Evaluation Resources: MSU Extension

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Extending knowledge. Changing lives.

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What is Mississippi State University Extension?

- "Taking the university to the people"
- Provides research-based information, educational programs, and technology transfer focused on issues and needs of the people of Mississippi, enabling them to make informed decisions about their economic, social, and cultural well-being
  - Agriculture and natural resources
  - Family and consumer education
  - Enterprise and community resource development
  - 4-H youth development

Extension Program & Staff Development

- PSD faculty support MSU Extension professionals with
  - Planning and needs assessment
  - Program development and enhancement
  - Evaluation and accountability
  - Performance measurement
  - Professional learning and development
- Through training and consultation, resource development, and impact reporting
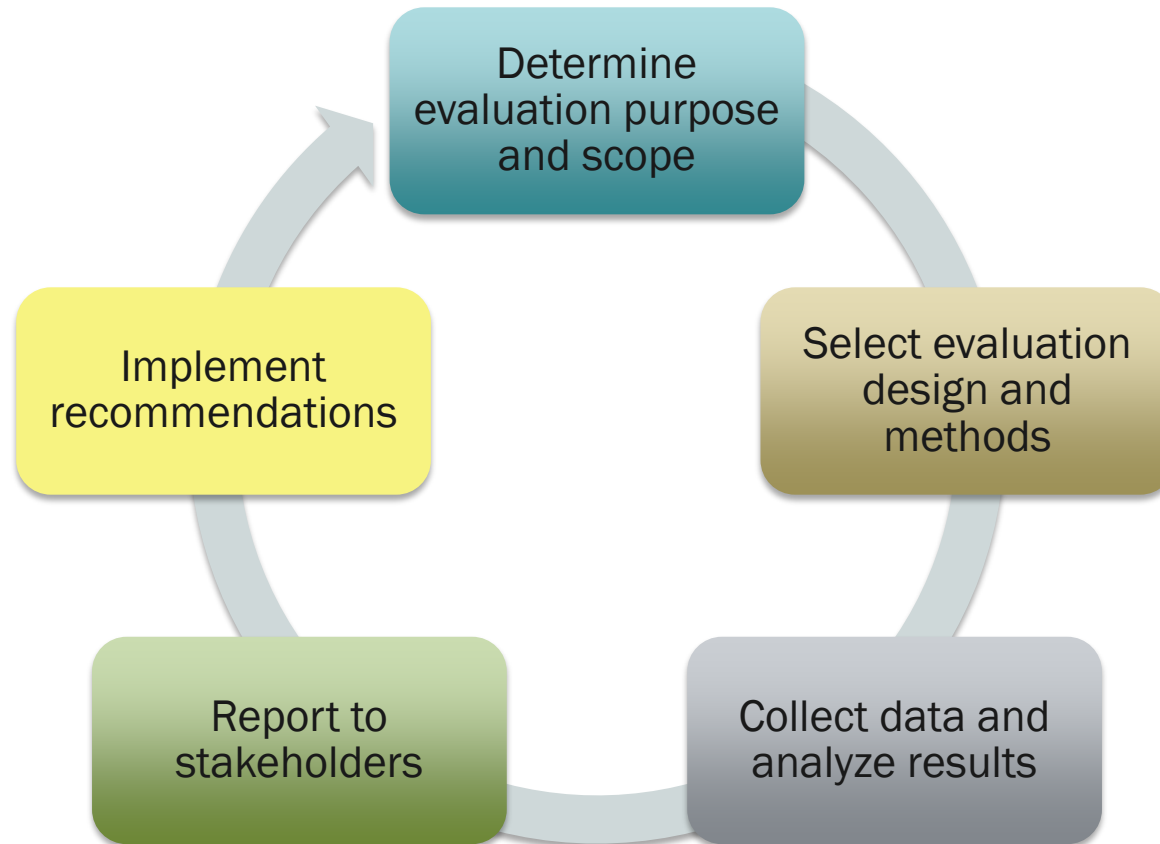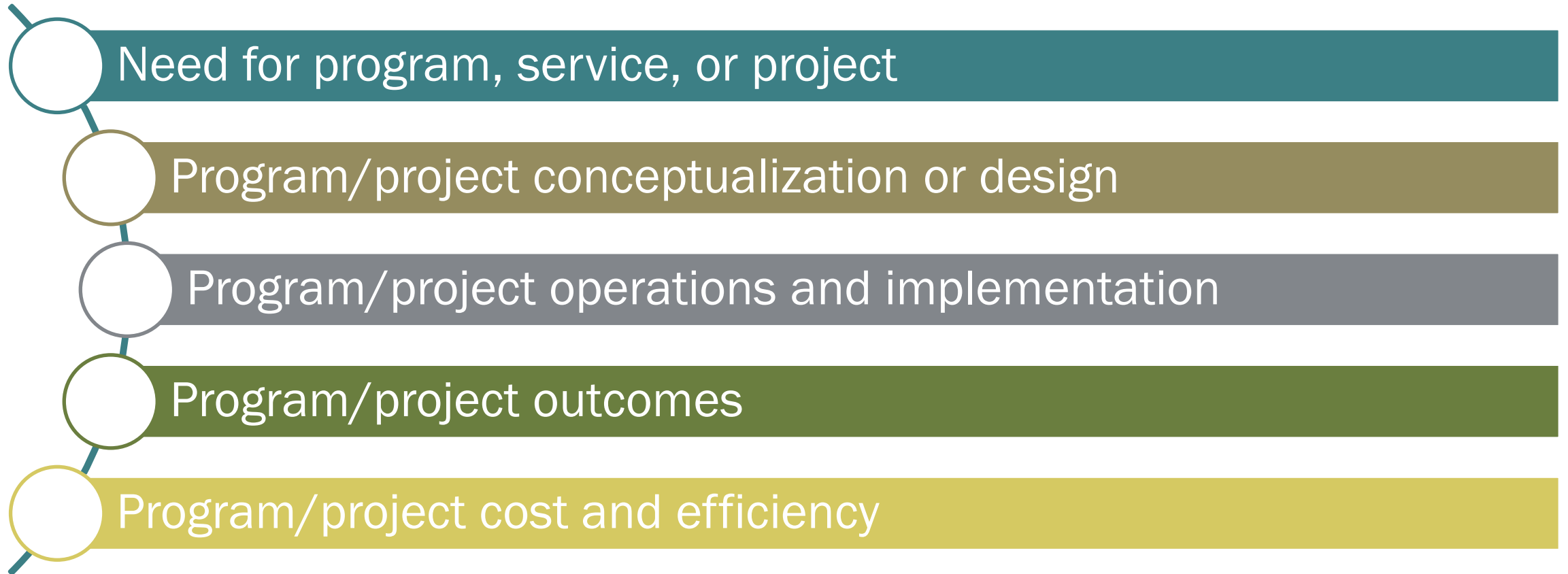
About us...

My Role

- Extension Professor / Evaluation Specialist
- Design and implement evaluations
- Extension state and federal accountability reporting
- Capacity building in program planning and evaluation
- 25 years of experience
- Internal / External evaluator – USDA, CDC, NIH, NOAA, NSF

The Evaluation Process

Determine evaluation purpose and scope

Select evaluation design and methods

Collect data and analyze results

Report to stakeholders

Implement recommendations

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Evaluation Questions

- Need for program, service, or project
- Program/project conceptualization or design
- Program/project operations and implementation
- Program/project outcomes
- Program/project cost and efficiency

Adapted from Rossi, Lipsey, & Henry, 2019

Objectives: Build Toward Goal

Process Objectives

- Program/project activities and processes
- Outputs are a measure of processes and activities
- What activities are done? By whom?
- What is produced?

Outcome Objectives

- Learner (short-) & Behavioral (medium-term)
  - What do you expect participants to learn, adopt, and/or change as a result of activities carried out?
- Condition (long-term)
  - What social, economic, or environmental changes will occur as a result of behavior changes?
- Who? What? How much? When?

Writing a Purpose Statement

- Implies the type of evaluation that will be conducted
- Describes intended uses of evaluation findings

- Example:
  - The purpose of this evaluation is to understand the knowledge and skills gained by parents as they prepare to implement a new family budgeting process. This information will be used to determine areas in which additional information or skill practice is needed to ensure parents are successful.

Purpose → Evaluation Questions

- The purpose of this evaluation is to understand the knowledge and skills gained by parents as they prepare to implement a new family budgeting process. This information will be used to determine areas in which additional information or skill practice is needed to ensure parents are successful.

- Evaluation Questions
  - What knowledge did participants increase by attending the program?
  - What skills did participants gain by attending the program?

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Indicators

Address the criteria that will be used to judge the program/project

Reflect the aspects of the program/project that are most meaningful to monitor

Multiple indicators may be available

Several indicators may be needed

Process and Outcome Indicators

Process (Output) Indicator
Progress against outputs

- Evidence to show what you "did"
- How well was program/project implemented
- Whether intended audience was reached
- If program/project is of acceptable quality (satisfaction)
- The number and types of activities carried out or products developed

Outcome Indicator
Progress toward results / outcomes

- Evidence to show what you "got"
- Monitor the progress of achieving intended outcomes
- Changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, conditions
- If program/project goals were achieved

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Program planning and evaluation need to go hand in hand...

Work With Your Evaluator to...

- Decide what to evaluate (evaluation questions)
- Develop an evaluation plan
- Design, collect, and analyze evaluation data
- Report evaluation findings
- Make recommendations for the program or project (continue, expand, improve, or eliminate)

References

- CDC. (n.d.). Developing evaluation indicators. https://www.cdc.gov/std/Program/pupestd/Developing%20Evaluation%20Indicators.pdf

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- Kettner, P. M., Moroney, R. M., & Martin, L. L. (2016). Designing and managing programs: An effectiveness-based approach (5th ed.). SAGE.

- Knowlton, L. W. & Phillips, C. C. (2013). The logic model guidebook: Better strategies for great results (2nd ed.). SAGE.

- Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Henry, G. T. (2019). Evaluation: A systematic approach (8th ed.). SAGE.

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