International Initiative for Impact Evaluation

Stakeholder engagement and evidence uptake and use

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3ie peer-learning event for the Transparency and Accountability Thematic Window
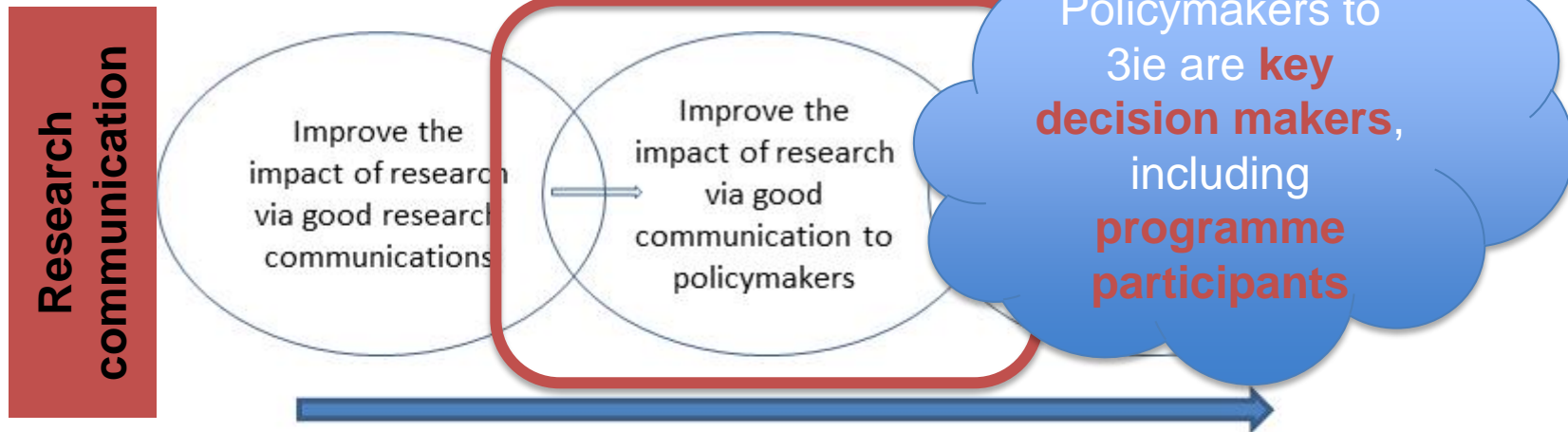Kampala, Uganda
30 March

Transparency and Accountability Thematic Window: what are learning so far?

- Finding windows of opportunity to inform early decisions and building capacity

- The role of local research/implementing partner(s)/ local principal investigators

- Existing relationships with key actors

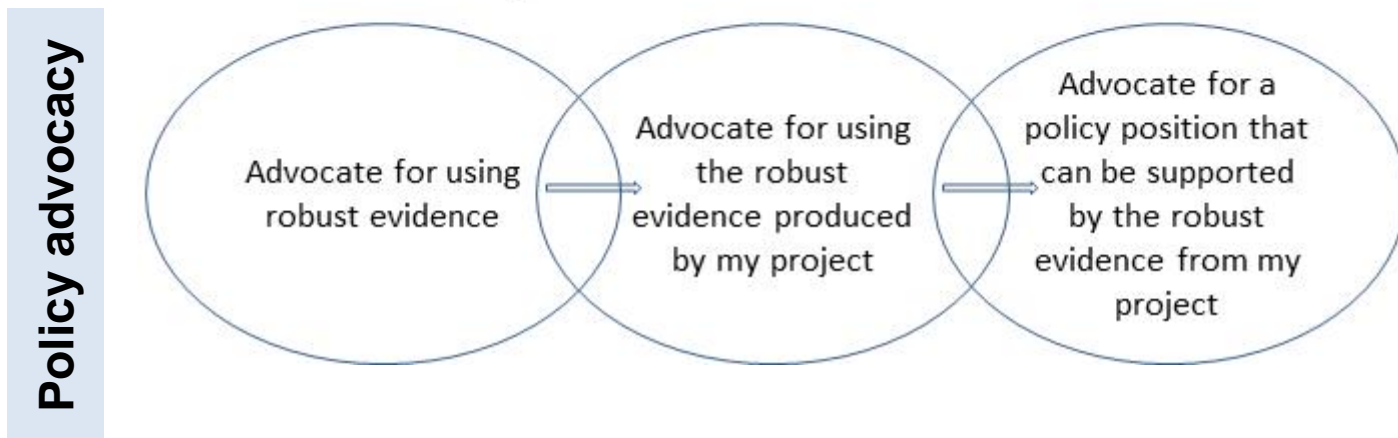- Multi-stakeholder forums; steering committees and study groups

3ie

What challenges still remain?

- Filling the evidence gap in the sector, but also providing **context-specific, country-specific lessons on engagement** and how evidence is used

- **Barriers and facilitators for engagement and use**, actors and messaging, formats

- **Staff turnover; general elections; delayed engagement, shifting political priorities**

- **Understanding demand of users**, usefulness of evaluations and evidence

- **Attitudes and behaviours take time to change.** Decision making may not necessarily be evidence driven

Be clear about what you are practicing

Research communication

Improve the impact of research via good research communications

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Improve the impact of research via good communication to policymakers
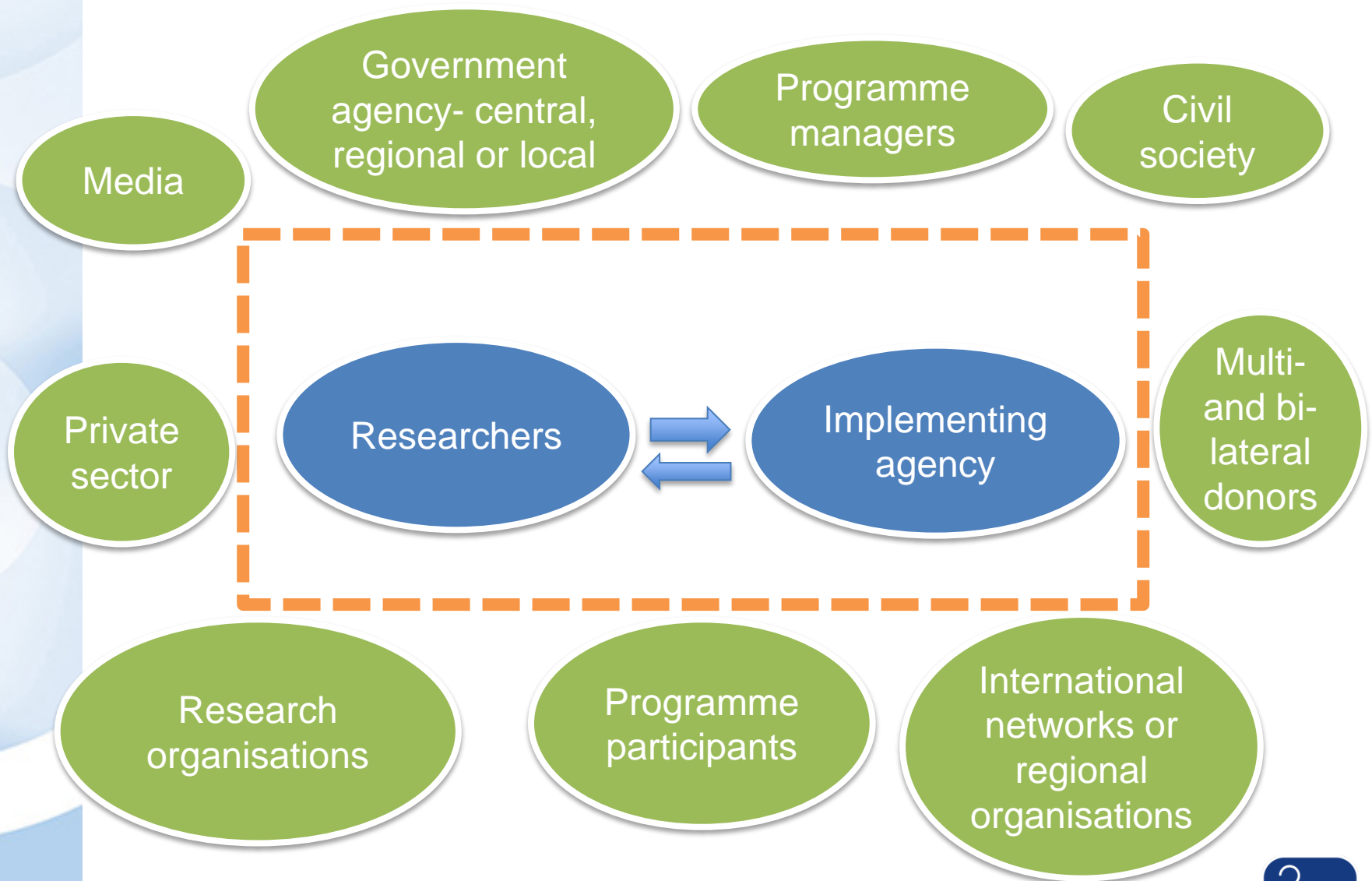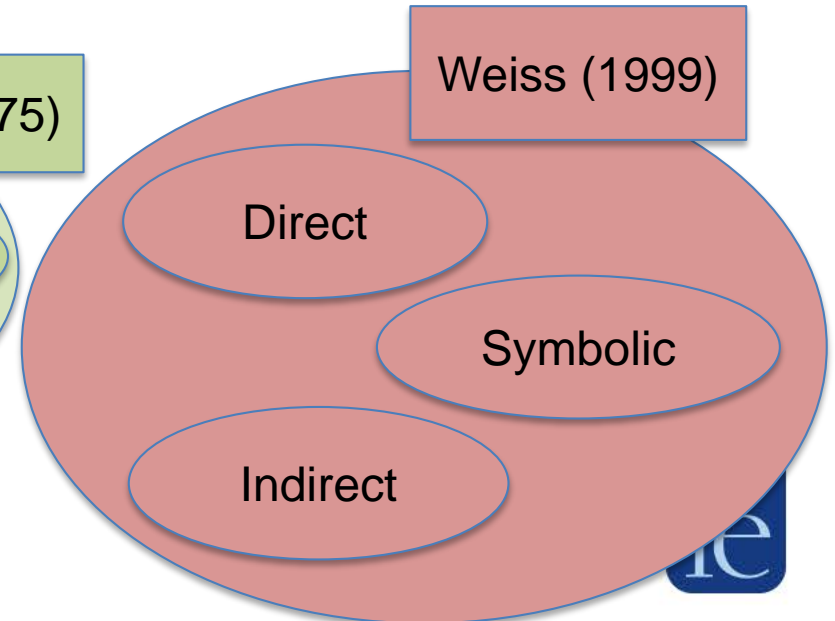
Policymakers to 3ie are **key decision makers**, including **programme participants**

It's easy to slide from one to the other

Policy advocacy

Advocate for using robust evidence

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Advocate for using the robust evidence produced by my project

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Advocate for a policy position that can be supported by the robust evidence from my project
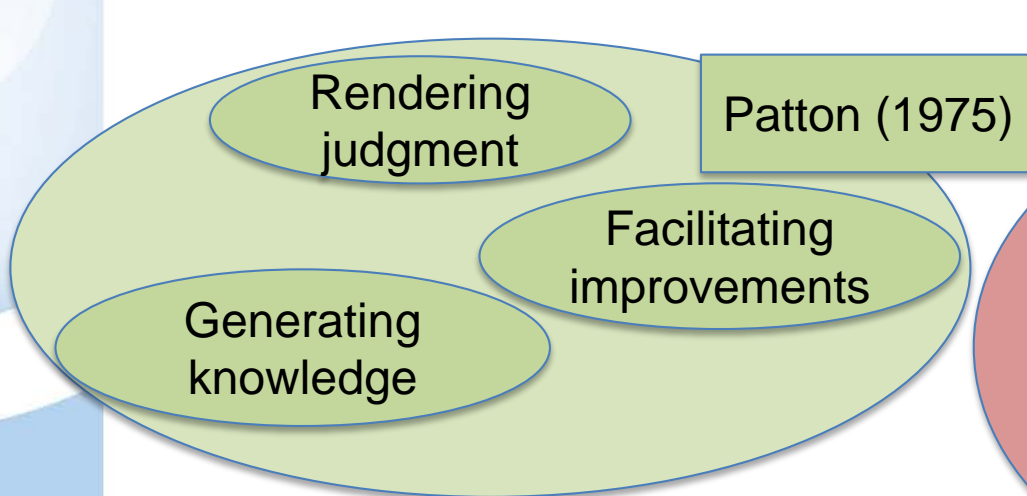
Shaxson (2013)

Who are the users of the evidence?

Conceptualisation of evaluation use

Sandison (2005)

- Instrumental
- Process
- Conceptual
- Legitimising
- Ritual
- Misuse
- Non use

Marra (2000)

- Instrumental
- Enlightenment

Patton (1975)

- Rendering judgment
- Facilitating improvements
- Generating knowledge

Weiss (1999)

- Direct
- Symbolic
- Indirect

Jones *et al.* (2009)
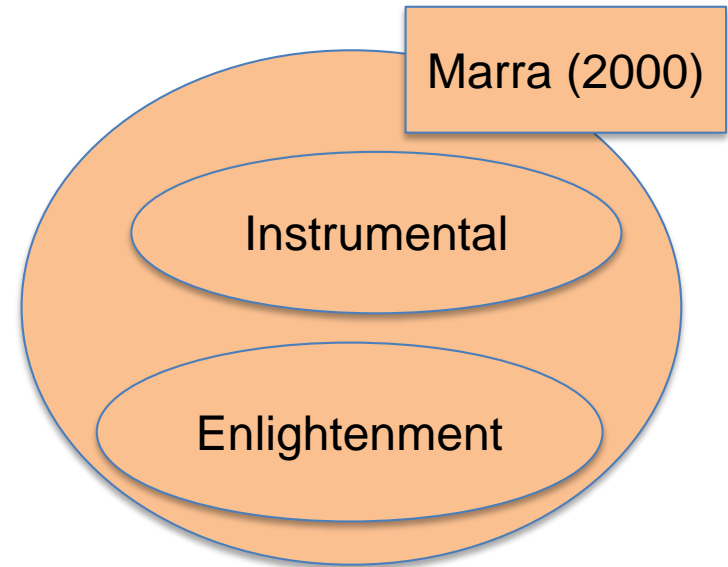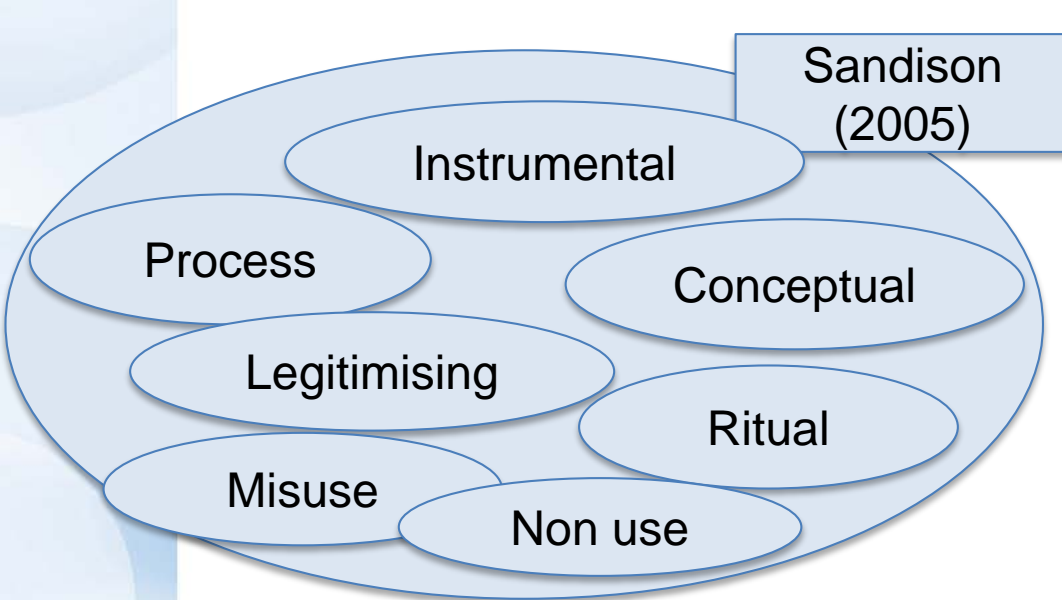
Instances of evidence uptake and use from 3ie-supported studies

- Improve culture of evidence use: 4 / 19
- Change policy or programme design: 2 / 26
- Inform discussions of policies and programmes: 0 / 25
- Inform design of other programmes: 2 / 16
- Close programmes that do not work: 3
- Take successful programmes to scale: 7
- Inform global policy discussions: 2 / 6
- Total: 10 / 102

■ Instances recorded since October 2016   ■ Total as of 31 March 2017
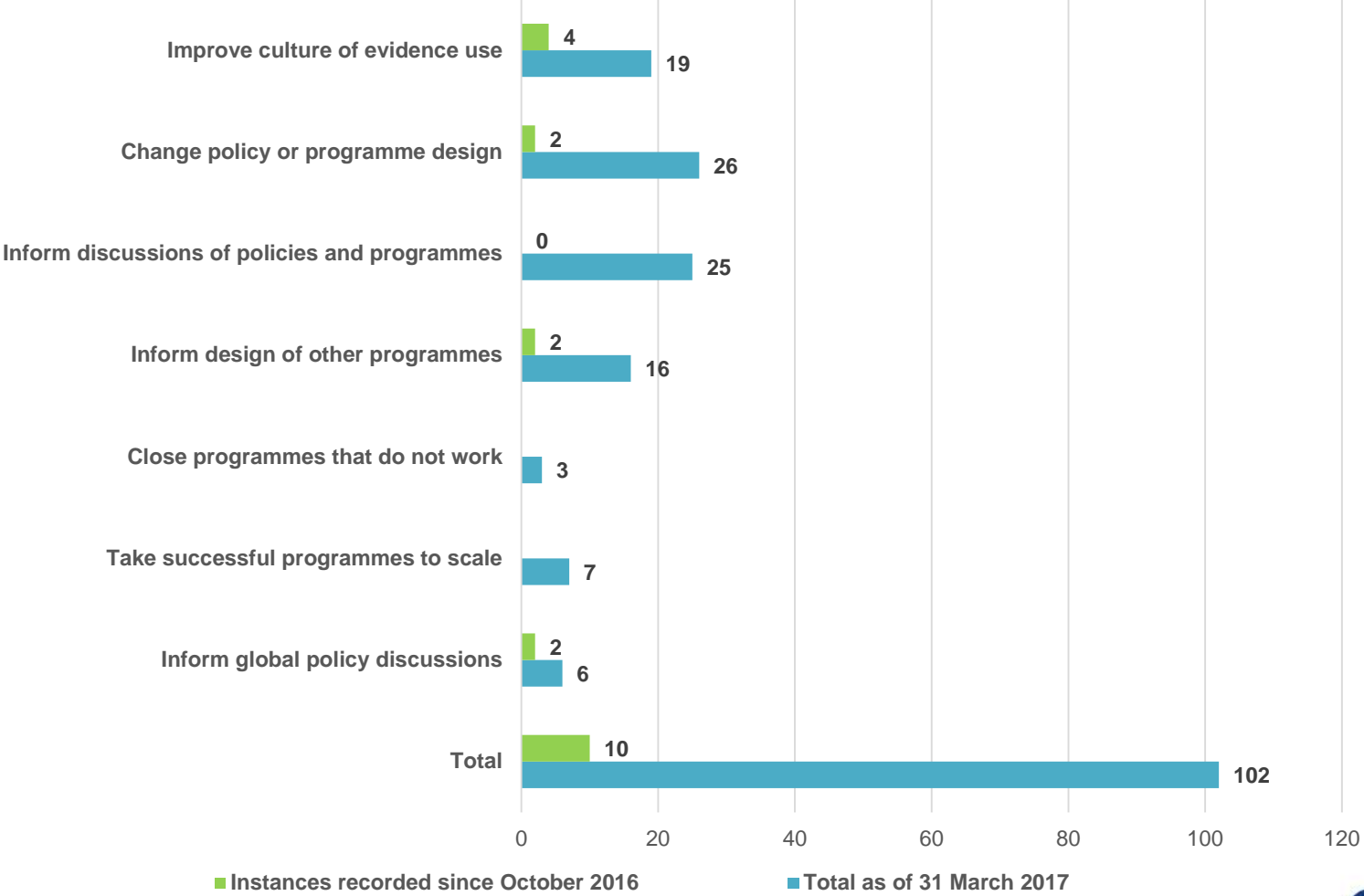
Key elements for effective engagement: who to engage

- Start early: *allows for questions relevant to decision-making, creation of policy-level ownership*

- Establish champions: *maintain their support for evaluation, using evidence*

- Engage deeply, widely: *policy, practice, intermediaries (media, civil society, public); translate knowledge as needed for each*

- Engage often: *relationships and credibility matter*

Key elements for effective communication: how to engage

- Use multiple prongs: *integrated and regular use of many communication channels: social media, media, listservs, events, meetings, website*

- Translate knowledge: *stories of change, research briefs, learning briefs, policymaker-friendly reports, plain language summaries, presentations, blogs and other channels for pro-active engagement*

Thank you

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