



The Power of Data-Driven Policy Evaluation in the Federal Government

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Roadmap:

Introduction

Policy Evaluation & Its Place in the
Policymaking Process

Location of My Applied Field Experience (AFE):
U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)

General Experience and Lessons Learned

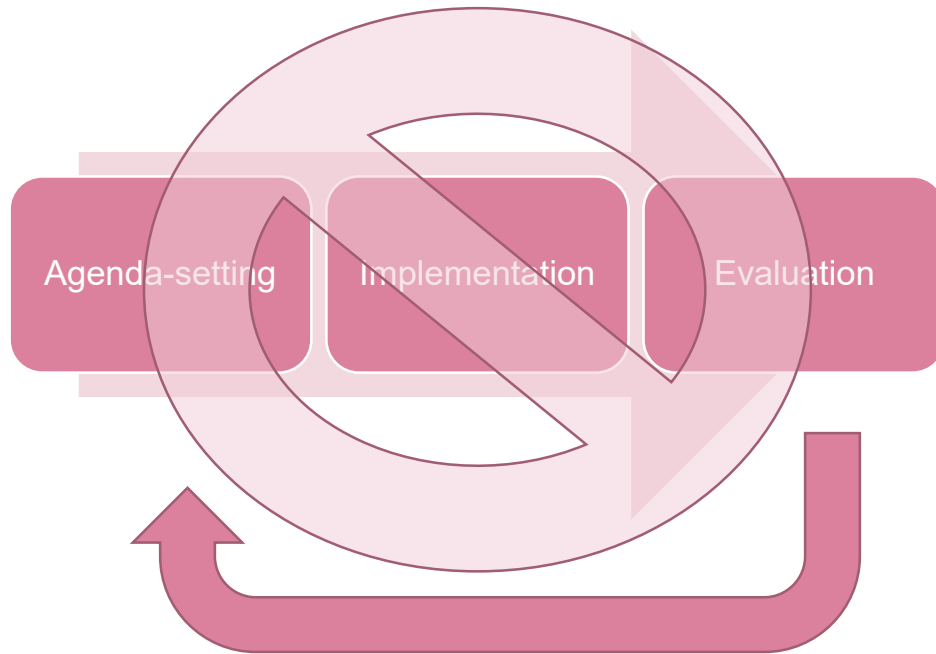


Introduction: My Spark

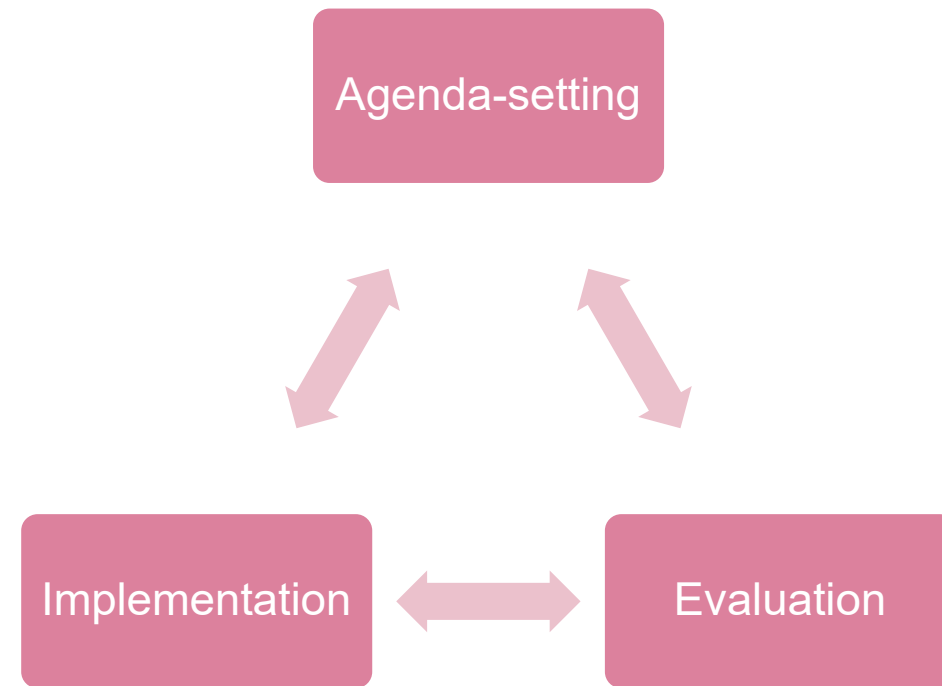


Policy Evaluation & Its Place in the Policymaking Process

Pre-AFE Understanding:



Post-AFE Understanding:



Location of My AFE: GAO



- A crucial actor in federal policy evaluation
- “For the past century, the independent, non-partisan ‘congressional watchdog’ has been overseeing how the federal government operates and spends its money—pointing out where it is doing well and where it can improve.” – GAO
- GAO’s recommendations prevented fraud and improved efficacy of about \$77.6 billion in FY2020, a return of about \$114 on every \$1 invested in GAO

General Experience & Lessons Learned: Part 1

The “GAO-Way”

- Developing the scope of the analysis
- Gathering data
- Analysts spending months analyzing data in teams to determine the story
- Potentially make recommendations to federal agencies

Rigorous process for recommendations:

- Criteria (how should it be?);
- Condition (how is it?);
- Cause (why is there a difference?); and
- Effect (what bad thing is happening because of the difference between how it should be and how it is?).

Not every GAO report has recommendations...

- ...but when they're there, everyone in the federal government pays attention.
⑩ Why? GAO's reputation for rigorous and dependable data analysis

General Experience & Lessons Learned: Part 2

