FEMA Robotics Process Automation (RPA)

Shared Services Forum | April 13, 2023

Agenda

- FEMA Mission

- Financial Systems Modernization / RPA

- Roadmap

- Success Stories

- Lessons Learned

- Challenge

FEMA: Helping People Before, During, and After Disasters

How We Do It:

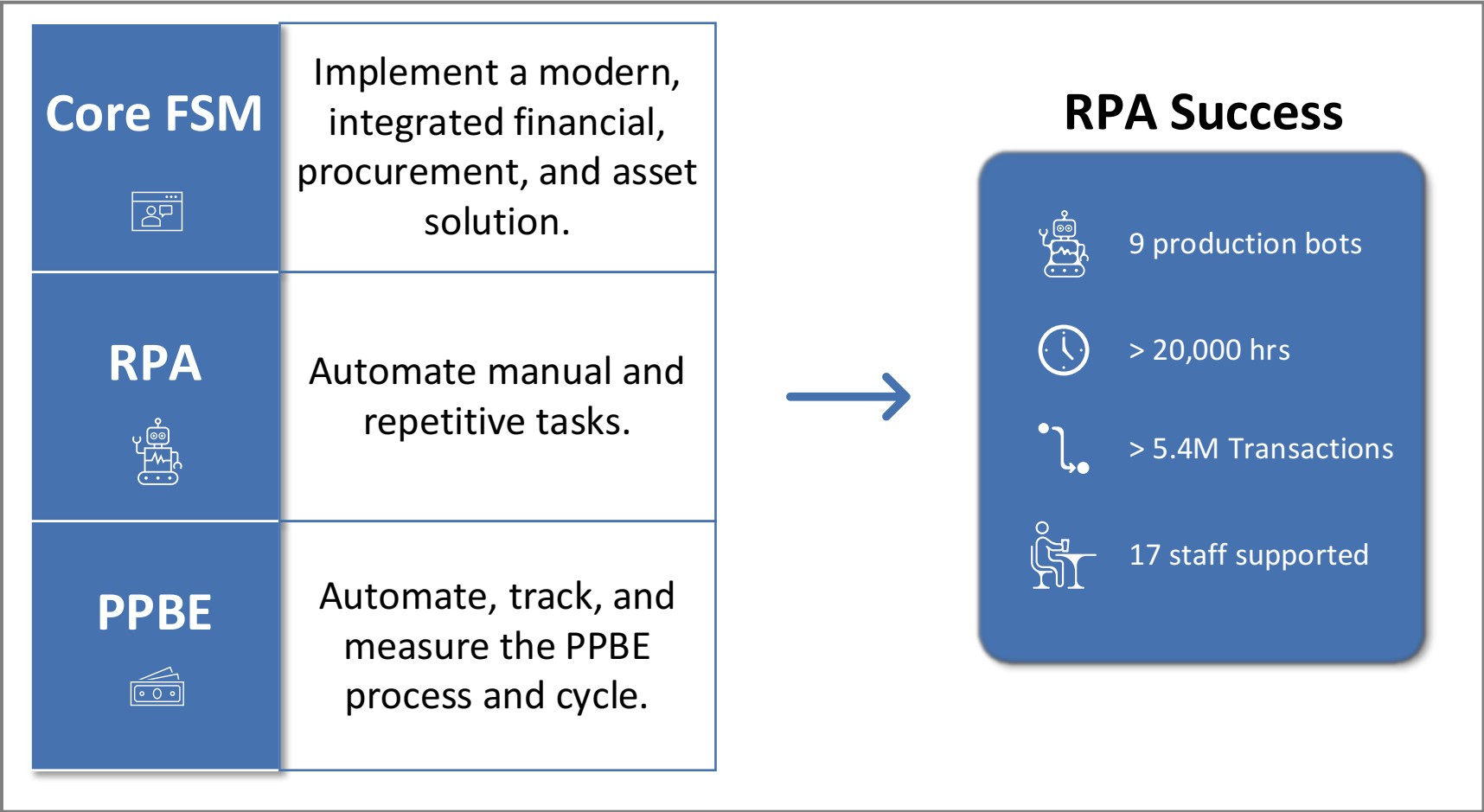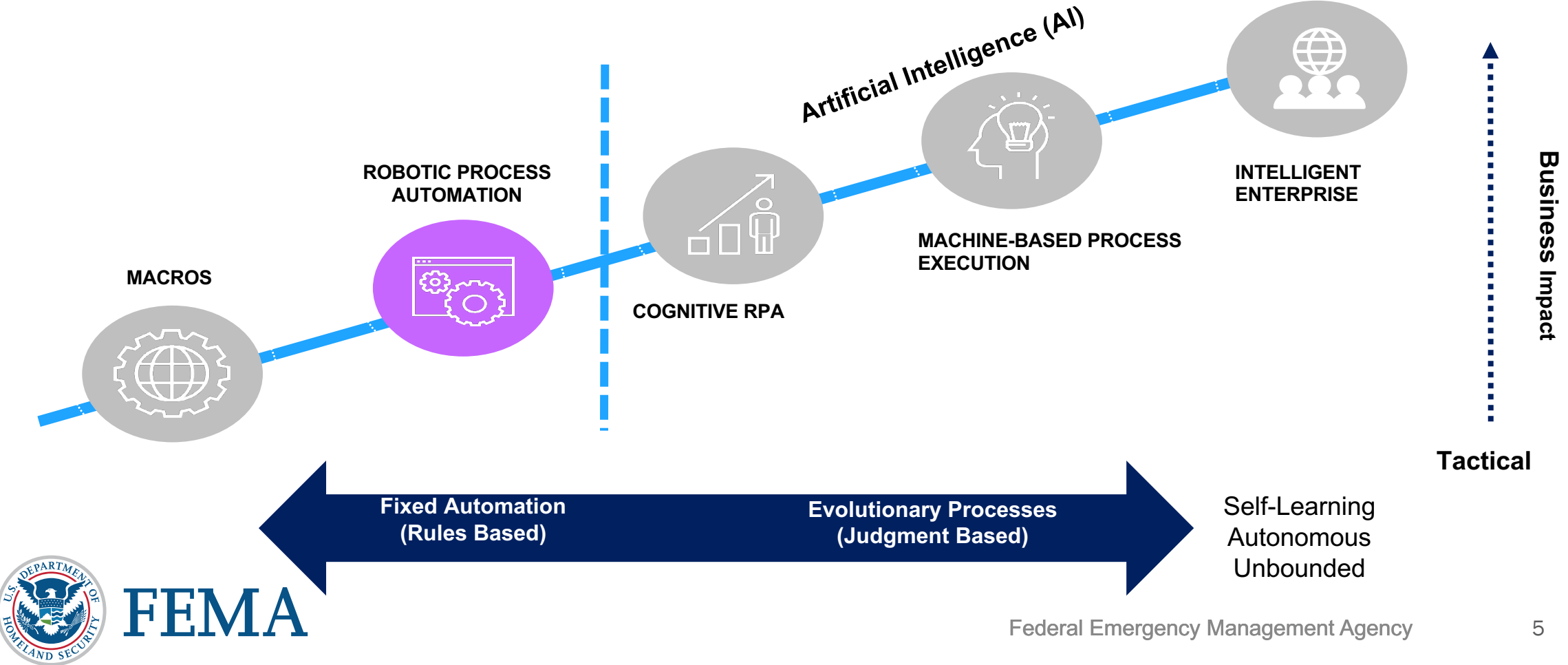| Before Disasters	During Disasters	After Disasters
✓ Manage the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) ✓ Provide Grants for Risk Reduction ✓ Train and Educate	✓ Assess Lifelines ✓ Deliver Immediate Emergency Assistance ✓ Ensure Continuity of the Government	✓ Employ the National Disaster Recovery Framework ✓ Ensure Long-Term Resources are Available ✓ Reduce Future Risk

FEMA

Financial Systems Modernization / RPA

The Financial Systems Modernization (FSM) Program includes the core FSM project, Robotics Process Automation (RPA), and Planning, Programming, Budget, and Execution (PPBE) project.

Core FSM	Implement a modern, integrated financial, procurement, and asset solution.
RPA	Automate manual and repetitive tasks.
PPBE	Automate, track, and measure the PPBE process and cycle.

RPA Success

9 production bots

> 20,000 hrs

> 5.4M Transactions

17 staff supported

RPA Value Proposition

FEMA evaluated our business need against potential RPA benefits.

Success Stories

Below are several of our bot success stories:

Bot Name	Description	Highlights
Payment Reconciliation	Monitors payments across multiple FEMA systems to ensure processing is occurring timely and correctly. Identifies potential issues that could impact payments to survivors. Reconciliation encapsulates all validations and notifies stakeholders. Can now be executed by any team member (versus dependency on single induvial) and runs **10x faster**.	Improved audit controls
Travel Reconciliation (IBA) & (CBA)	Automates reconciliations for over 20,000 individual cards to ensure mission critical travel can be processed. Reconciles between FEMA travel system and credit card provider. **Improves accuracy** of review, reduces individual reconciliations (thousands performed) by 30 min to 3 hours, and **frees up multiple employees to focus on higher value activities.**	Productivity Gain of 50%
Region (Mitigation)	Aggregates data from multiple systems and consolidates into a GIS tool. The bot standardized the business process, **decreased processing time,** and **provides additional time for resources** to focus on decision-making. Future opportunity to expand to other programs and regions.	Efficiency Gain of 89%

Lessons Learned

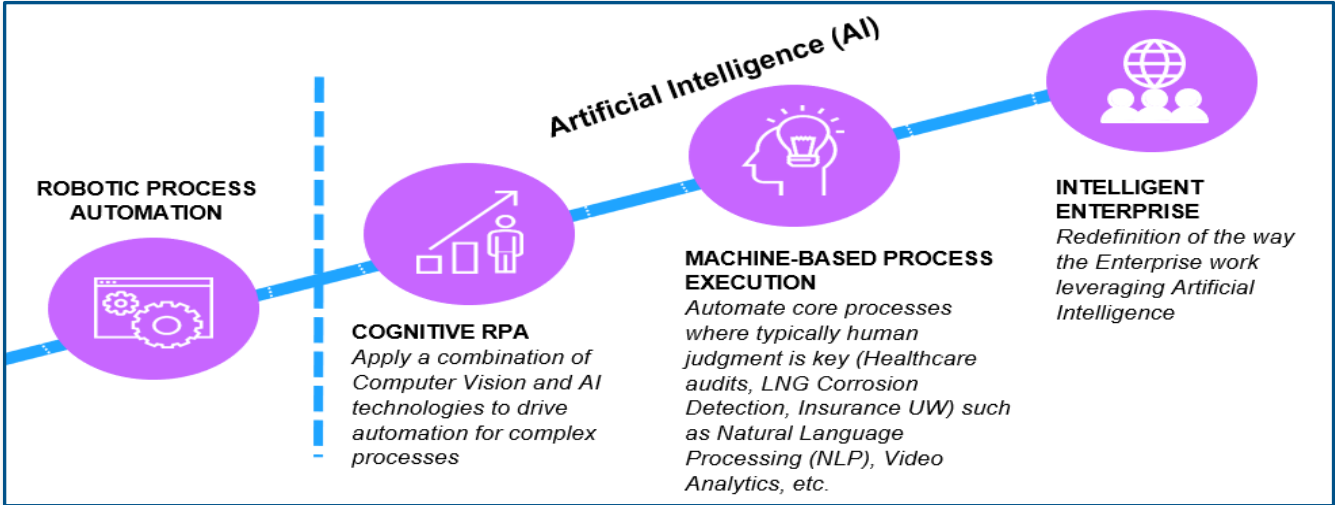FEMA has learned many lessons on our RPA journey. Here are a few:

Area	Description
Getting Started	Start small to determine how RPA will work in you organization. We uncovered many items, including security considerations, the approach to identifying automation opportunities, and navigating through the DHS systems engineering lifecycle.
IT Engagement	Engage with OCIO early to ensure alignment on expectations. We familiarized our IT organization with RPA by engaging with DHS headquarters, DHS components, and other organizations.
Return on Investment	Determine the importance of return on investment and how it will be measured. We have been refining our approach to determine ROI up front and validate actual results post implementation.
Stakeholder Engagement	Engage with stakeholders to identify automation opportunities, develop automations, and successfully deploy. We have encountered some instances where stakeholders request bots but do not use them as expected once delivered.

Challenges

We are interested in your thoughts on how to address these challenges:

Challenge	Description
Surge Support	How can FEMA best leverage RPA to support our no fail mission that requires the agency to quickly surge to support disasters?
Scalability	How can FEMA continue to scale our RPA automations? We are considering leveraging citizen developers, unattended bots, and Artificial Intelligence. How is this working for other agencies?

Questions?

Thank You