



CSREES OneSolution Initiative

Business Case / Overview

Agenda



The OneSolution Vision

The Current Reporting Environment

The Future OneSolution Environment

OneSolution Benefits and Financial Analysis

Next Steps and Q&A





The OneSolution Vision

- OneSolution - An integrated reporting strategy
 - ❑ *Ties together disparate reporting processes and systems*
 - ❑ *Simplifies reporting for CSREES staff and partners*
 - ❑ *Improves the usefulness of reporting data*
- OneSolution will fulfill three major goals:
 1. *Simplify reporting and reduce burdens for funding recipients;*
 2. *Improve the quality of accountability data, better equip the agency to meet increasing performance and budget reporting expectations, and improve AREERA compliance (particularly through development of a more structured Plan of Work); and*
 3. *Reduce staff effort required to complete reporting-related processes, allowing staff members to focus on program leadership and active, portfolio-based management.*



Why OneSolution?



Our partners have asked for it

- Land grant universities and other funding recipients have asked for streamlined reporting, to allow staff and faculty to focus more on research, education, and extension activities
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Increased focus on outcomes and integration of program activities with strategic planning

- Laws such as AREERA, and federal initiatives focused on grants management and performance measurement, have increased the attention CSREES must put on program outcomes and how the activities CSREES funds support the agency's strategic goals.
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Need for improved access to, and quality of, reporting data

- CSREES' national program leaders and other staff need improved access to accurate, more useful data in order to better manage their portfolios of CSREES-funded activities.



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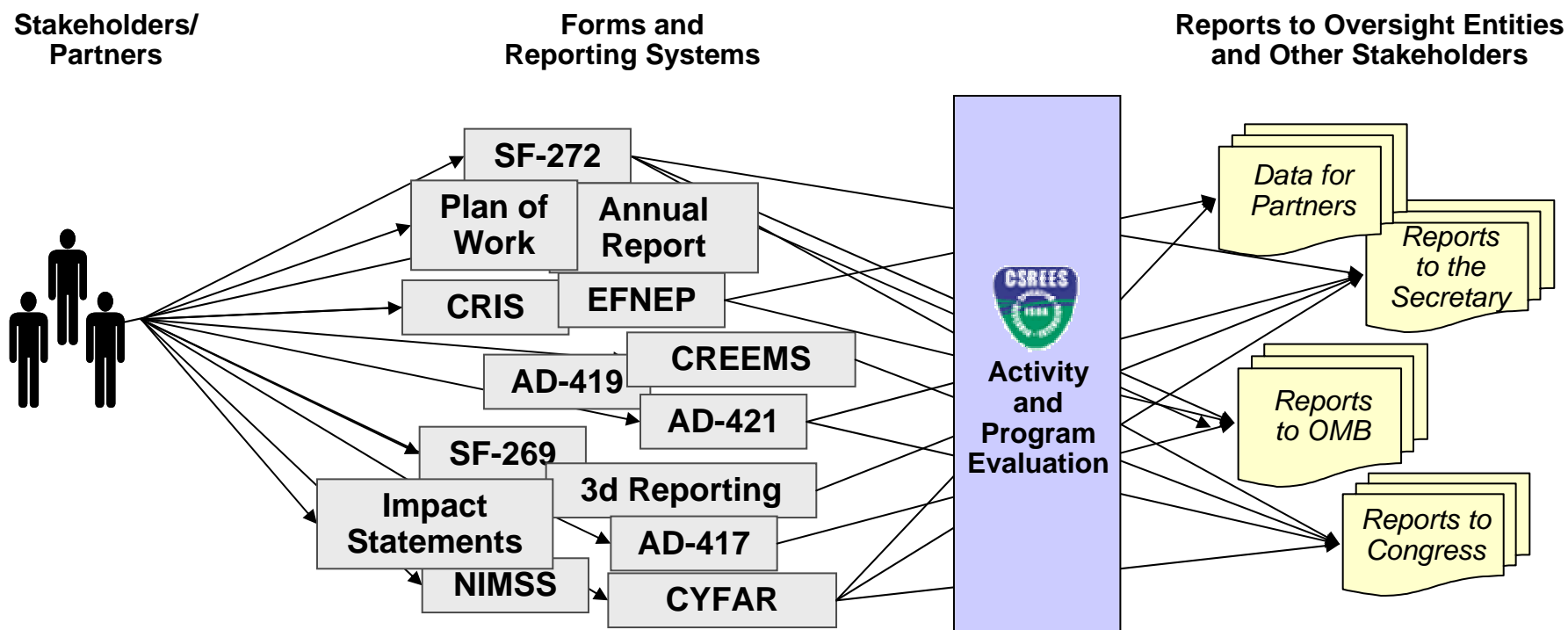


Current CSREES Reporting Processes



- Current reporting is uncoordinated, with both CSREES staff and external partners using many forms and accessing multiple systems to enter and use reporting data.

Current Reporting Situation - Illustrative





Additional Inefficiencies in Current Processes

Further, current reporting processes create a number of inefficiencies, including:

- Current reporting formats, particularly the Plan of Work and Annual Report, cannot be efficiently reviewed and require a significant amount of effort simply to check for compliance
- Because there is no single, complete reporting capability at the agency, staff must often consult multiple sources and manually calculate data to compile required reporting data.
- A lack of data standards and an agency-wide taxonomy (classification system) prevents data from being effectively aggregated and analyzed across programs.
- As the White House focuses on integrating budgets with performance, CSREES must increasingly calculate funding for its activities by strategic goal and other mission-oriented categories. The agency must sometimes rely on informed estimates by executives to report on extension programs
- The process for approving new formula-funded research projects is manual and cumbersome. Often, this manual process results in delays in project approval, creating difficulty for universities.



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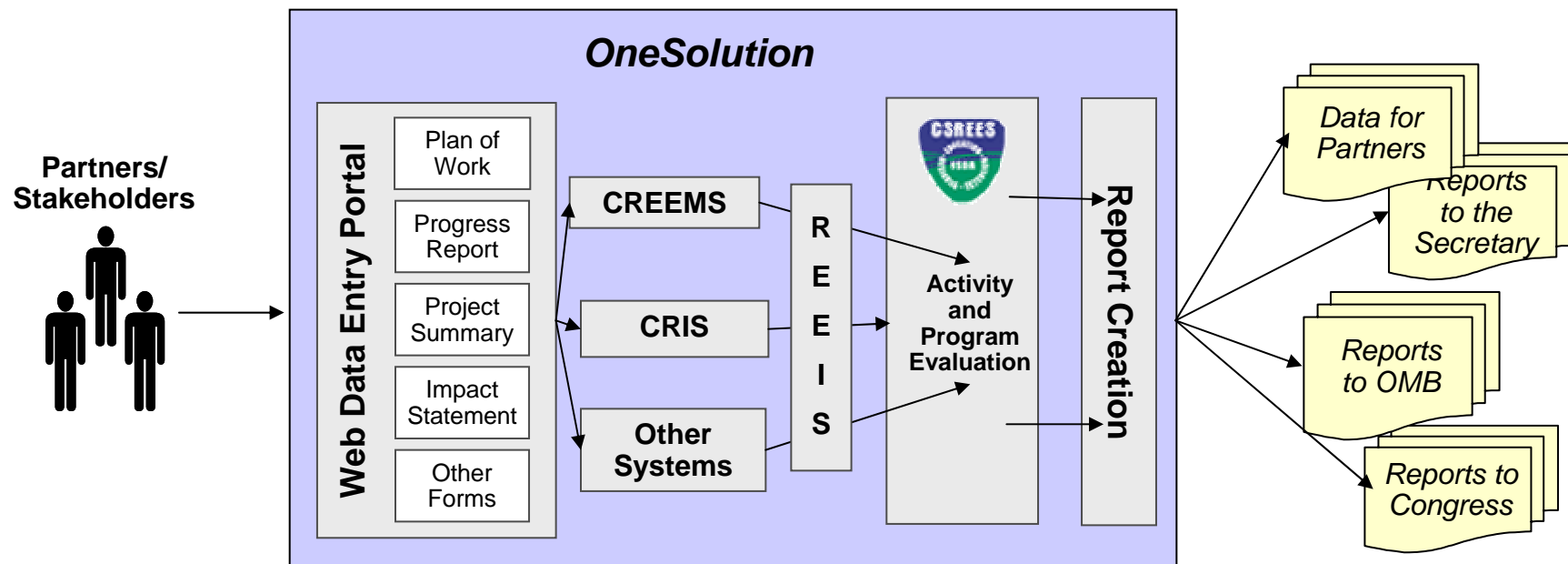
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OneSolution – Simplifying Reporting for CSREES and Partners



OneSolution Concept (Illustrative)



- **OneSolution is much more than just a new IT system**

- ❑ Although technology will be used to reduce duplication and streamline access, enabling the collection and use of improved, outcome-based evaluation data is a key goal of OneSolution.
- ❑ Further, as part of OneSolution, redundant data collections and reports will be streamlined and processes simplified (where appropriate)





OneSolution Development Approach

- OneSolution has been designed to fulfill the reporting needs of CSREES staff, land-grant partners, Congress and OMB, and the public.
 - ❑ OneSolution is intended to provide a single approach to improving reporting for the agency and its partners
 - ❑ This approach recognizes that the many programs, activities, and processes at CSREES require reporting processes and systems that are flexible and take into account the needs of research, education, and extension.
 - ❑ OneSolution encompasses improvements to both the business processes and procedures governing reporting and the supporting information technology systems.
- In planning and designing the OneSolution project, CSREES evaluated a number of potential options
 - ❑ These ranged from a limited approach focusing solely on developing processes and systems to enable collection of a new structured Plan of Work to the development of an entirely new set of business processes and reporting systems.
 - ❑ An approach leveraging and enhancing existing reporting systems (such as CRIS and REEIS), and developing a focused set of new components to provide additional capabilities, provides the greatest benefit at the lowest cost.





OneSolution Capabilities – Land-Grants and Other Partners

CSREES' **land-grant university partners** (and other funding recipients) will have many new capabilities, including features to:

- Provide nearly all CSREES-required reporting through a single, Web-based interface
- Use automated data transfer to submit data, text, or graphics directly from internal university systems, eliminating the current need to manually copy and paste such information into CSREES systems for each report submitted
- Streamline data provided to the agency through pre-population of reports, reuse of common data, and linking of key information across reports to eliminate redundant data requests (for example, using Hatch project data currently submitted via CRIS for the Annual Report of Accomplishments)
- Reduce effort required to complete the Plan of Work and Annual Report through use of a more structured, standardized format

Continued ...





OneSolution Capabilities – Land-Grants and Other Partners

Land-Grant Institution capabilities ...continued:

- Be automatically notified of upcoming reports due, overdue reports, follow-up requests for information, report approvals, and other key event information
- Check status of report receipt, review, and approval processes online, eliminating the need to manually call or e-mail CSREES staff
- Access, analyze, and download extensive institution-specific information, as well as many cross-institution reports
- Receive automated assistance in classifying project and programs, simplifying use and increase understanding of Problem Areas





OneSolution Capabilities – CSREES Staff and Citizens

CSREES staff will be able to:

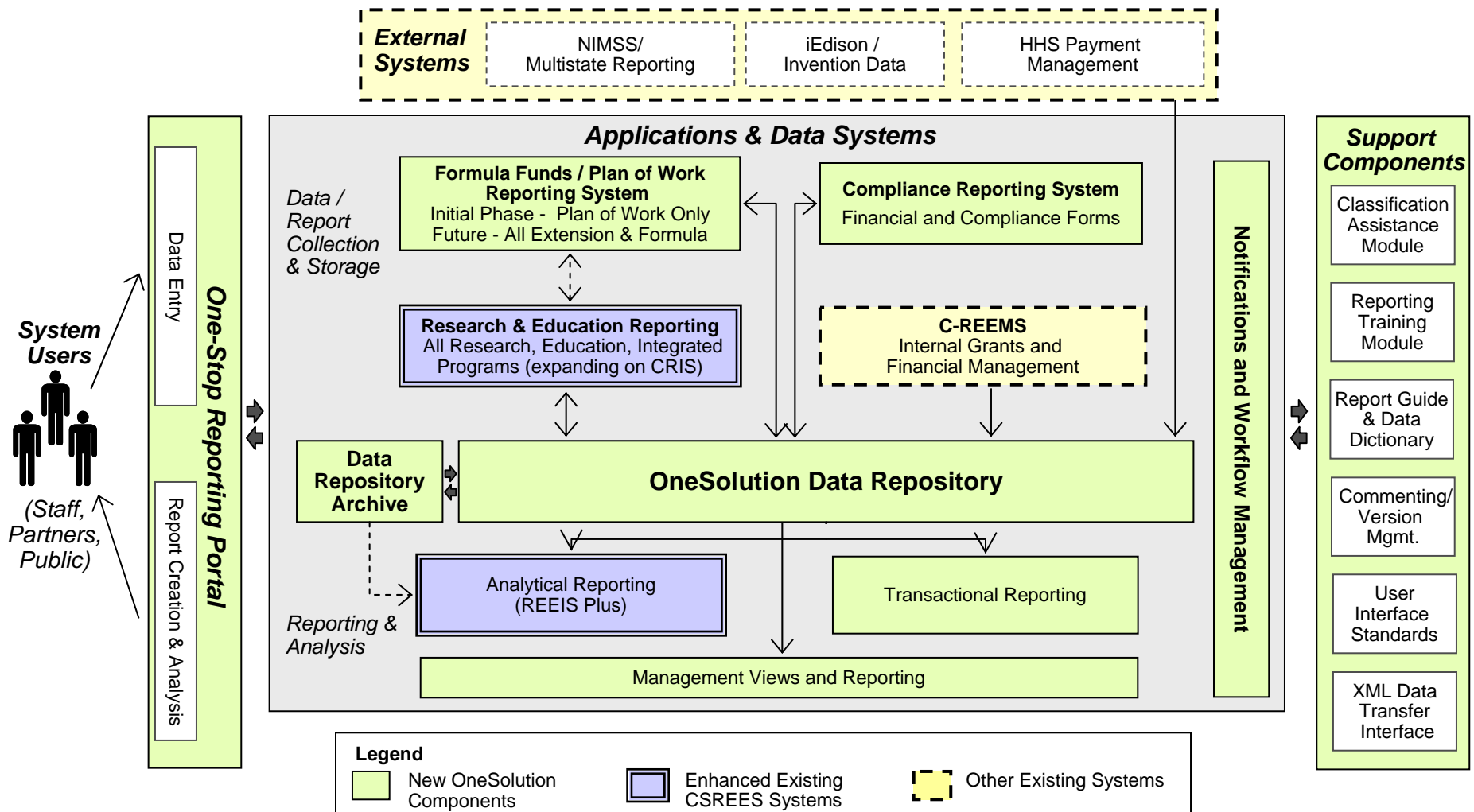
- Obtain better insight into partners' formula-funded activities, through a new structured Plan of Work that will provide detailed program and activity information
- More quickly create accountability reports, replacing current business processes requiring manual searching and tabulation of hundreds of forms with simplified, more automated processes requiring significantly less time to initiate and review
- Create reports that integrate data from across all CSREES reporting and project management systems, enabling staff to get a full picture of all activities related to a project, program, funding line, institution, or individual

Congress, OMB, and citizens will be able to:

- Receive improved accountability information, with data that better links program activities to strategic and performance goals
- Search for data across all CSREES programs specific to their needs and interests (for example, allowing citrus growers to instantly locate all activities related to citrus fruit)
- Obtain greater value from research, education, and extension funds, as CSREES staff and partners will be able to reduce time spent on administrative tasks and focus more directly on advancing knowledge



OneSolution Technical Blueprint





Business Process and Data Improvements

OneSolution includes a number of business process and data improvements, as well as new technology and analysis features, to ensure that all necessary data is collected and appropriately managed.

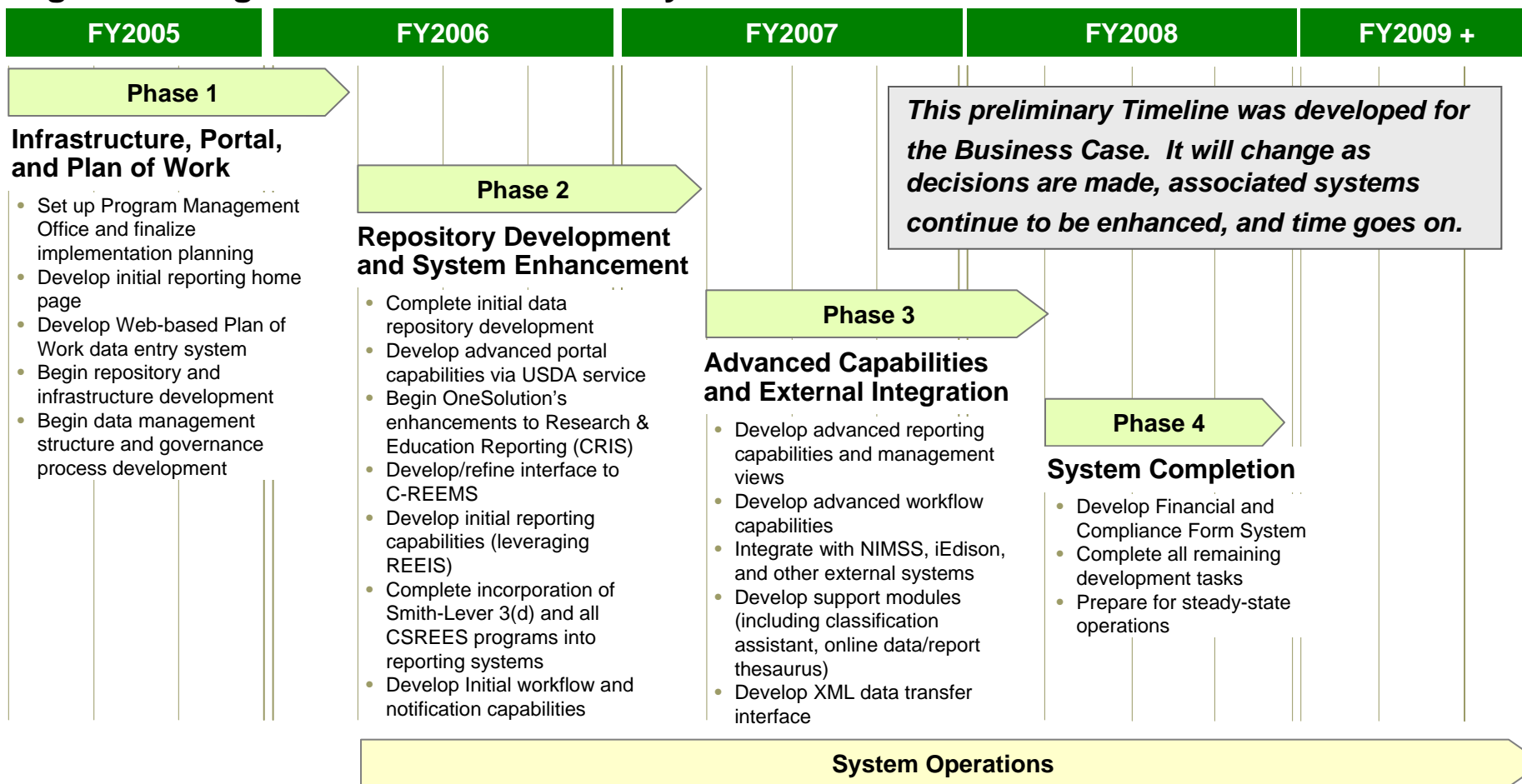
- Some improvements focus on the development of data standards and structures (such as an agency-wide taxonomy) to ensure that data can be consistently used across programs.
 - *A consistent classification system is critical to enabling agency-wide analysis of CSREES-funded activities, providing a common set of categories that can be used to cross-cut and “slice and dice” projects and programs and provide meaningful analysis of inputs, outputs, and outcomes*
 - *Data standards will ensure that all similar data collected – such as age or ethnicity – are collected using the same formats, categories, and other data characteristics, to enable integration across programs and data sources.*
- Other improvements will focus on standardizing forms and processes across programs, minimizing the need for program-specific forms by developing processes that can serve the needs of as many programs as possible.





OneSolution Timeline

OneSolution has been planned to be developed in four annual phases, to provide key functionality in time to meet regulatory deadlines and to ensure that staff and partners begin realizing benefits within the first year.



This preliminary Timeline was developed for the Business Case. It will change as decisions are made, associated systems continue to be enhanced, and time goes on.



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OneSolution Benefits



OneSolution will provide **strategic** benefits to CSREES and its partners through:

- Enabling improved planning and achievement of the agency's mission through improved data analysis and enhanced strategic and portfolio planning processes
- Supporting the President's Management Agenda's eGovernment and Budget and Performance Integration initiatives
- Supporting AREERA's goals of better managing and coordinating formula funds and the Government Paperwork Elimination Act goal of reducing the data collection burden on partners



OneSolution Benefits



OneSolution will provide **operational** benefits including:

- Significantly reducing the amount of time that partners spend creating reports and CSREES staff members spend reviewing them.
- Reducing the effort required for staff to create oversight and accountability reporting and significantly improving report quality
- Streamlining routing and approval processes to enable projects to be approved and underway more quickly, and with less staff and partner effort
- Eliminating the need for executives to estimate or locate key data used in creating reports for OMB, Congress, and others





Costs and Financial Benefits (Preliminary Estimates)

Financial Benefits

- OneSolution will generate an estimated \$20 million in financial benefits to CSREES and partners over 7 years. These benefits are generated in three areas:
 - ❑ *Productivity savings, including significant reductions in time spent on reporting for both partners and staff*
 - ❑ *Technology cost savings, including reduced development and maintenance expenditures for IT systems*
 - ❑ *Materials costs savings, including reduced expenditures for printing, mailing, and storing paper documents*
- Of this, \$10.8 million – over 50% - represents benefits to partners.

Development Costs

- OneSolution will cost an estimated \$8.3 million to develop over 4 years.
 - ❑ *Of this cost, approximately \$7.2 million will be direct development costs incurred by CSREES*
 - ❑ *It is estimated land-grant institutions costs will be less than \$5,000 per year to transition to OneSolution – a total of 1.1 million*

Return on Investment

- OneSolution will generate an estimated net financial value of \$8.1 million and represents a return on investment of 89% (in addition to recouping all CSREES and partner costs).



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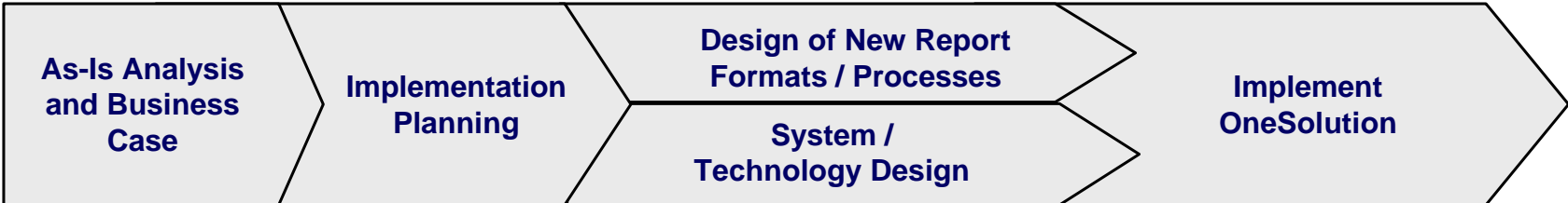
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Next Steps

OneSolution Tasks



Activities:

- Analyze current reporting situation
- Develop OneSolution Concept
- Develop business case describing OneSolution and its benefits
- Develop structure for the coordinating bodies for OneSolution
- Develop final workplan for implementing OneSolution
- Continue communicating with stakeholders
- Determine reporting, data, and analysis requirements
- Develop reporting formats and structures based on requirements
- Determine detailed system design requirements
- Develop detailed computer system design based on initial approach
- Develop new technology and computer systems
- Begin incorporating new reporting formats, tools, and structures (such as new classification system) in program activities

Status:

Complete



In Progress

Not Yet Started

Not Yet Started



Q&A

