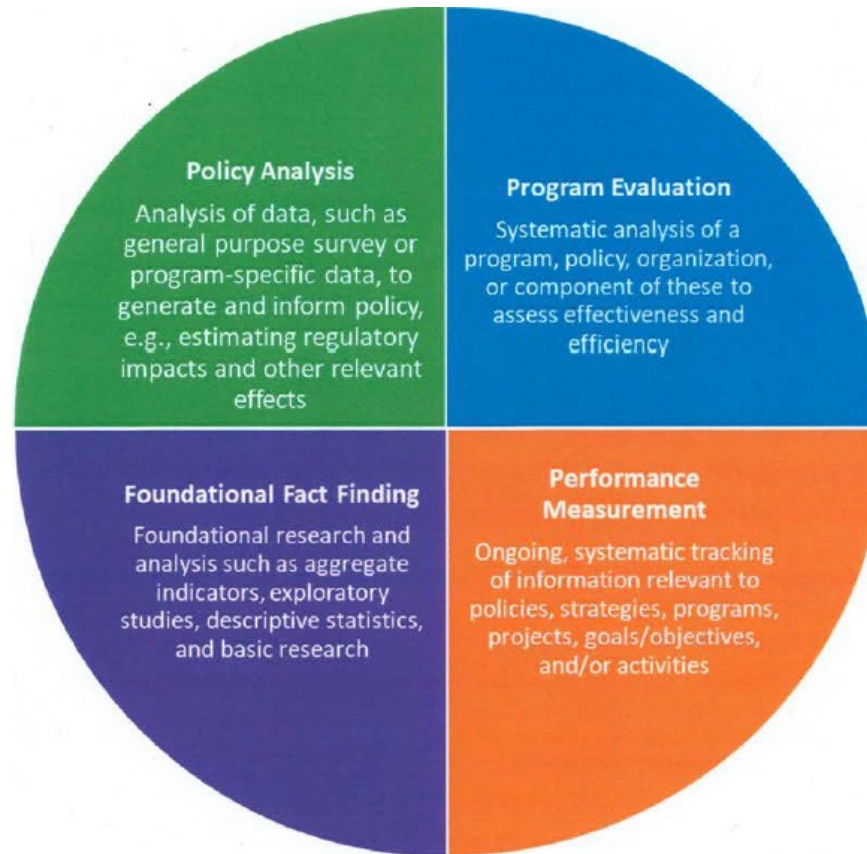
What is Evaluation?

An assessment using **systematic data collection and analysis** of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their **effectiveness and efficiency**

Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018

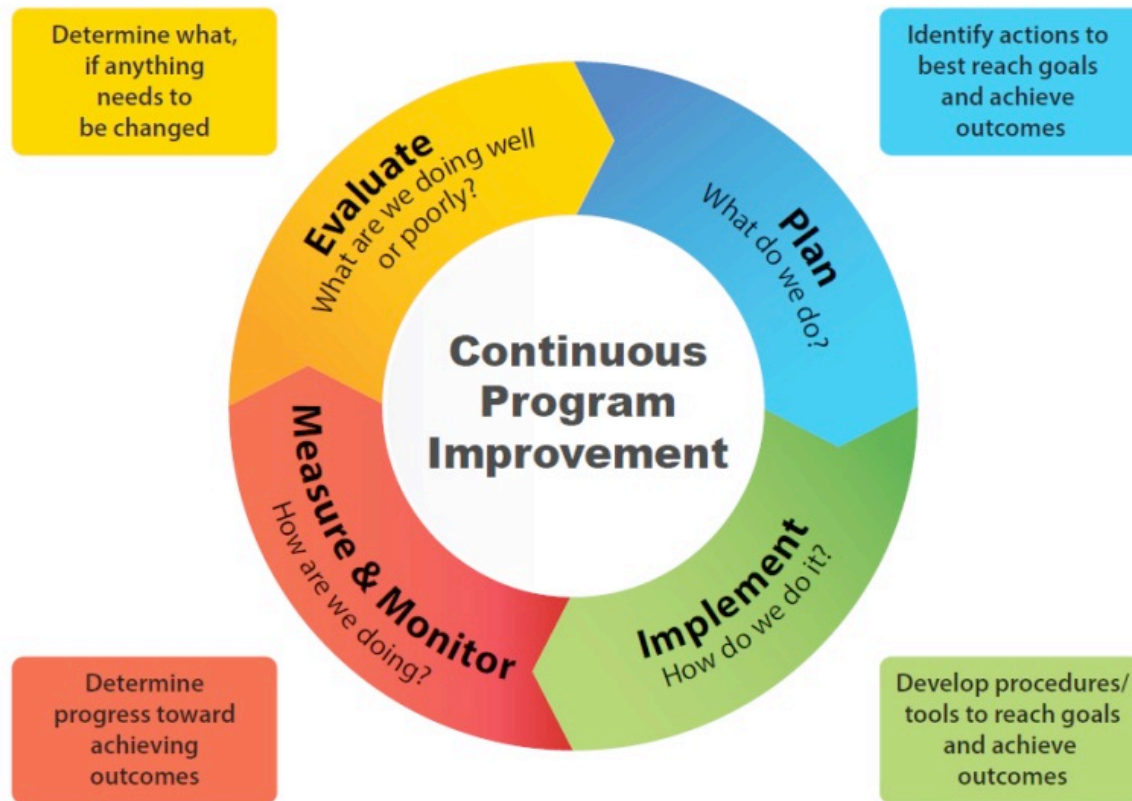
Evidence Act § 101(e)(4)(B) (citing 5 U.S.C. § 311(3))

What do we mean by “evidence”?



Program and Evaluation must be integrated...

Continuous Program Improvement cycle



Kidder & Chapel, 2018

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0033354918778034>

CDC Framework for Evaluation in Public Health



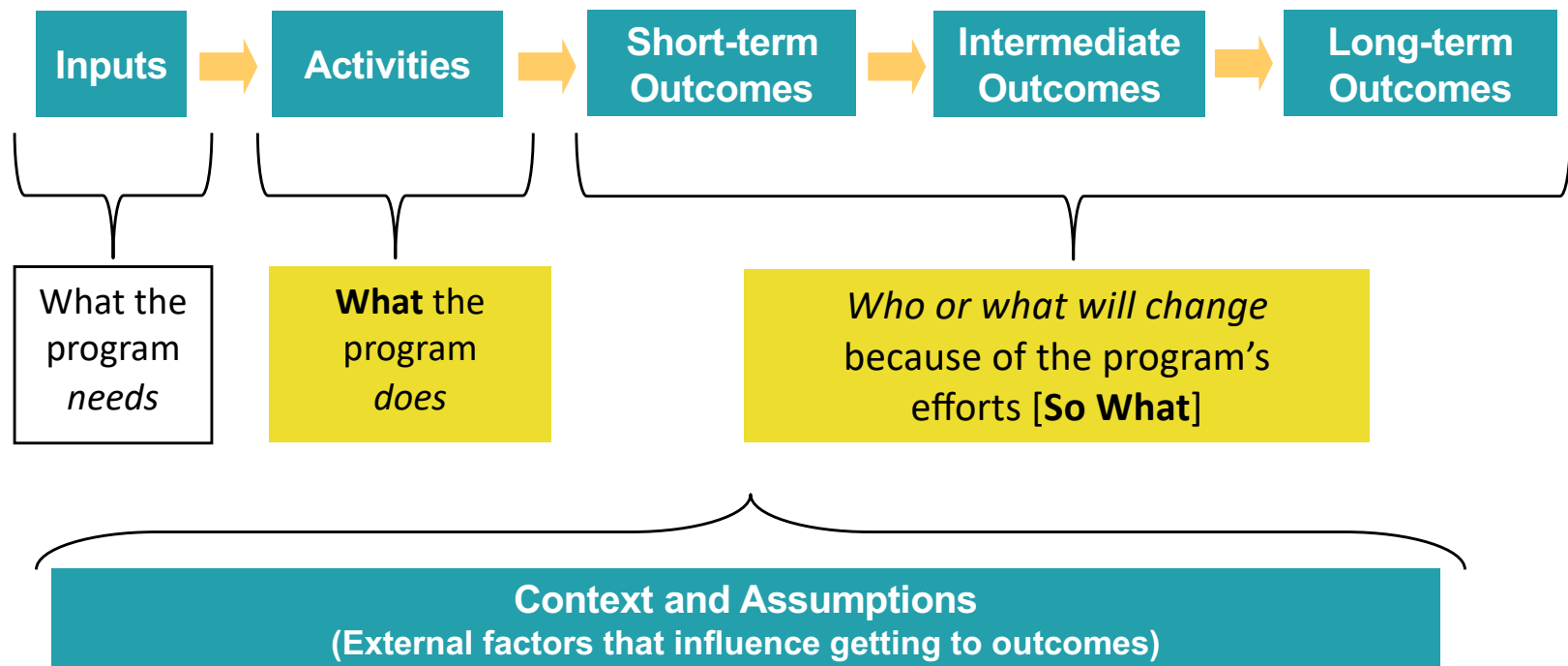
Steps

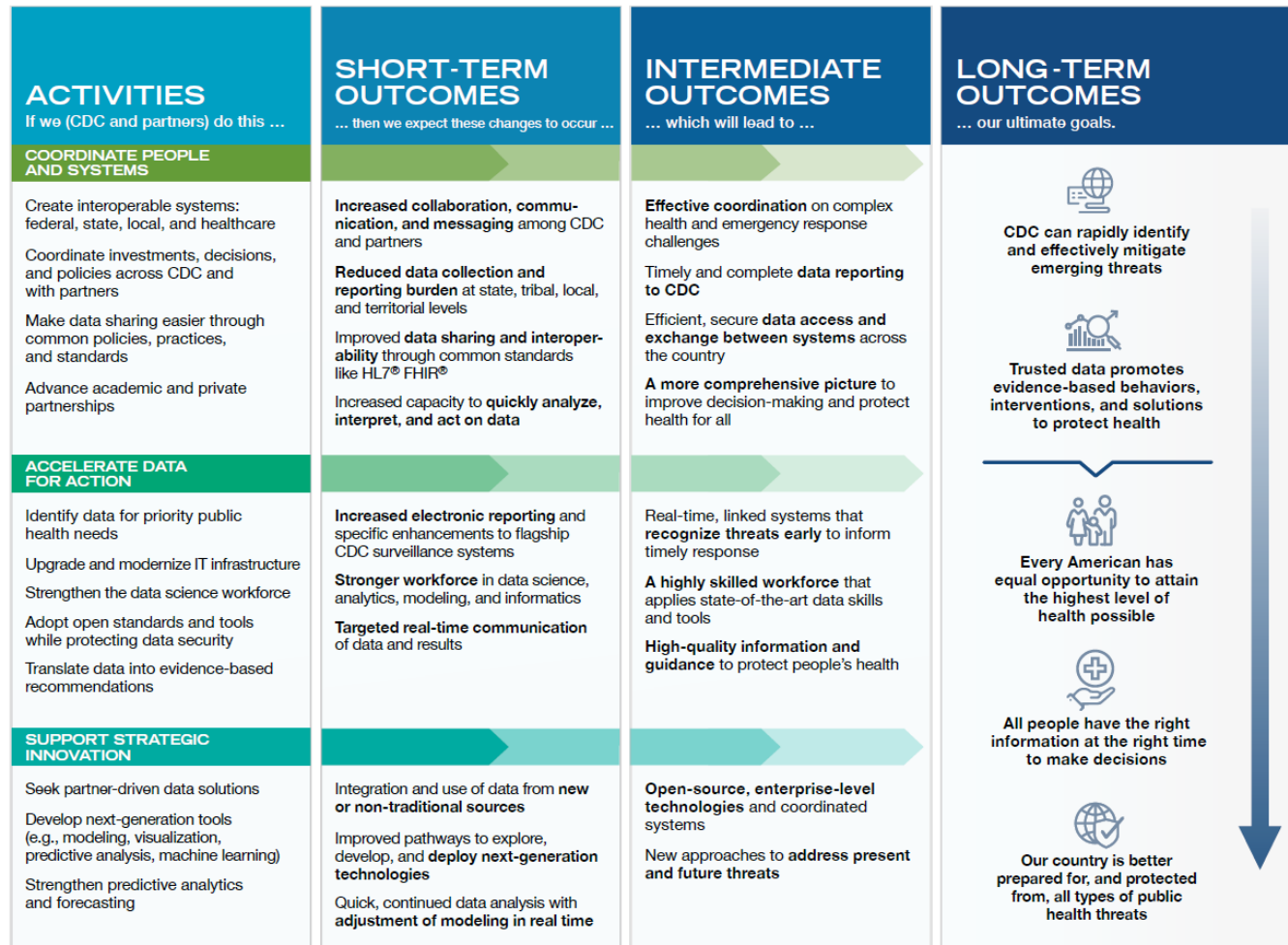
1. **Engage stakeholders**: Collaborate with key groups who need to be involved for it to make a difference
2. **Describe the program**: Draw a complete picture of the program – activities and intended outcomes
3. **Focus the evaluation**: Decide key evaluation questions
4. **Gather credible evidence**: Determine measures/indicators, choose and implement data collection methods
5. **Justify conclusions**: Review and interpret data/evidence to determine success or failure
6. **Use lessons learned**: Use evaluation results for program improvement and decision making

Standards

- **Utility**: Program stakeholders find evaluation processes and products valuable in meeting their needs
- **Feasibility**: Increase evaluation effectiveness and efficiency
- **Propriety**: Support what is proper, fair, legal, right and just in evaluations
- **Accuracy**: Increase dependability and truthfulness of evaluation representations

Describing the Program Using a Roadmap/Logic Model





What does this mean in practice?

- Evidence-building functions and activities are included in program and policy design from the beginning, rather than as an afterthought.
- Taken together, evidence-building activities **strengthen ability to use data for improved decision-making** and to invest in what works

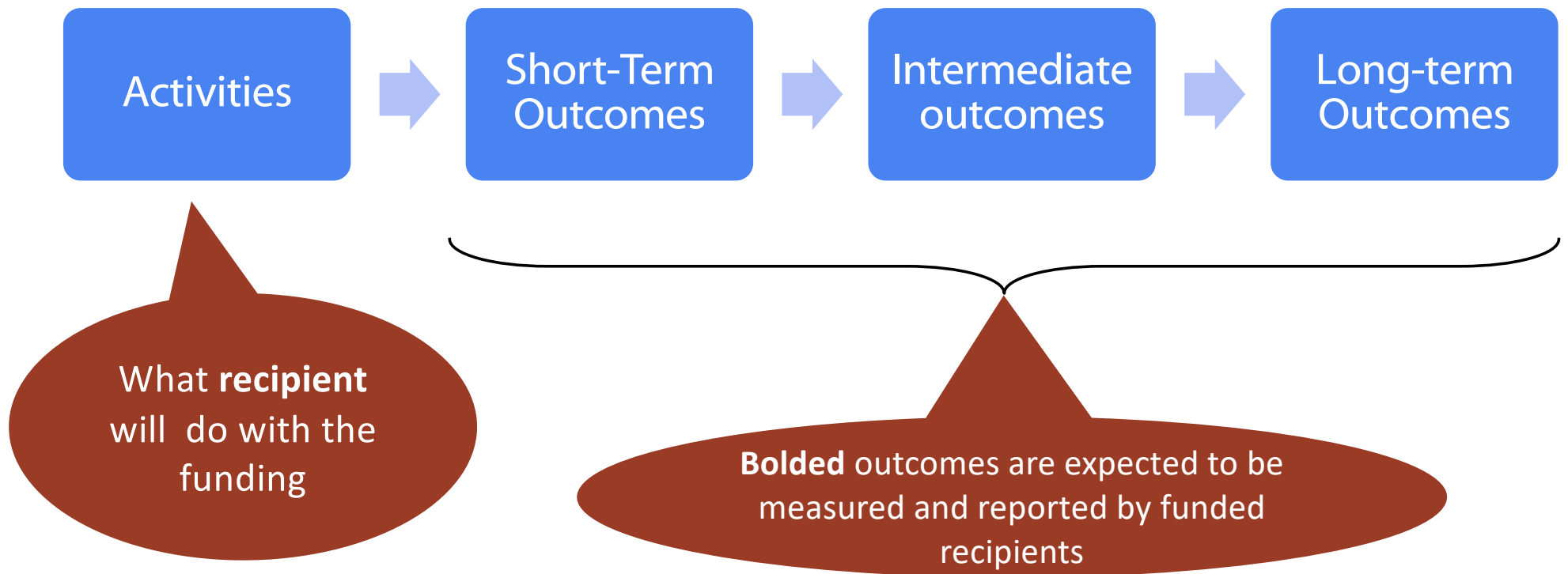


Data and evidence in CDC funded programs: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- NOFO: Announcement of funding availability and inviting applications.
- Includes information on eligibility, submission requirements, and evaluation criteria.
- Key components include activities, outcomes, monitoring and evaluation



Simplified logic model in NOFO




Logic Model frames NOFO sections

NOFO logic model serves as the roadmap/outline and frames the narrative sections that follow including:

- Purpose
- Strategies and Activities
- Outcomes
- Work Plan
- Evaluation and Performance Measurement (aka M&E)



Evaluation & Performance Measurement Section

- Performance measures that recipients collect, track, and report to CDC
 - **Process measures** track implementation of recipient strategies and activities
 - **Outcome measures** for the bolded period of performance outcomes in logic model to track progress toward achieving expected effects or changes
 - Evaluation studies conducted by CDC, required for recipients, or topics recipients may choose to conduct with the funding
 - How CDC and/or recipients will use evaluation and performance measures data
 - Demonstrate achieving NOFO outcomes, continuous program improvement, highlight successes that could be scaled up, etc.
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Do you have any other fun reading materials?

- [Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018](#)

OMB Memos:

- [OMB M-19-23, July 2019: Phase 1 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Learning Agendas, Personnel, and Planning Guidance](#)
- [OMB Memo M-20-12, March 2020: Phase 4 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Program Evaluation Standards and Practices](#)
- [OMB Memo M-21-27, June 2021: Evidence-Based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans](#)

HHS documents:

- [HHS Evidence-building Plan: FY2023-2026](#)
- [HHS Capacity Assessment: FY 2023-2026](#)
- [HHS Evaluation Plan 2024](#)
- [Evaluation Policy for the Department of Health and Human Services](#)

[Evaluation.gov](#)

- [Evaluation.gov | Celebrating Five Years of the Evidence Act](#)

Thank you!

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For more information, contact CDC
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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

