



The PII Approach: Early Strategies for Building and Evaluating Interventions, and Dissemination

Welfare Research and Evaluation Conference

May 28, 2014



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Data Mining as an Early Strategy for Building Evaluation Capacity: Lessons from PII

A photograph of five diverse children sitting outdoors on a grassy area. From left to right: a girl with blonde hair in a pink and white striped shirt, a boy with short dark hair in a white and blue striped shirt, a girl with long brown hair in a yellow polka-dot shirt, a boy with brown hair in a light blue polo shirt, and a girl with curly brown hair in a bright green shirt. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a fence.

Allison Meisch, PhD
Westat

May 28, 2014

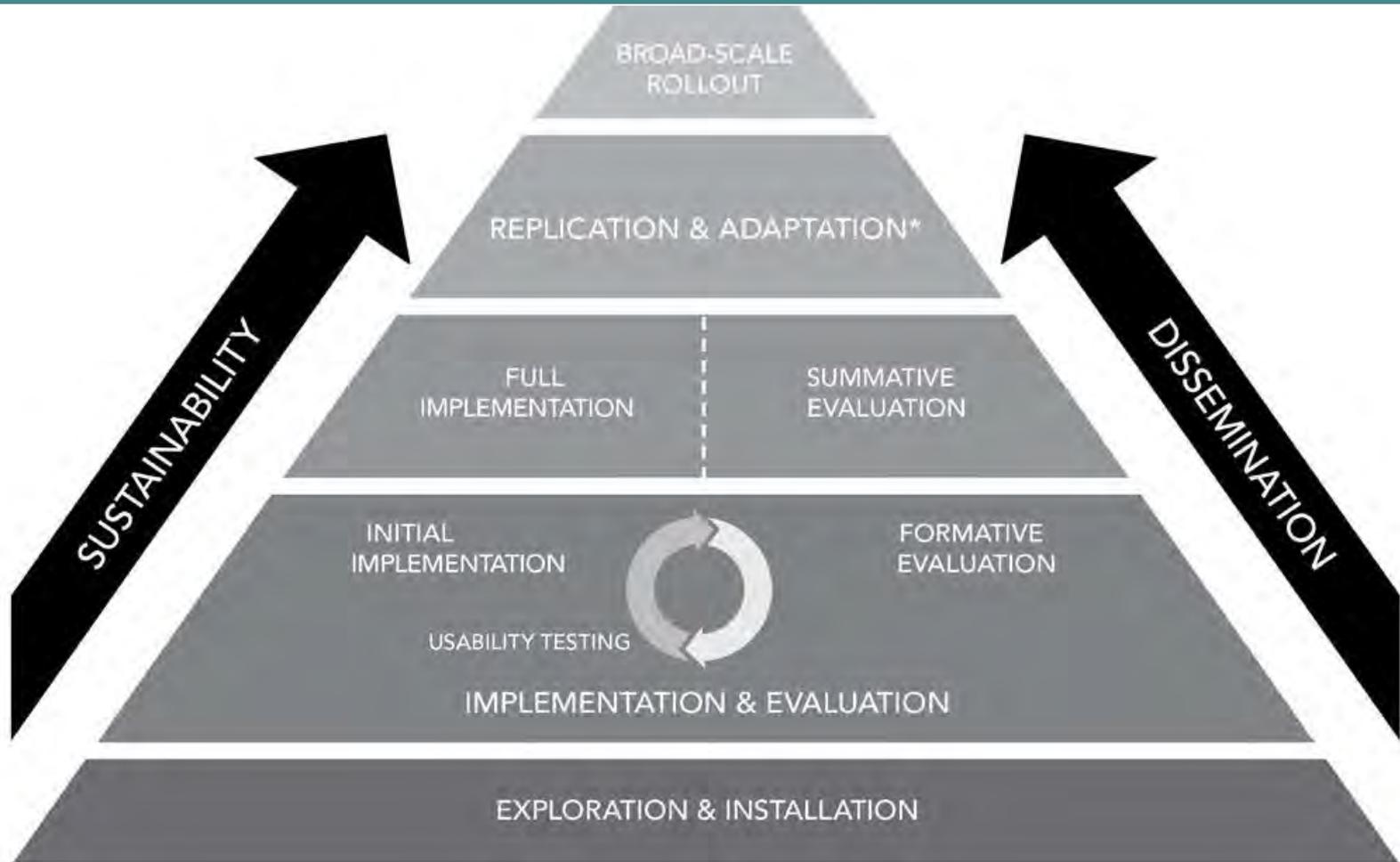
What Is PII?

The federal Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII) is a 5-year, \$100 million Presidential Initiative designed to support six grantees to develop and implement innovative intervention strategies to reduce long-term foster care stays and improve child and family outcomes.

What Are the Goals of PII?

- To build an evidence base, PII will:
 - Implement innovative intervention strategies, informed by the relevant literature, to reduce long-term foster care stays and improve child outcomes
 - Use an implementation science framework enhanced by child welfare expertise to guide technical assistance activities
 - Rigorously evaluate the validity of research-informed innovations and adapted ESIs in reducing long-term foster care
 - Disseminate findings to build knowledge in the child welfare field

The PII Approach



PICO: Well-built Evaluation Question Elements

*Do children in population (**P**) that receive intervention (**I**) have a significantly better outcome (**O**) than children in a comparison group (**C**) who do not receive the **I**?*

- Population
- Intervention
- Outcome
- Comparison

(Richardson et al., 1995; Testa and Poertner, 2010)

How does Data Mining fit with the Goals of PII?

- Understanding who is at most risk of long term foster care was part of the exploration phase of the PII Approach
 - Helps to define the “P” (population) in PICO
- Data mining assists matching the “who” (population) with the “what” (the appropriate intervention)

Advantages of data mining

- Identify (confirm or not confirm) who is most at risk
- Identify subpopulations that may benefit most
- Refine or confirm assumptions informed by practice experience
- Refine timing of the planned intervention

One grantee found that children who were entering the system had different characteristics of risk for LTFC than children who were already in the system

Data Mining

- What?
 - the process of reviewing existing administrative and program data to identify pertinent characteristics of the target population
- When?
 - Ideally, during the pre-implementation phase
- How?
 - Gather data sources, systematically examine them

Data Mining in PII

- Literature review
- The review answered questions such as:
 - *Who is currently served and not served with regard to LTFC?*
 - *What is known about current program outcomes, and do these outcomes vary by type of participant?*
 - *Is there any recent legislation or policy targeting the problem and the problem's impact on a particular population?*

Data Mining in PII

- Case record reviews
 - Children Entering Care
 - Children Currently in Care at 1,2,3 years
 - Children in Open or Closed cases who have long stays
 - Examples of variables extracted from reviews
 - Initial reason for placement
 - Case goals
 - Agreement of case goals with removal reasons
 - Child characteristics (e.g. behavior problems, disabilities, juvenile justice involvement)
 - Parent characteristics (e.g. substance abuse, family structure, employment status)

Data Mining in PII

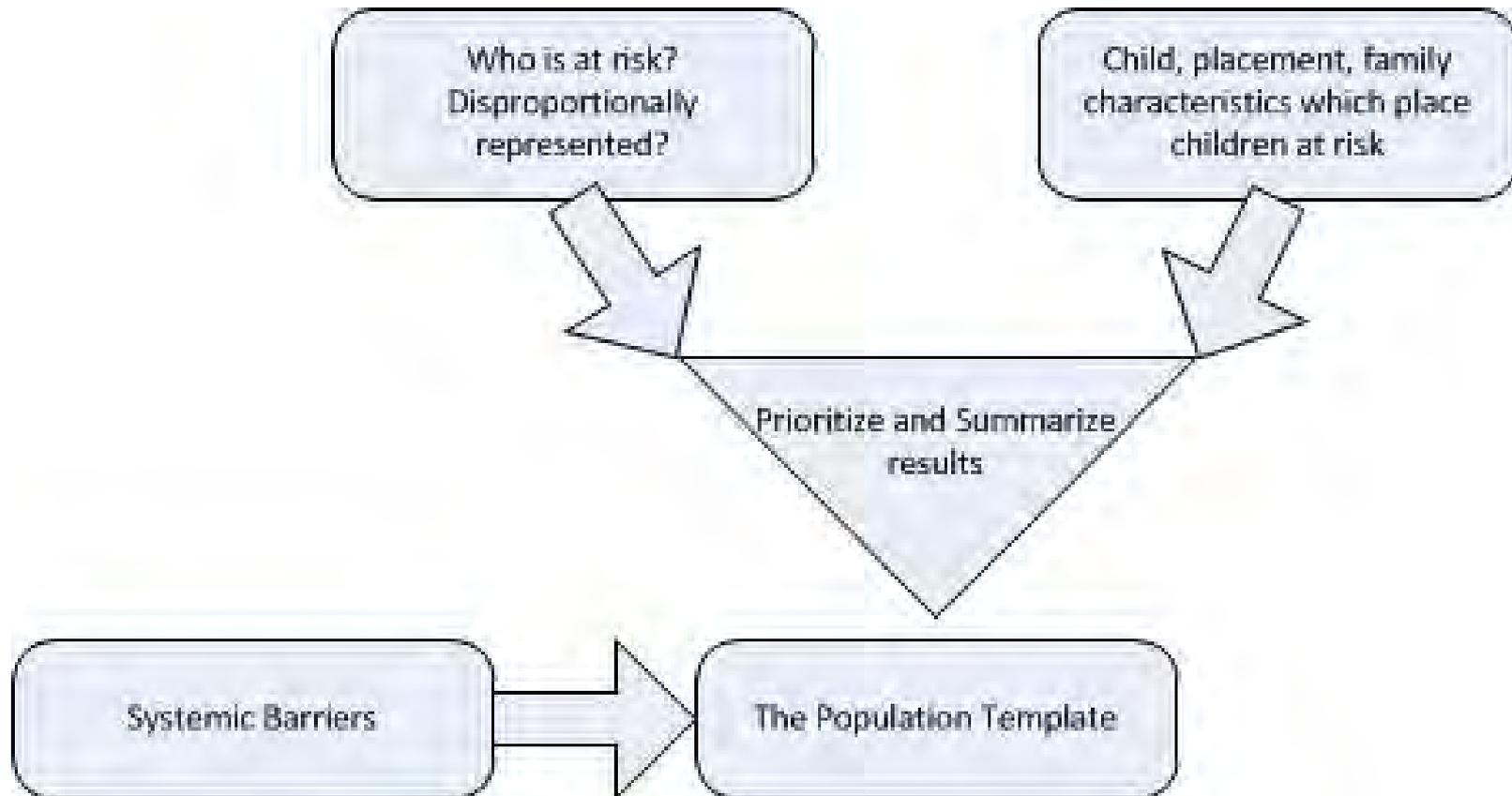
- Administrative data
 - Describe the LTFC Population
 - Compare characteristics of children in LTFC with children in care for shorter periods
 - Model risk characteristics known at earlier points in time that distinguish children who move into LTFC from those who exit to permanency sooner
 - Tree diagrams (survival analyses)

Data Mining in PII

- Focus groups
 - Caseworker, Supervisors and Administrators
 - Stakeholders
- Informant interviews

One grantee relied heavily on informant interviews because they were targeting LGBTQ youth, and there were no variables related to gender identity or sexual orientation in existing government data systems.

Using Results to Inform Decision-Making: The Population Template



Lessons Learned

- Correct identification of the target population is critical to program development
- Know the strengths and limitations of your data sources
- Data mining can identify systemic barriers too
 - And this can be an opportunity early on to adjust
- Earlier is better – even before award!

For more information

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Stay tuned!

The PII-ET issue brief *Using Data Mining to Identify At-Risk Populations in the Permanency Innovations Initiative* is coming soon!!



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Defining Core Functions and Developing Fidelity Measures for Child Welfare Interventions

Presenters:

Tori Russell, Senior Principal
JBS International, Inc.

May 28th, 2014

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Session Outline

- PII-TTAP
- Defining Core Functions
 - Methods and Tools
 - Challenges
 - Lessons Learned
- Developing Fidelity Measures
 - Methods and Tools
 - Challenges
 - Lessons Learned

PII Training and Technical Assistance Project (PII-TTAP)



We provide cutting edge training and technical assistance to PII Grantees to support the implementation of innovative and evidence-informed intervention strategies



Defining Core Functions

Well-Defined Core Functions

- Facilitate successful implementation
- Serve as a foundation for the entire innovation
- Clearly outline what practitioners should do
- Clearly outline what children and families should receive
- Promote consistency

Defining Core Functions

- Develop a set of essential functions
- Develop the associated core activities
- Create behaviorally based indicators
 - Measurable and observable
 - Examples of expected behavior, developmental behavior and unacceptable behavior

Organizing Essential Functions

Essential function: Best practices related to (Essential Function):			
Core Activities - teachable, learnable, doable behaviorally-based activities			
Expected/ Proficient Implementation	Developmental Implementation	Unacceptable Variation Implementation	Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Common Challenges when Defining Core Functions

- Time
- Describe indicators in a behaviorally based way
- When, how and who to involve when making modifications to the innovation
- Narrow down the essential functions of the innovation

Lessons Learned in Defining Core Functions

- Usability testing to “try out” the developed innovation
- The practice profile as an outline for staff selection
- Importance of research
- Using the practice profile for subsequent steps in the process

Developing Fidelity Measures

Importance of Monitoring with Fidelity

- Assesses whether or not the innovation is done as intended
- Looks for the presence of the core functions and how well they were executed
- Supports implementation and the continuous improvement process needed for successful implementation
- Used when interpreting outcome data to ensure the intervention was delivered as intended

Fidelity Measure Creation

- Use the expected behaviors and think of concrete indicators that show the behavior is happening
- Documentation of the behavior
- Repeat for all elements in the profile
- Prioritize

Sample Fidelity Measure

Essential Function: Engagement				
Best practices related to Engagement: Effectively joins with family and community to establish common goals concerning child safety, wellbeing, and permanency				
FIDELITY ASSESSMENT				
Expected/Proficient Implementation	Indicator that activity is happening (Adherence)	Potential Data Source	Indicator that activity is happening well (Competence)	Potential Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notifies family in advance of visits. Drop-in visits are used sparingly and only with specific purpose that is clearly documented in the case record. 	Documentation of scheduling visits Documentation of length of each visit	Case plan Case plan	Family is included in the scheduling of visits at times that work for them	- Supervision notes -Client engagement survey

Fidelity Measure Protocols

- Essential Elements
 - Frequency of data collection
 - Developing a rating system
 - Training raters
- Key Considerations
 - Who will do the assessment?
 - How will the data be captured?
- Interpretation and sharing of data

Common Challenges when Developing Fidelity Measures



- Common definition of fidelity
- How data from the fidelity assessment process would be used
- Prioritizing the activities to include in the fidelity assessment
- Establishing data collection, analysis and reporting systems

Lessons Learned when Developing Fidelity Measures

- Usability testing as a way to try out the assessment and the protocols
- Importance of education and knowledge about the process
- Collaboration is key
- Usefulness of the resulting data

For more information

- Visit the PII project resources page on the Children's Bureau website:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/pii-project-resources>



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Dissemination from the Start

Presenter:

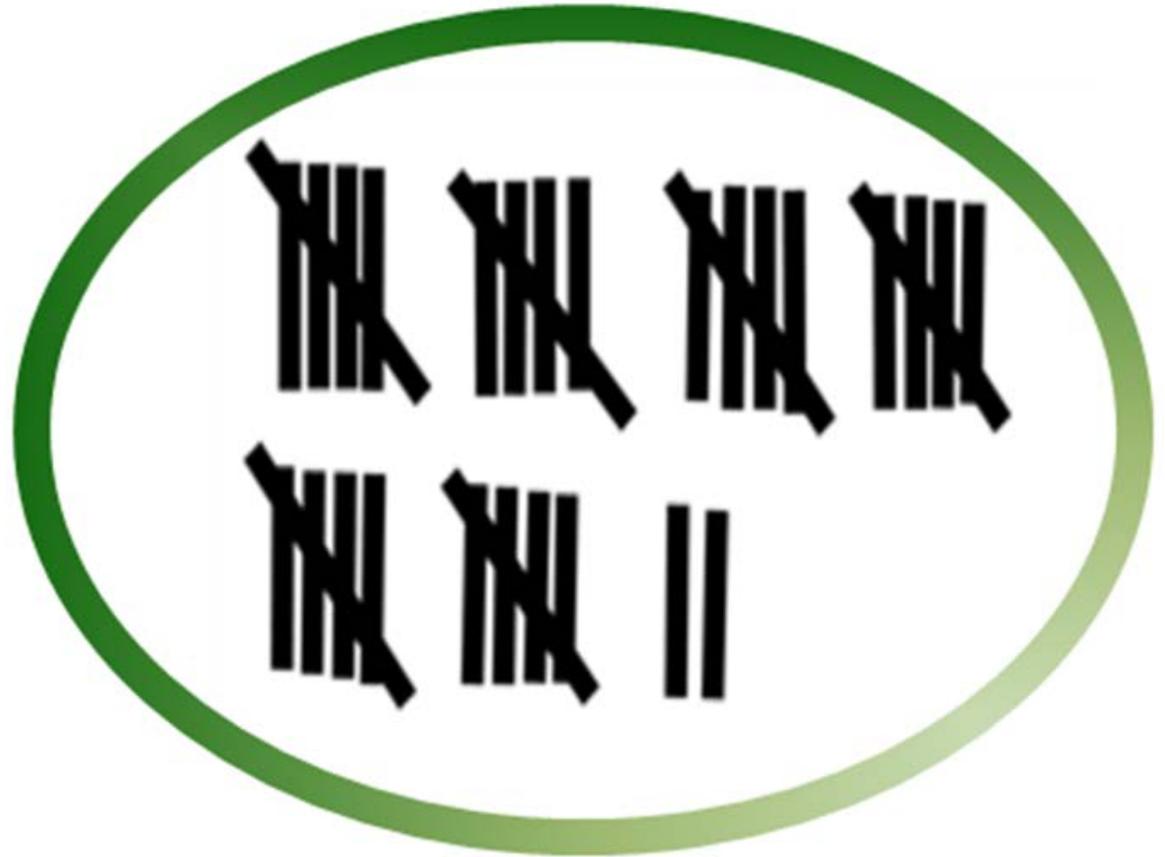
Courtney L. Harrison, PII Dissemination Strategist

May 28, 2014

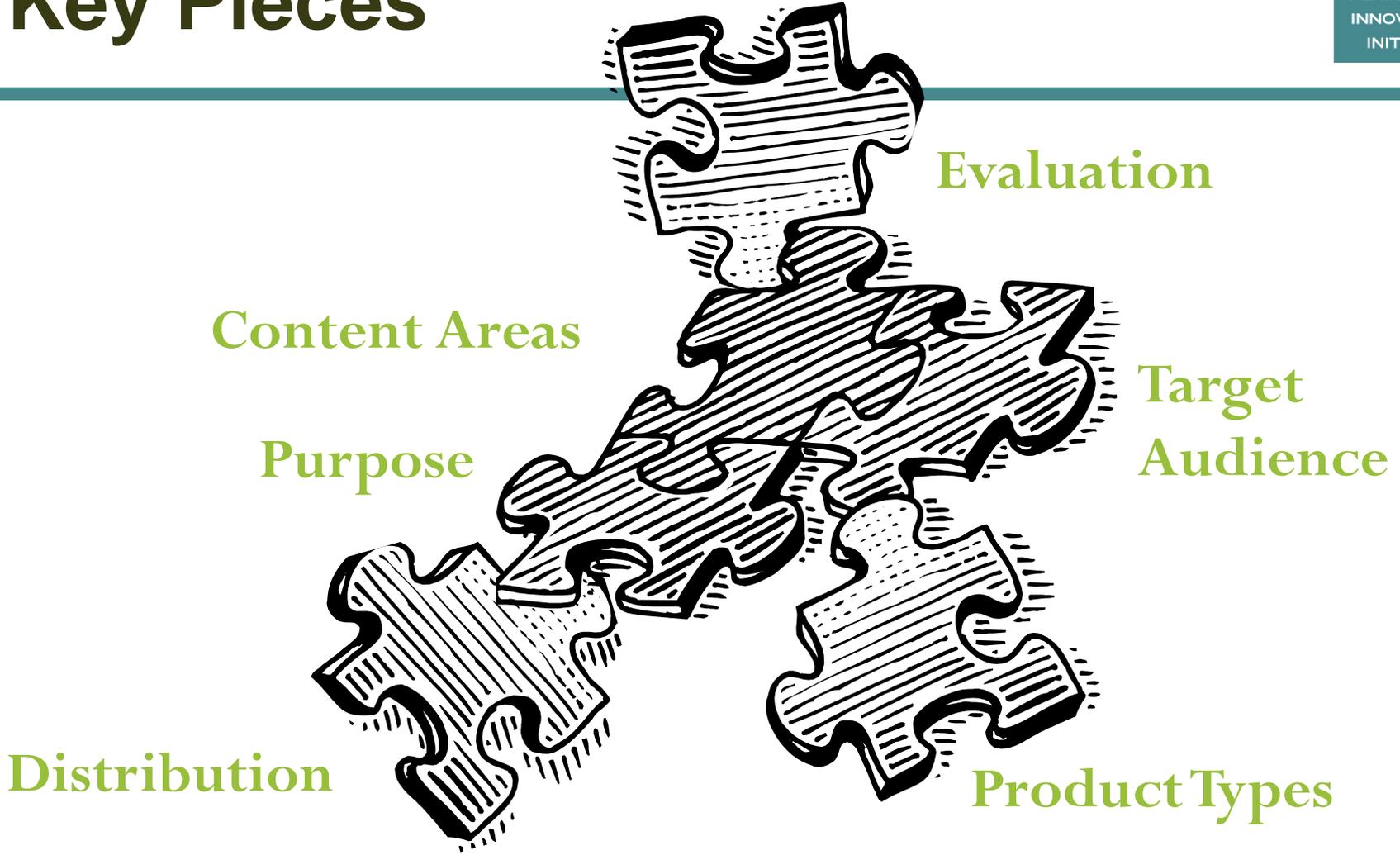
What is Dissemination?

Dissemination on the PII project is an intentional process to move new information relevant to policy, practice, and research from PII partners to a well-defined child welfare audience for a particular purpose

What is Dissemination?

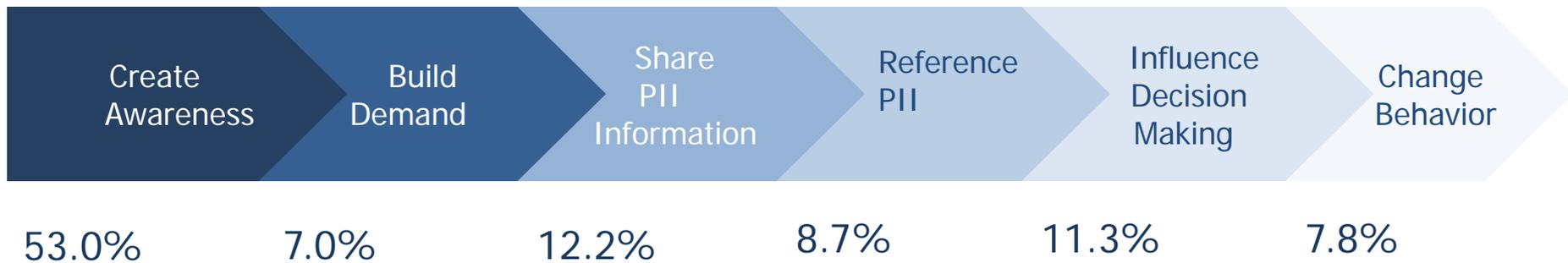


Key Pieces



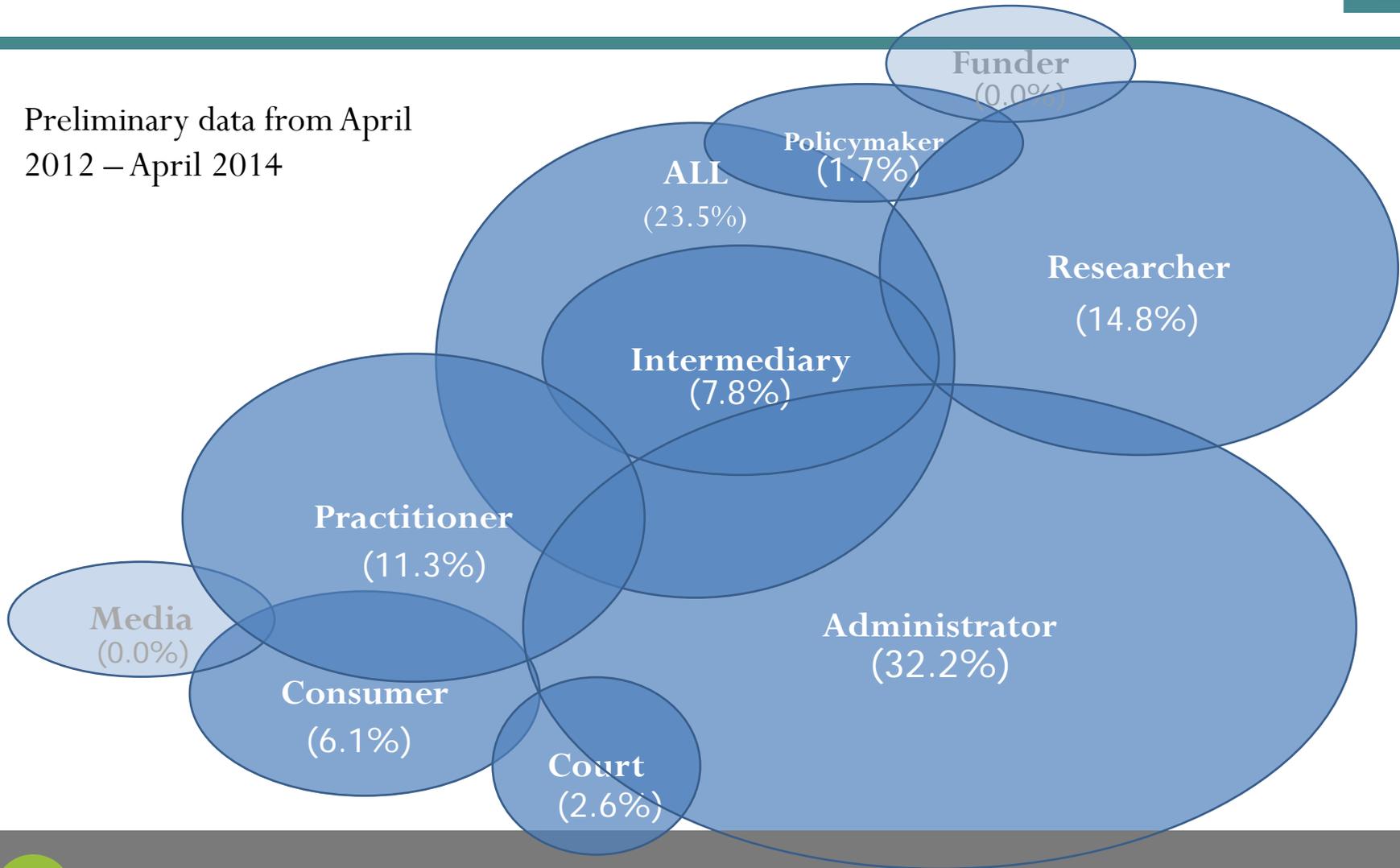
Purpose

Preliminary data from April 2012 – April 2014

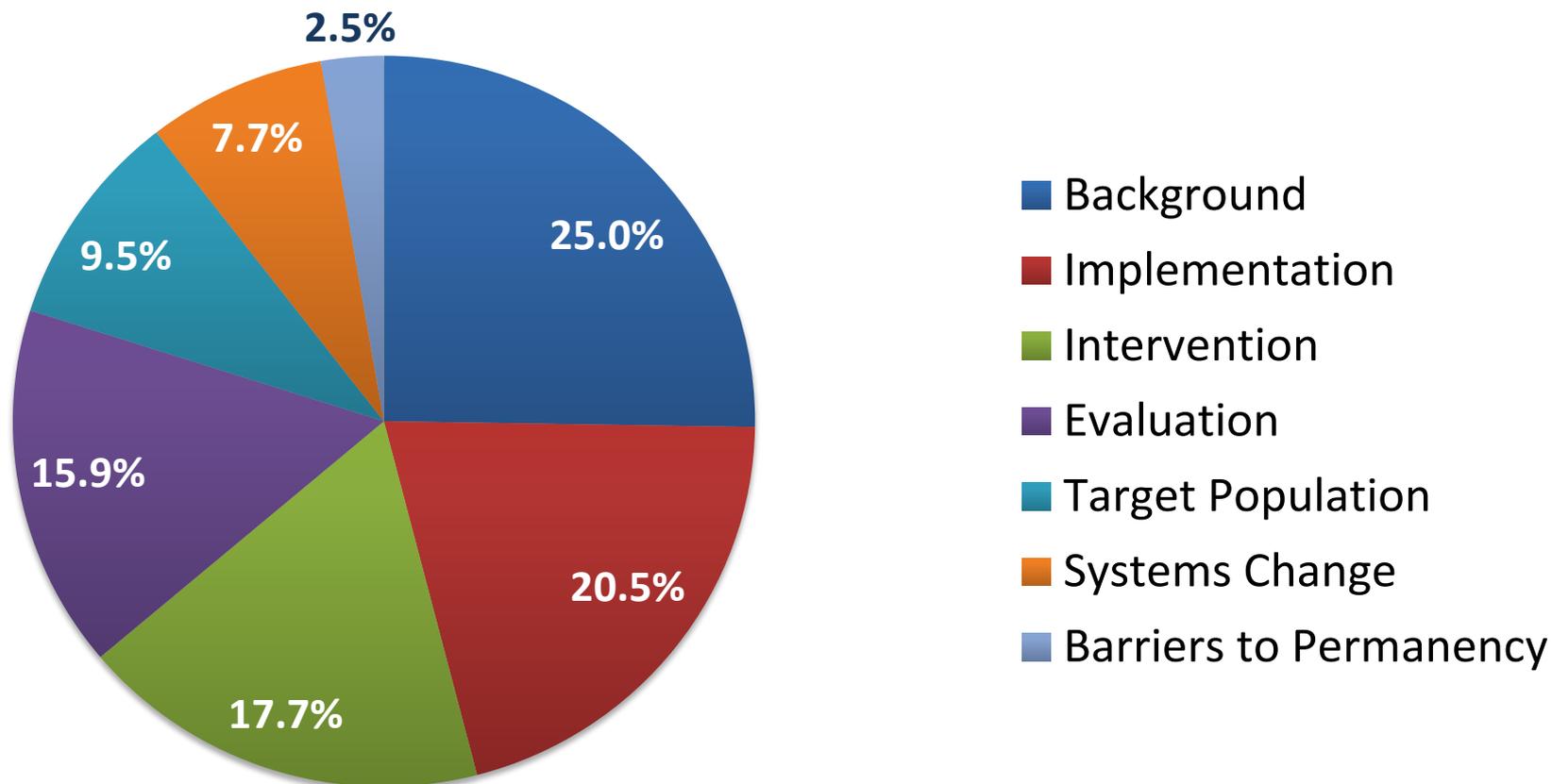


Target Audience

Preliminary data from April
2012 – April 2014

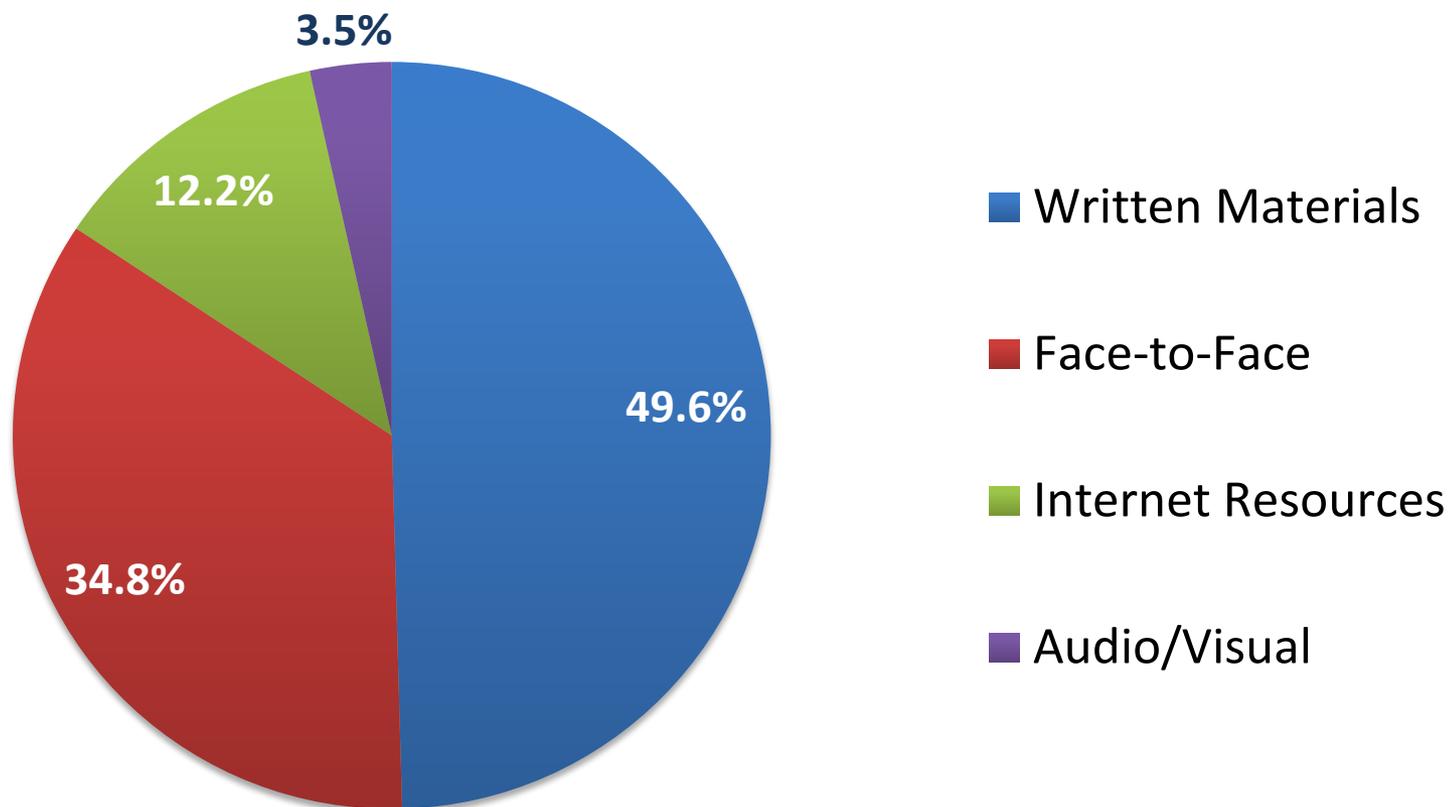


Content



Preliminary data from April 2012 – April 2014

Product Types



Preliminary data from April 2012 – April 2014

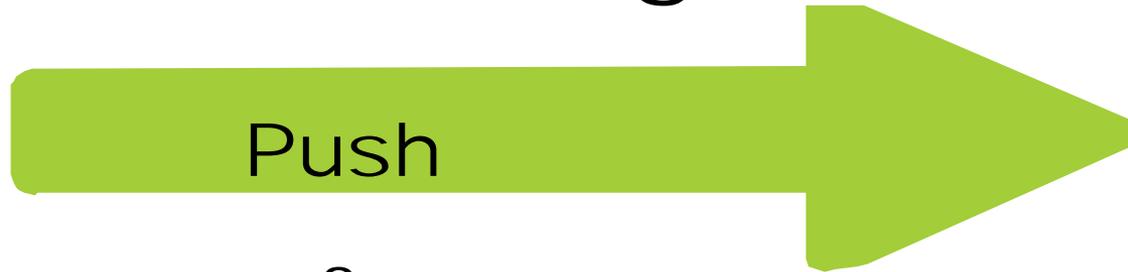
Distribution

According to *OPRE Human Services Research Dissemination What Works?*

- **Common distribution practices such as posting or publishing findings are not sufficient for policy, practice, and research fields to find and utilize them** (as cited in Barwick et al., 2005, Dal Santo, Goldberg, Choice, & Austin, 2002, Green, Ottoson, Garcia & Hiatt, 2009, Greenhalgh, Robert, Macfarlane, Bate & Kyriakidou, 2004, Lomas, 1997, and Munson, 2010)

Evaluation

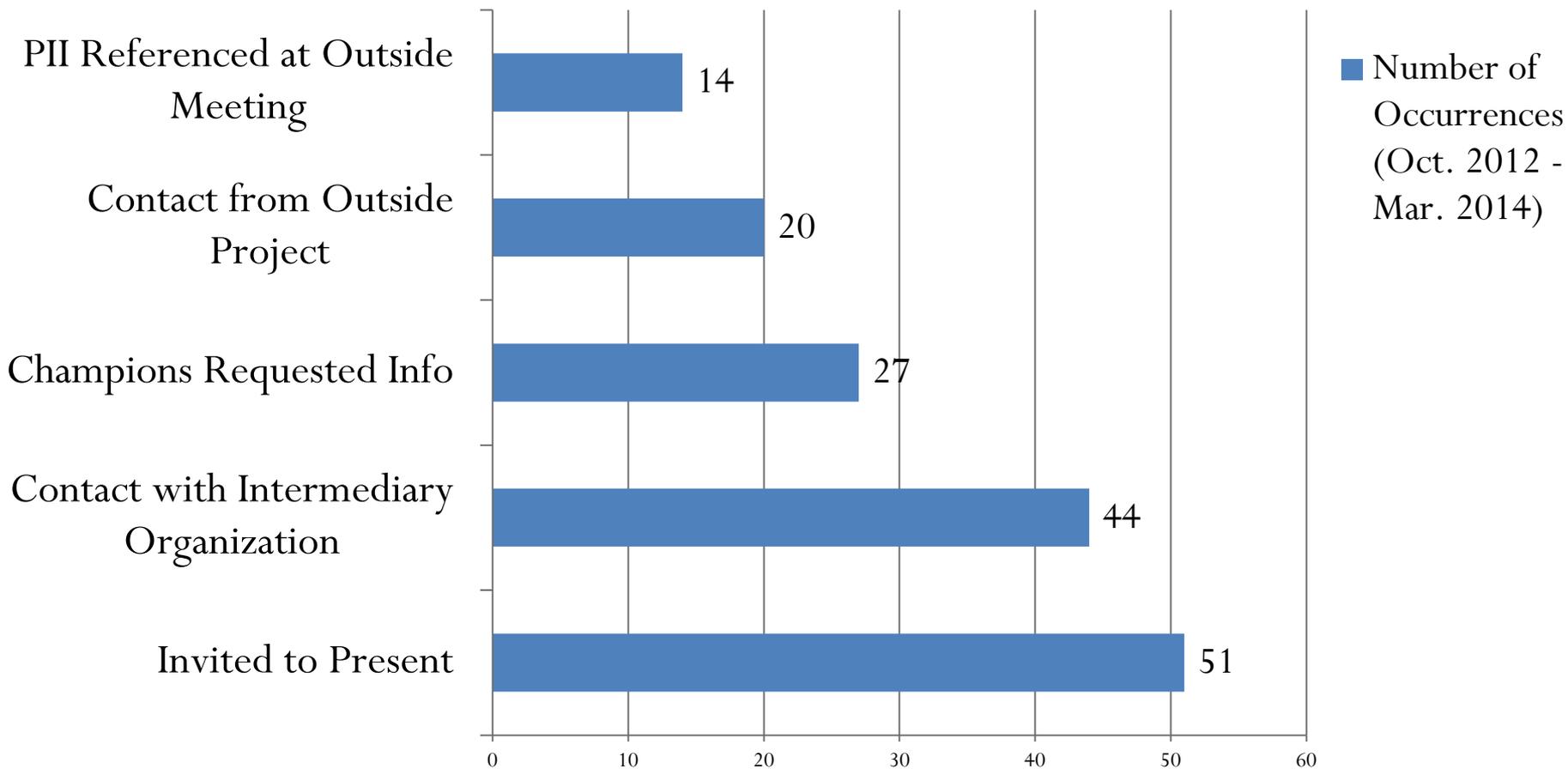
Measuring



&



Evaluation



Lessons Learned

- Dissemination is a communication process, not a distribution exercise
- It is easier to be reactive than proactive in sharing information
- Dissemination must be on the agenda

Lessons Learned

- Someone needs to be responsible for dissemination
- Common language is essential
- It is not easy to measure dissemination efforts

For More Information

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