Critical Components of Evaluation

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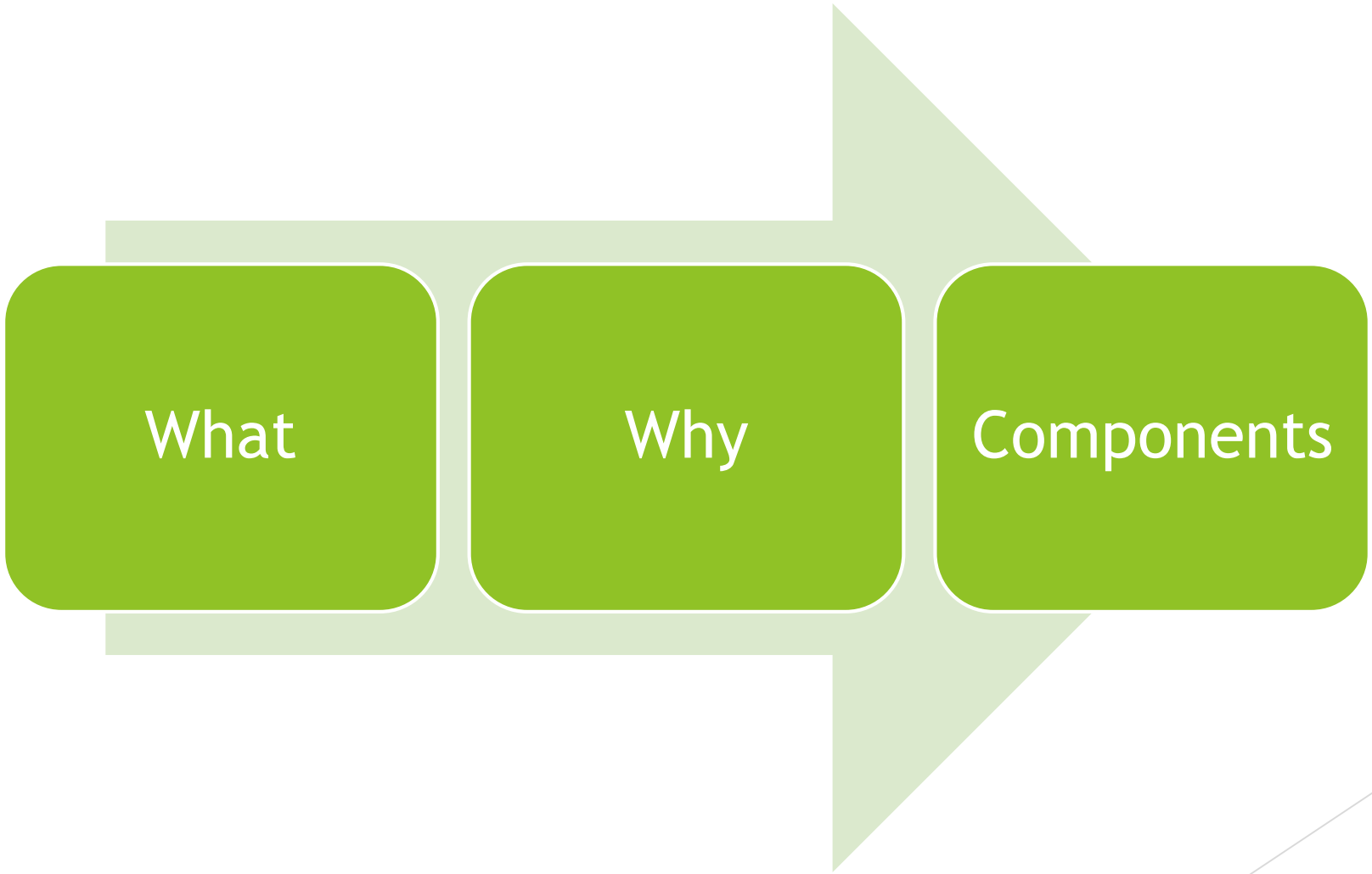
Evaluation Workshop: Demonstrating Value and Outcomes

July 22, 2014

Areas of Focus – Laying the Foundation



Definition: Program Evaluation

A systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency.

Don’t get confused with “program”

Assessments
Marketing
Media Campaigns
Provision of Services
Training
Research Projects
Public Policies
Workshops
Activities
Technical Assistance
Communications

Evaluation vs. Research vs. Assessment vs. Surveillance

Purpose

- Evaluation – Provide timely and constructive information for decision-making about particular programs, facilitate program development, improve something
- Research – Advance knowledge and theory, prove something
- Assessment – Determine individual or group performance by examining skill level
- Surveillance – Continuous monitoring or data collection over time (e.g., deaths, behaviors)

What about the numbers?

Common Misconception

- Evaluation is all about numbers or measuring in some numeric way the value or outcomes of effort – NOT TRUE

Instead

- Evaluation is about words, stories, anecdotes, and numbers.

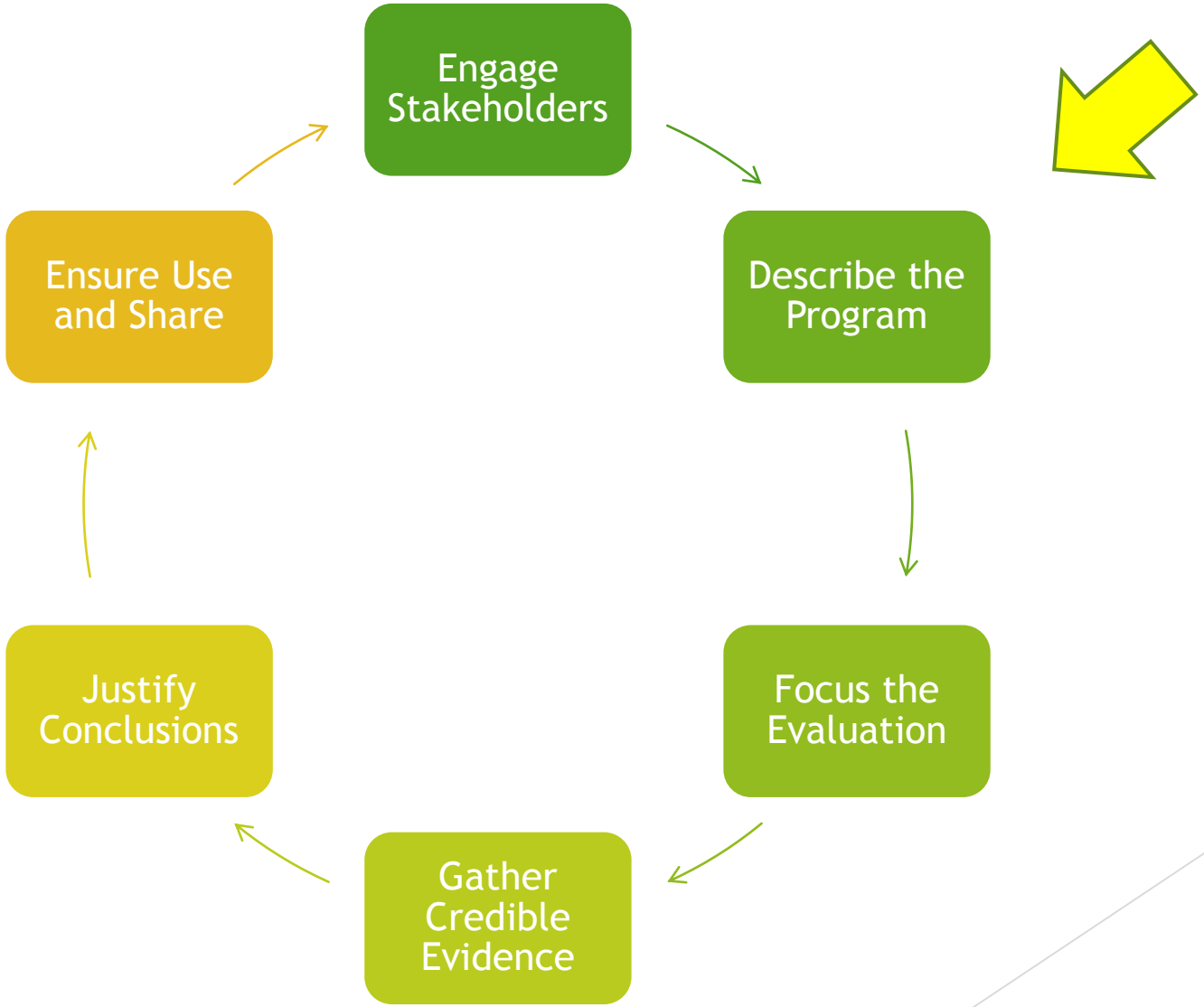
Therefore

- Evaluation = qualitative and quantitative methods

Why Flex and SORH Program Evaluations?

- Demonstrate Program Effectiveness
- Better manage limited resources
- Document and share program accomplishments
- Improve program implementation and effectiveness
- Increase stakeholder engagement and understanding
- Increase or maintain a sense of satisfaction – both internal and external
- Program sustainability and/or development/expansion
- Fulfill mission and work towards vision
- Document and share to support or foster program implementation

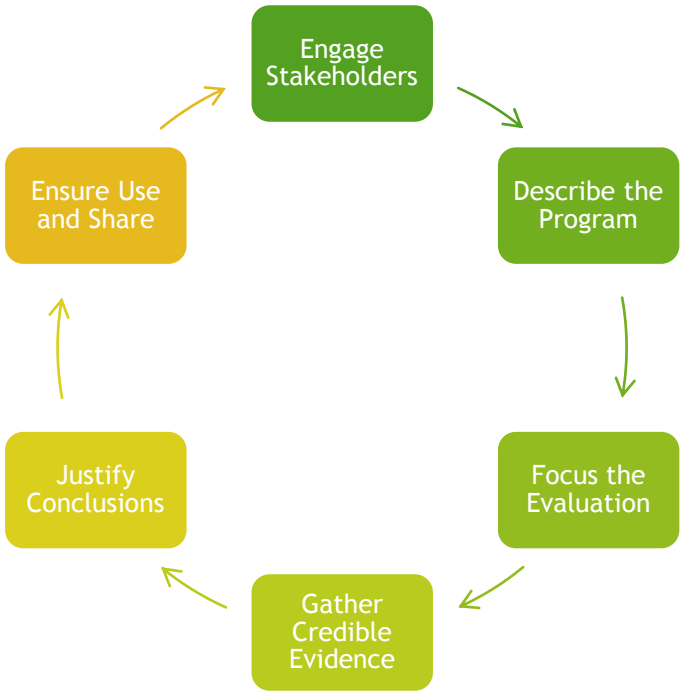
Evaluation Design: Framework



Evaluation Design: Framework

Step 1: Engage Stakeholders

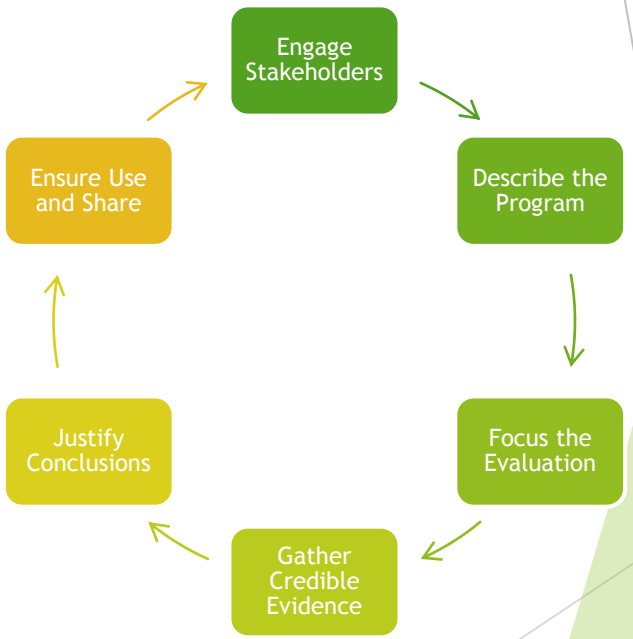
- Who?
  - Who is affected
  - Who is involved in program operations
  - Who will use evaluation?
- Why?
  - Credibility
  - Ease of implementation
  - Can advocate for change
  - Funding/authorization



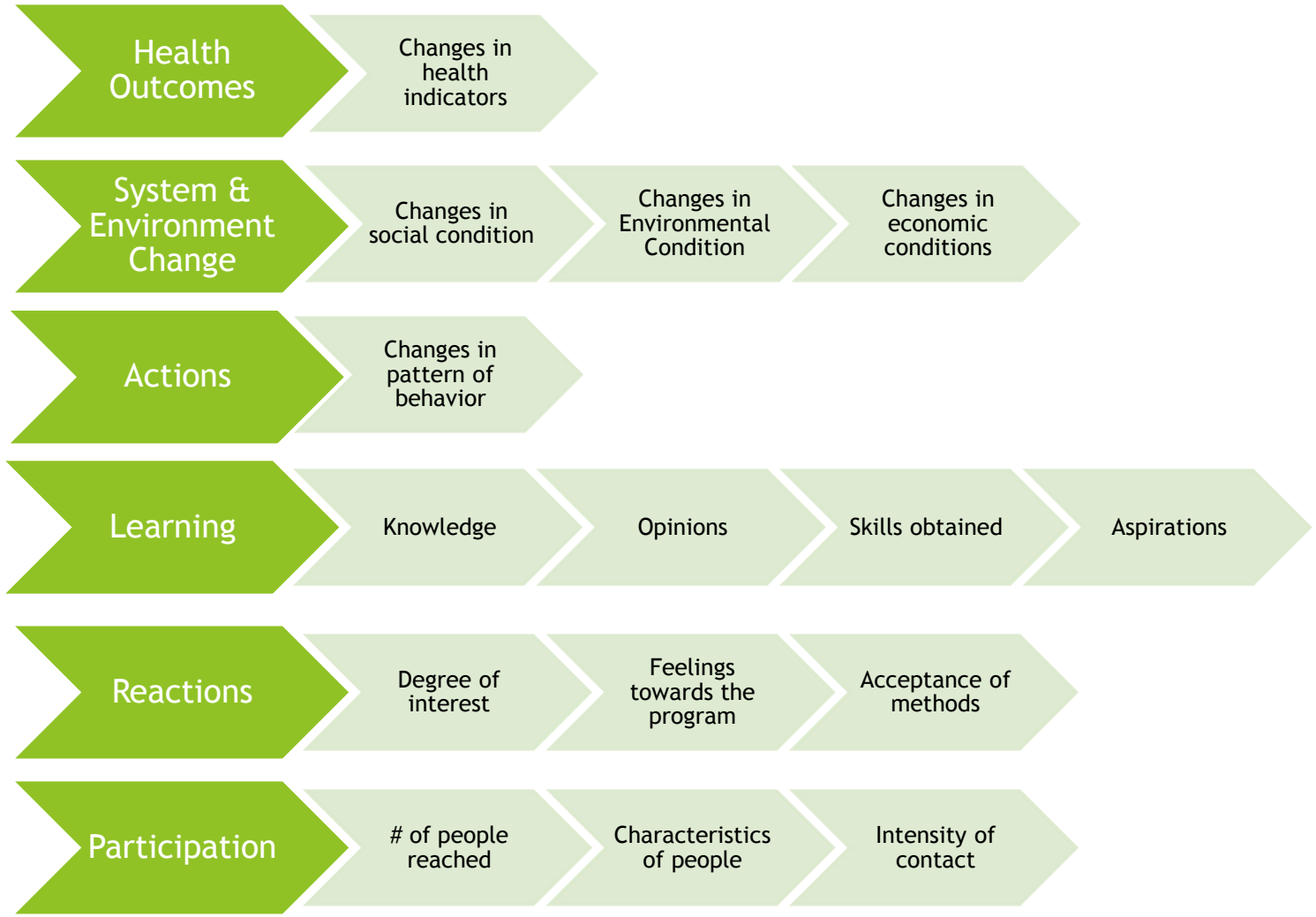
Evaluation Design: Framework

Step 2: Describe the Program (not the eval)

- Components
  - Need
  - Targets
  - Outcomes
  - Activities
  - Outputs
  - Inputs
  - Relationship of inputs and outputs



Logic Model?



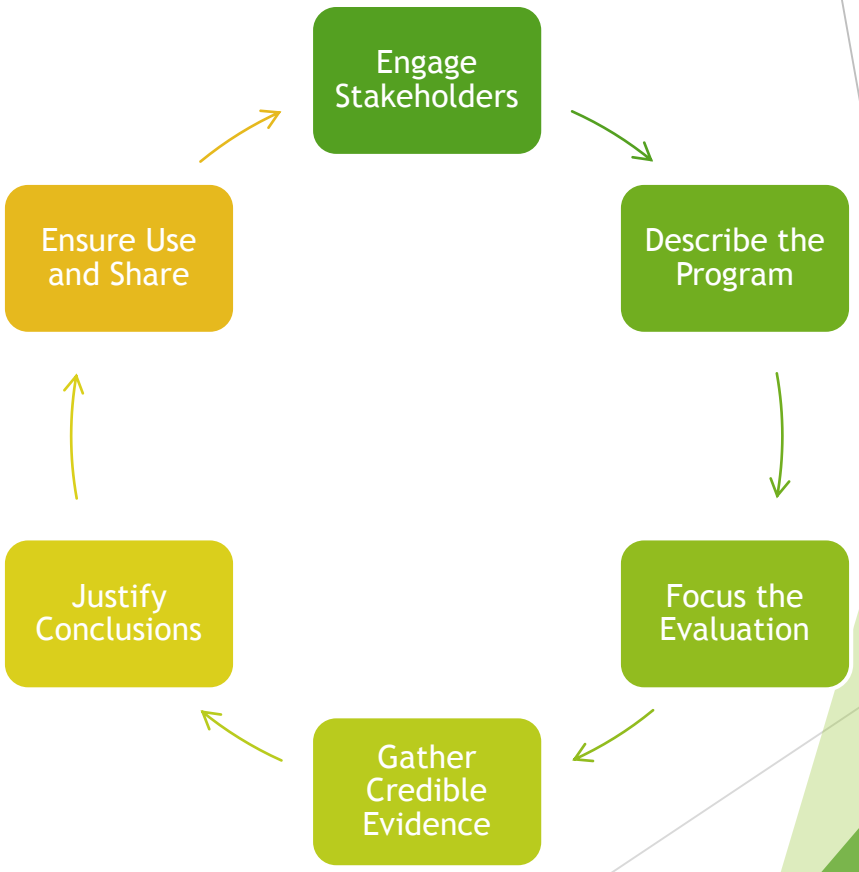
Outcomes: Changes in someone or something (other than the program or its staff)

Hierarchy of Effects (Bennett and Rockwell, 1995)

Evaluation Design: Framework

Step 3: Focus the Evaluation

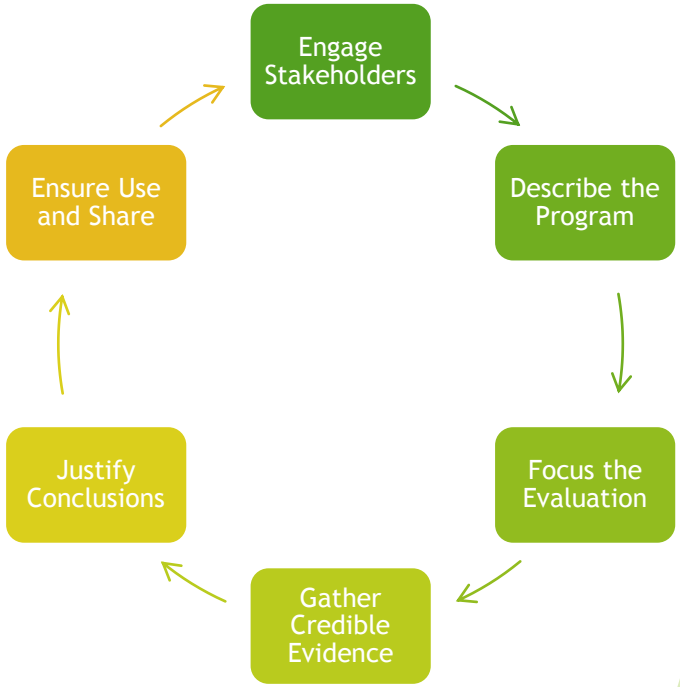
- What are the important questions?
- What is the right design?



Evaluation Design: Framework

Step 4: Gather Credible Evidence

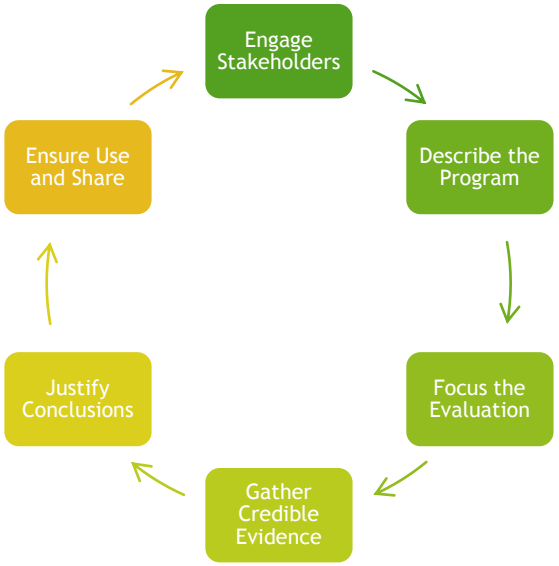
- Selecting indicators
- Identify data collection methods



Evaluation Design: Framework

Step 5: Justify Conclusions

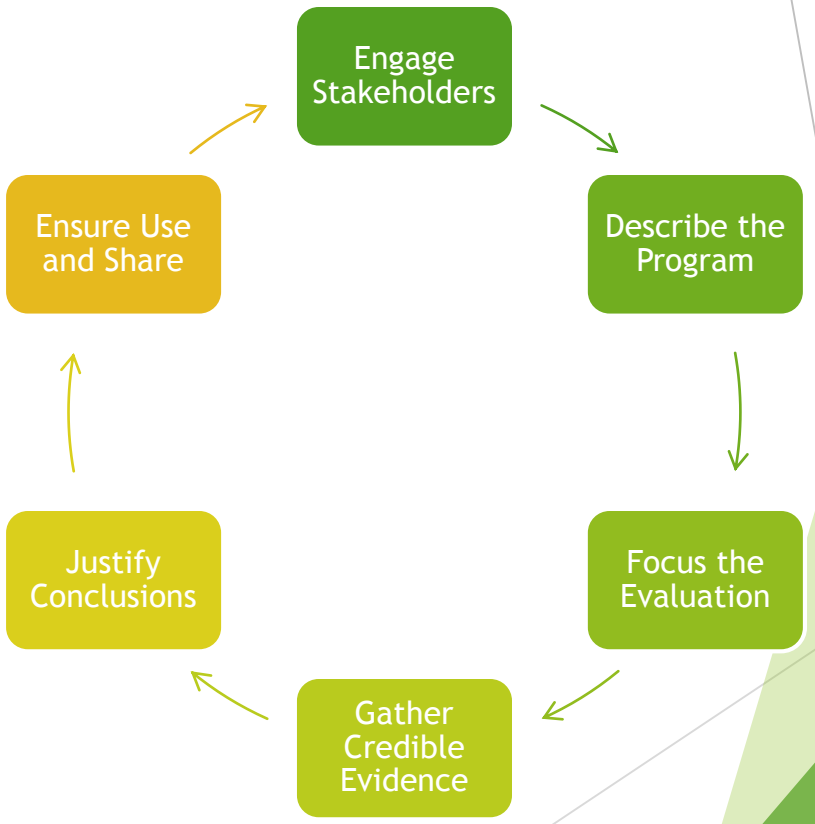
- Enter data
- Tabulate data
- Analyze
- Make comparisons
- Interpret and present



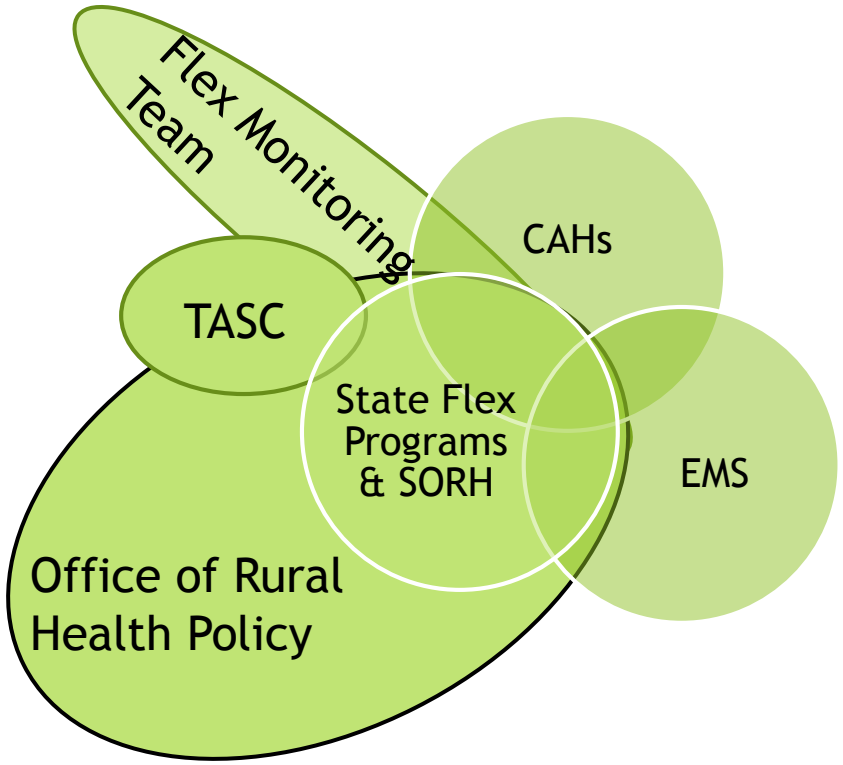
Evaluation Design: Framework

Step 6: Ensure Use and Share Lessons Learned

- Internal
- External



What about PIMS?



What about the measures listed in the Flex Program Guidance?

Resources:
TASC evaluation toolkit
Flex Monitoring Team Website

Evaluation Quiz
http://evaluation.umn.edu/evaluationland/

Thank You!

Questions?

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Sources

- CDC, http://www.cdc.gov
- Community Interventions for Health, http://www.oxha.org/cih_manual/index.php/process-evaluation
- Queensland Community Engagement Guide, http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/evaluating/evaluation-framework-4.html
- University of Washington, Office of Educational Assessment http://www.washington.edu/oea/services/research/program_eval/faq.html