

MineduLAB: innovation and learning for the improvement of educational policy

The case of SMS to improve budget execution of the Educational Infrastructure Maintenance Program

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XI School Infrastructure Regional Workshop: “Learning in 21st Century Schools”
March 27 – 31, 2017

It is thought that innovation is...

Costly



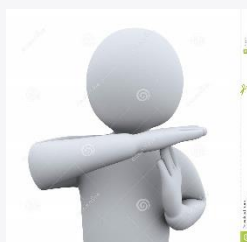
Slow



Risky



Untimely



Difficult to
evaluate

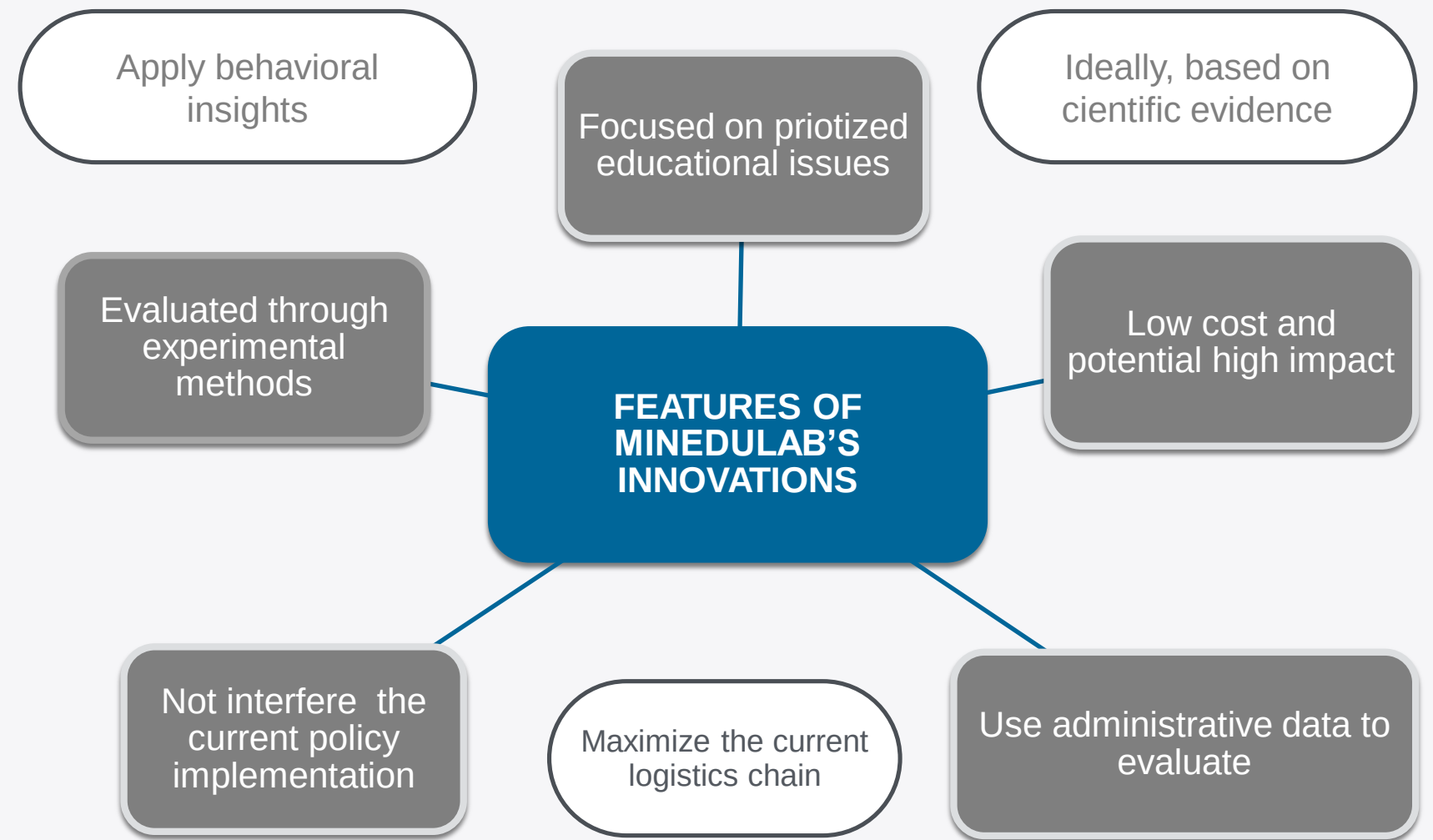
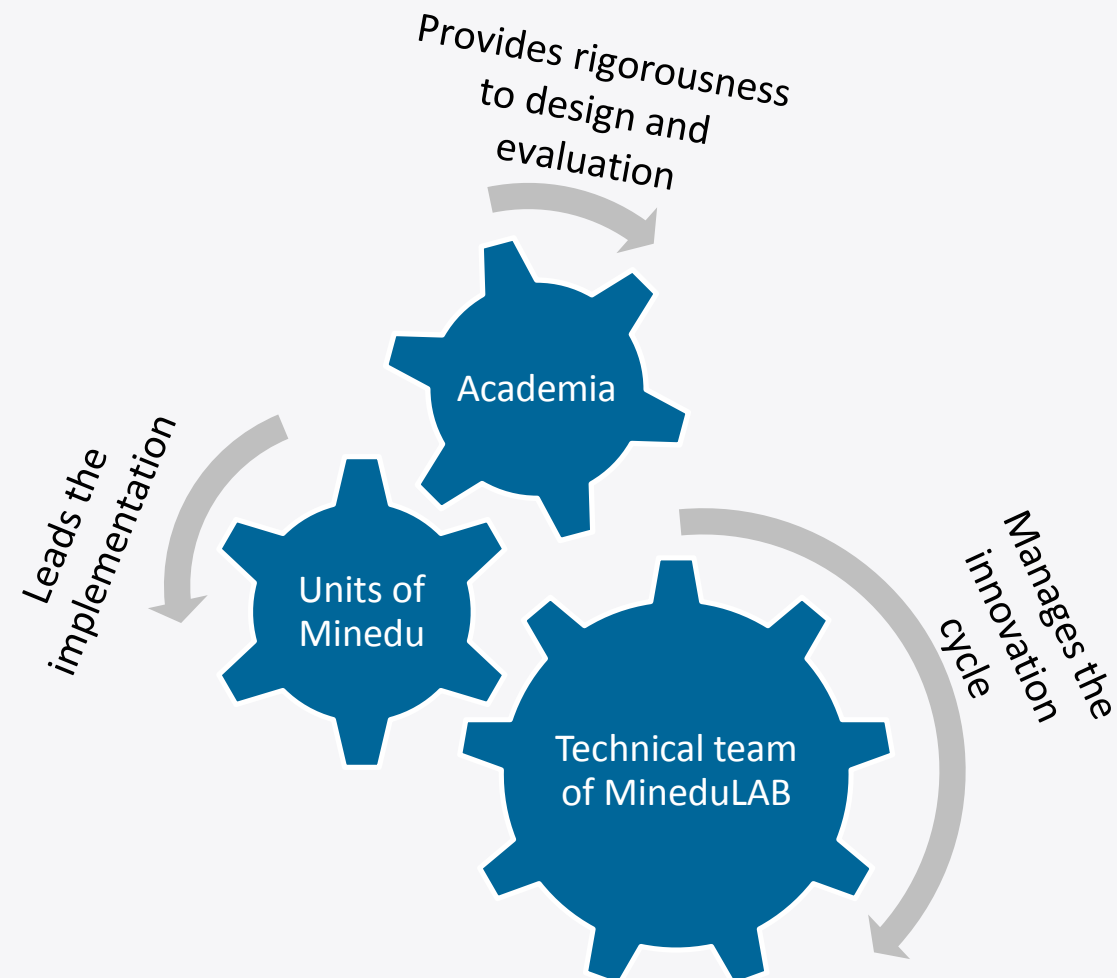


Even more so in the public sector

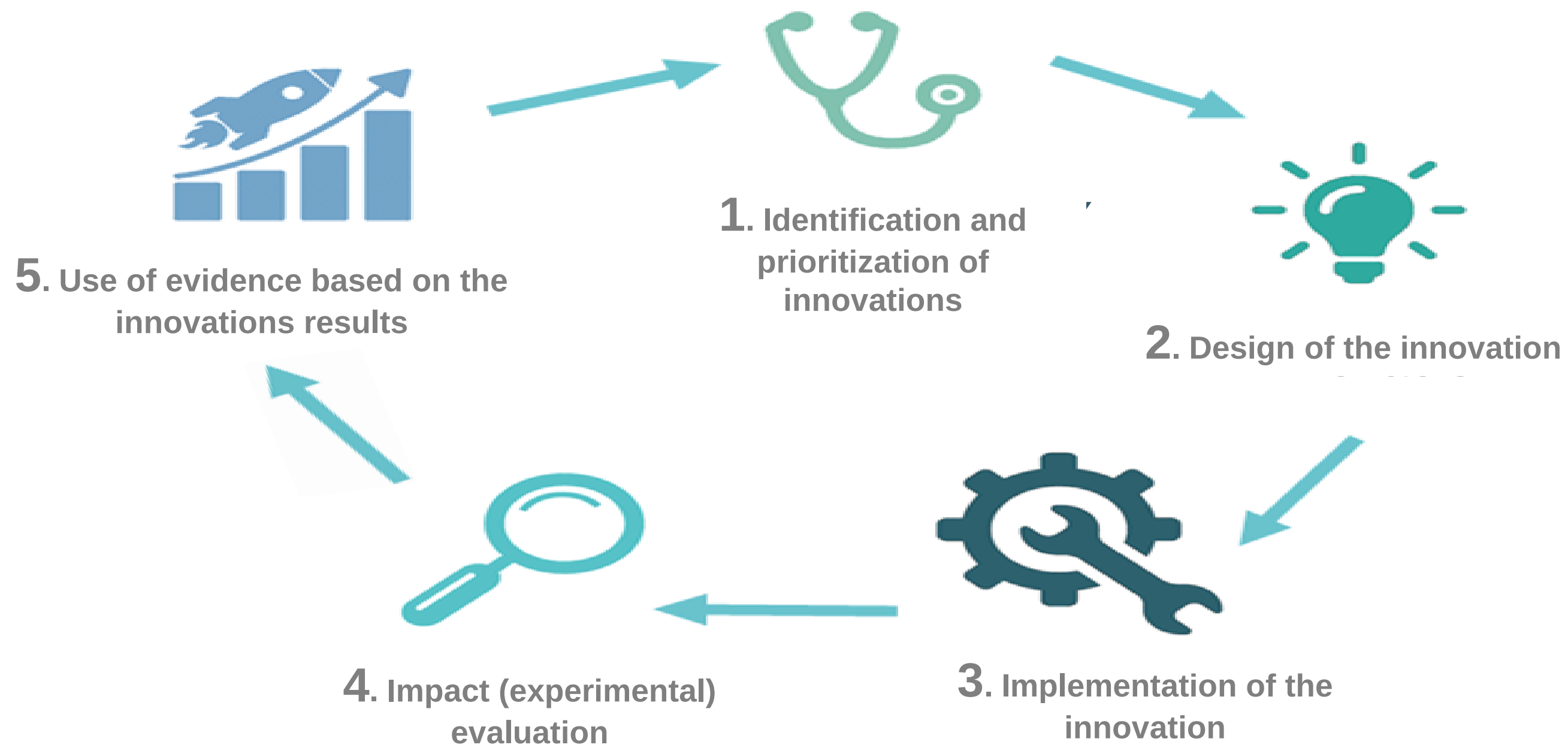
What is MineduLAB?

Innovation lab that allows to learn through the design, implementation and rigorous evaluation of low cost innovations, maximizing the use of administrative data.

It generates evidence prior to the decision of scaling up.



MineduLAB's innovation cycle



Innovation pool

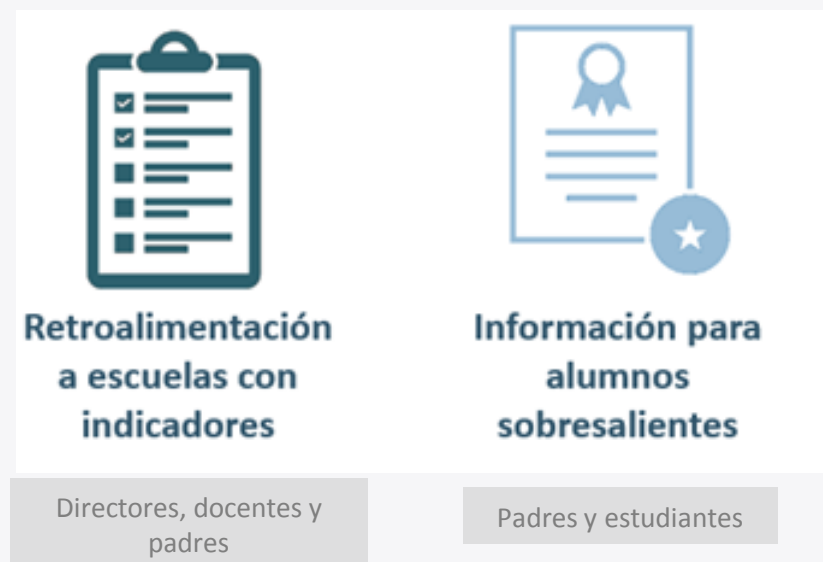
Innovations with results



Innovations in the evaluation phase



Innovations in the design or implementation phase





MineduLAB

The case of SMS to improve budget execution of the Educational Infrastructure Maintenance Program- Pronied

Antecedents: Pronied 2014

Pronied's objective:

Expand, improve, replace, rehabilitate and/or construct public educational infrastructure, including its maintenance and/or equipment.



Total: 50
thousand schools

Total Budget for transfers:

(millions of US\$)

2014: US\$ 197

2015: US\$ 100

2016: US\$ 112

2017: US\$ 111

Prioritized expenditures:

1. Roof repair
2. Bathroom Remodeling
3. Repair of electrical installations
4. Repair of floors
5. Repair of walls
6. Repair of doors
7. Windows repair
8. Repair of seats
9. Purchase of seats
10. Painting
11. Green areas
12. School and Desktop Tools

How does it work?

Figures 2014

1

Money transfer

2

Budget execution

3

Report back

Withdrawal



US\$ 18 millions not withdrawn

6,000 principals do not withdraw

Report back



7% of the amount of \$ not reported on time

16% of principals report back at least 50% of \$ out of time

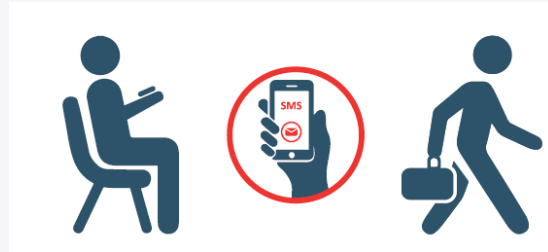
9% of principals report back out of time

11% of principals did not report back a % of the amount of \$

Opportunity

Improve the withdrawal and report back

What did we do?



SMS campaign to school principals, using behavioral insights.

Objectives of the innovation

- 1 **Improve the compliance** of the activities required for the budget execution on time
- 2 **Determine the most effective type of SMS**

Total sample available:
34,000 mobile phones
registered in
administrative database.

Dates:
August 13th - September
30th 2015 (report back
deadline).

Stage 1: Identification

December 2014

Stage 2: Design

January 2015 – September 30th 2015

Stage 3: Implementation

Stage 4: Evaluation

October 1st
to 31st

Stage 5: Use of evidence

November 1st
to 30th



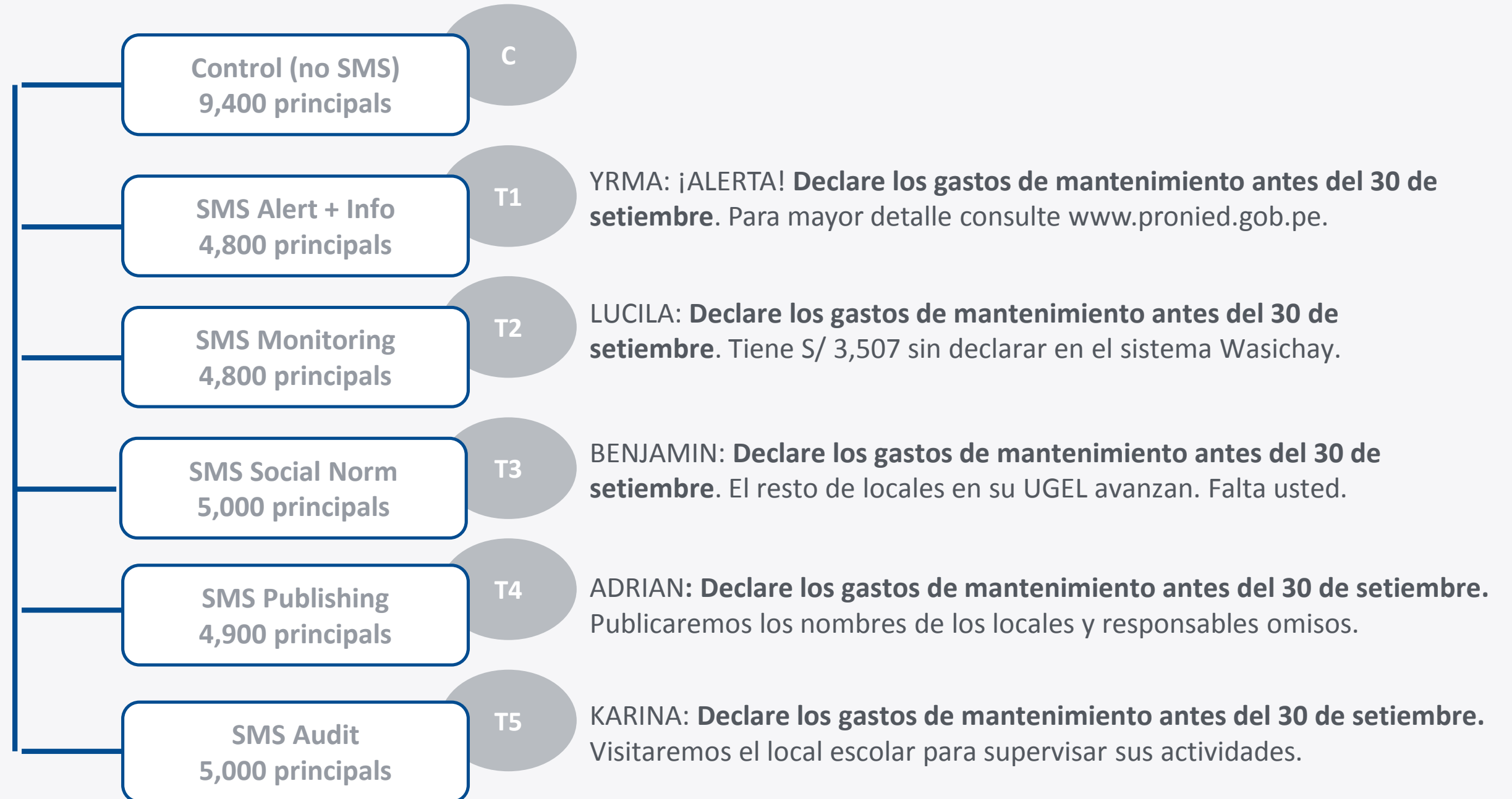
Which types of SMS did we send?

Random assignment:

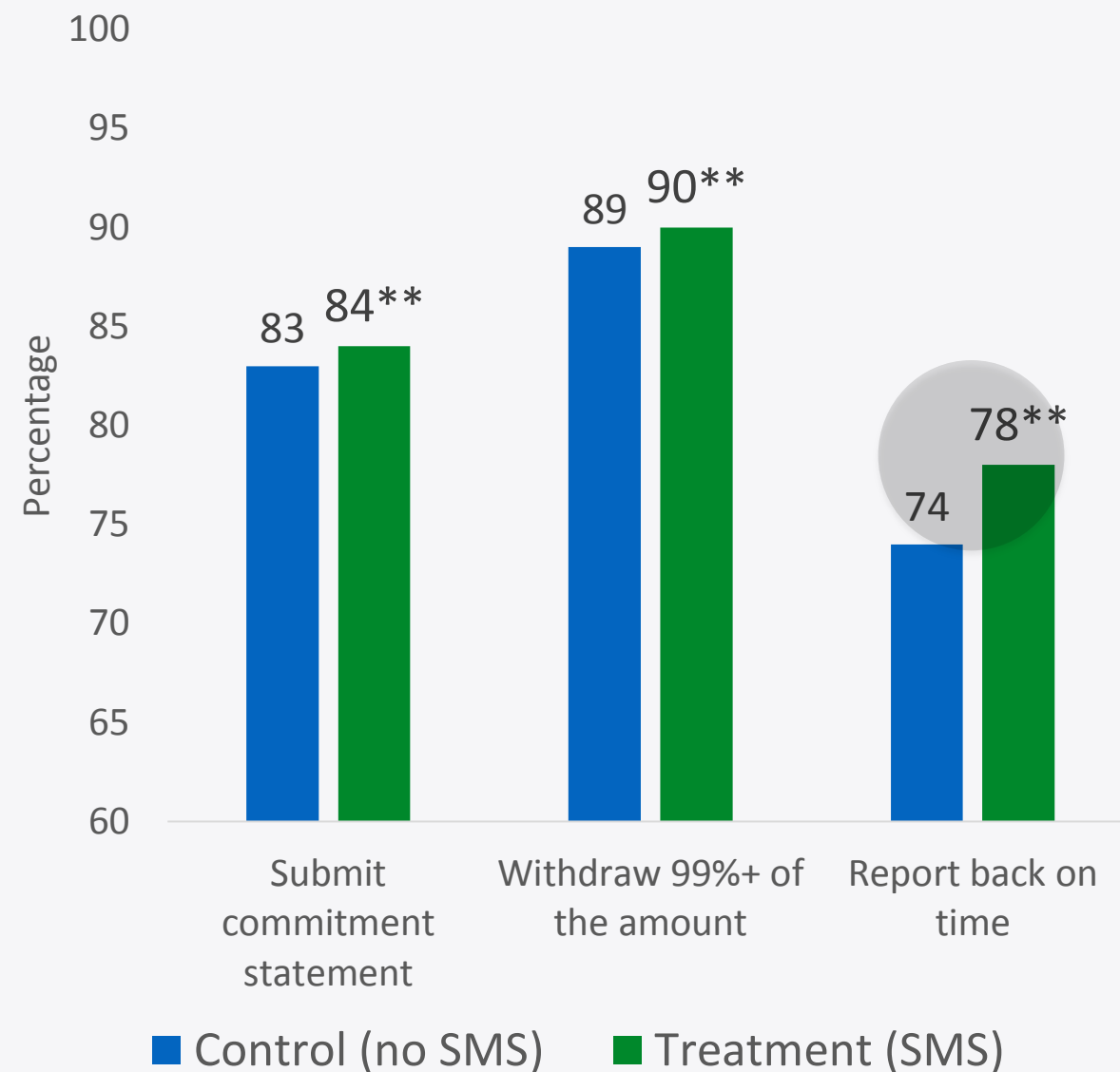
- 5 treatment groups
- 1 control group

Types of SMS

Sent every 2 weeks to each principal



What did we learn?



All of the effects are significant at 5%

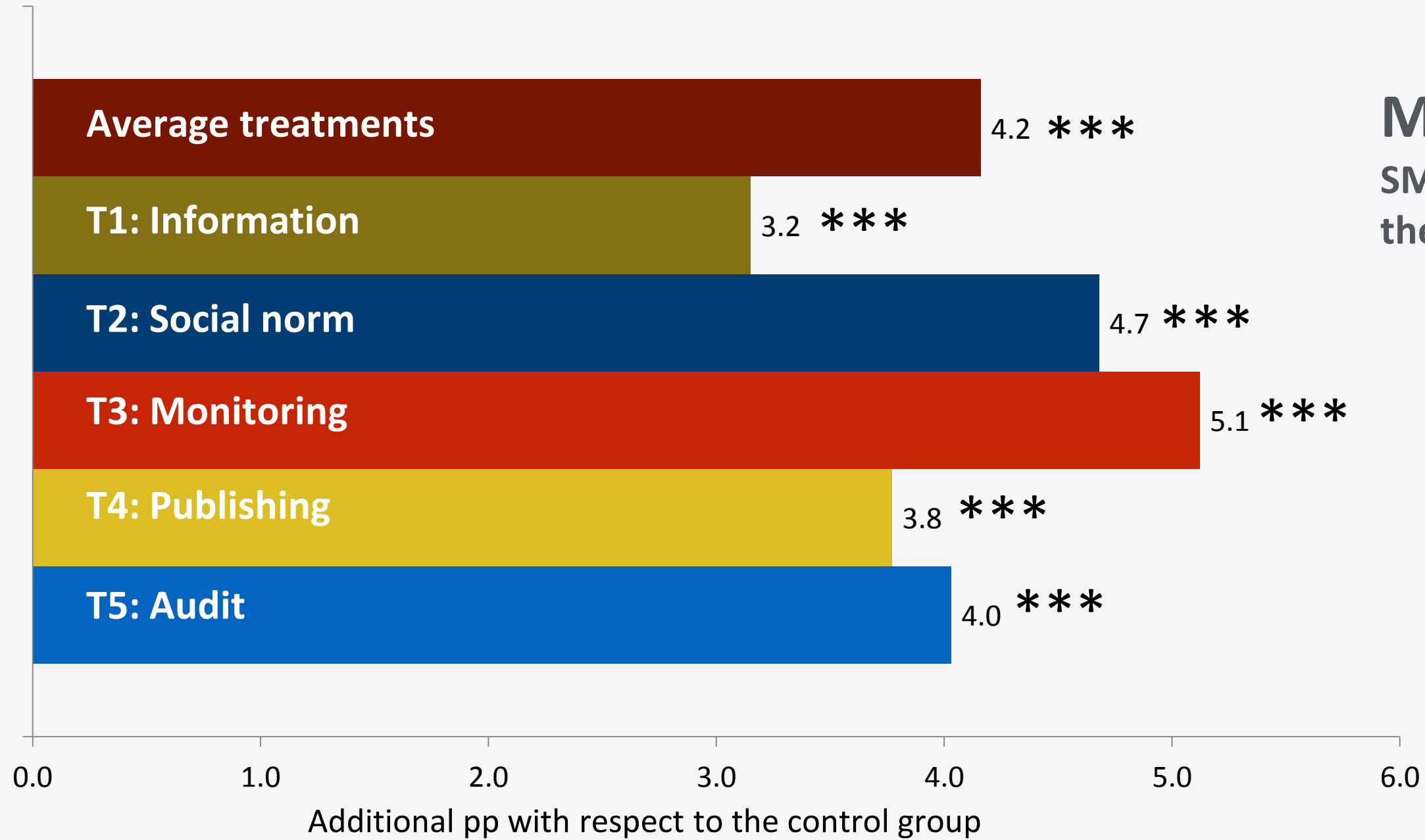
SMS increases probability of:

- submitting commitment statement
- withdrawing 99%+ of the amount
- reporting back on time

+1350 principals report back on time

+US\$ 2,7 millions are reported back on time

What did we learn?

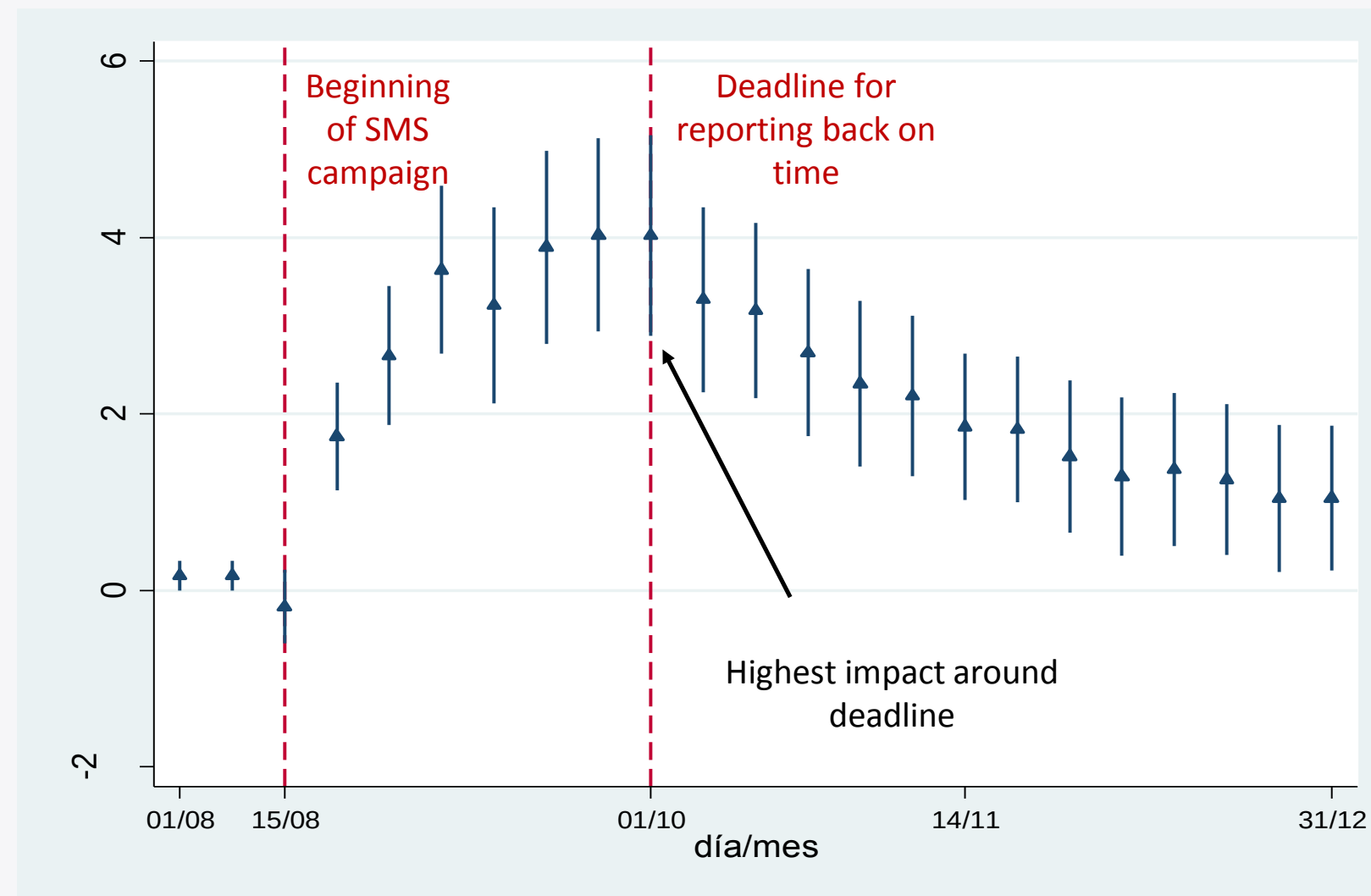


Monitoring and social norms
SMS are the most effective in increasing the reporting back on time.

% in control group:
74.2

What did we learn?

- ✓ **Impact** occurs **mainly in the first weeks**, and it is the highest **around the deadline**.
- ✓ Impact **tends to zero** by the end of the year.



Learnings from the innovation in 2015

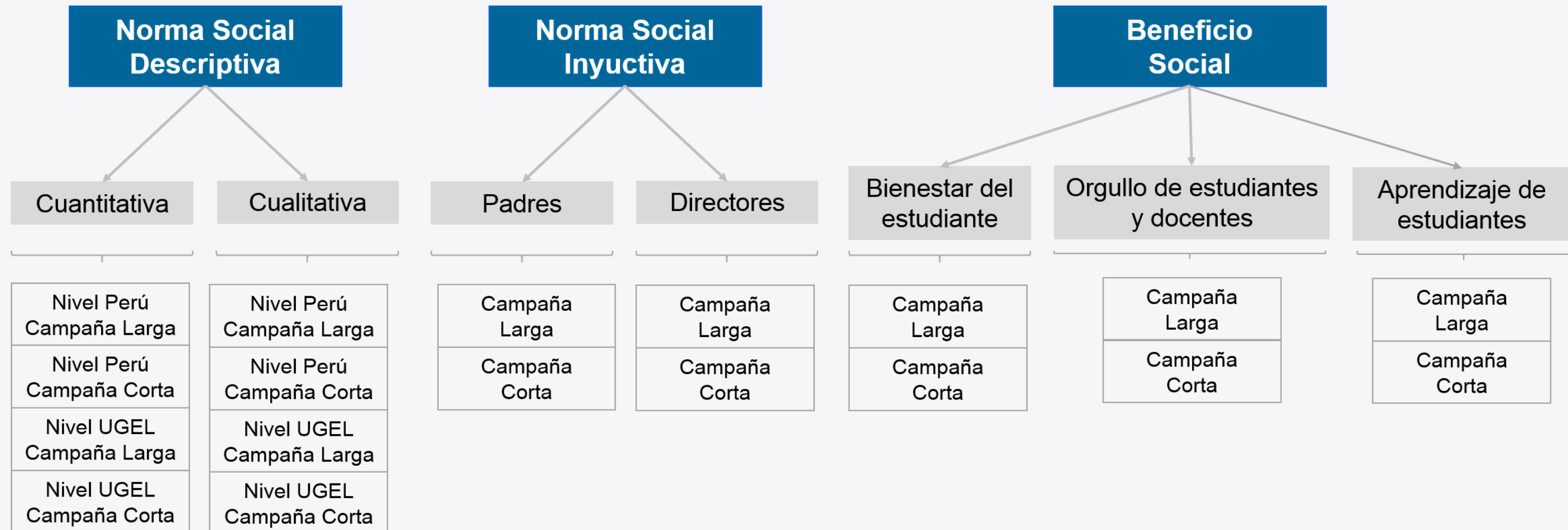
- **SMS** campaign has **positive and significant impacts**, mainly as a reminder of activities compliance.
- The **content** of the SMS is **relevant** for the impact and effectiveness.
- The effect is **almost immediate** and dilutes over time.
- **Low cost innovation**: cost of each SMS: US\$ 0.03
- Highly **cost-effective**: For every US\$ spent on SMS, US\$ 615 are being reported on time.

Pronied wanted to learn more... SMS 2016

Objective: Adjust the design prior to scale it up.

1 Explore length of campaign.

2 Analyze sustainability.



Descriptive social norm

Describes the level of compliance, changing the group of reference to appeal to a group of higher importance.

- **Quantitative content:** indicates the level of compliance (%) for the reference group.

*FELIX: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. El **75%** de locales en su Distrito Escolar ya han declarado. Falta usted. Atte., PRONIED.*

*INGRID: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. El **80%** de locales a Nivel Nacional ya han declarado. Falta usted. Atte., PRONIED.*

- **Qualitative content:** states the idea of progress of compliance.

*CARLA: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. El **resto de locales** en su Distrito Escolar avanzan. Falta usted. Atte., PRONIED.*

*JOSE: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. El **resto de locales** a Nivel Nacional avanzan. Falta usted. Atte., PRONIED.*

Inyuctive social norm

Communicates the preferred norm of the others, instead of the level of compliance. The objective is to test to which group the individual appeals more.

*SOLEDAD: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. **La mayoría de los padres** afirman que es importante una buena infraestructura. Atte., PRONIED*

*JUAN: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. **La mayoría de los directores** afirman que es importante una buena infraestructura. Atte., PRONIED*

Social benefits

Communicates the positive effects of the maintenance activities.

*JULIA: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. Una infraestructura de calidad **ayuda a la seguridad y salud de los estudiantes**. Atte, PRONIED. [Estudiantes bienestar]*

*ANTONIO: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. Una infraestructura de calidad **permite a los docentes y estudiantes estar orgullosos de su escuela**. Atte., PRONIED. [Estudiantes y docentes orgullo]*

*MARIA: Declare los gastos de mantenimiento antes del 30 de setiembre. Una infraestructura de calidad favorece el **aprendizaje de los estudiantes**. Atte, PRONIED. [Estudiantes aprendizaje]*

What do MineduLAB and SMS Pronied teach us?

Public sector can
provide room for
innovation

It is possible to
innovate and learn
at a low cost



It is necessary to think
out of the box to
improve educational
policies

SMS can be an
effective way to reach
stakeholders at
subnational levels and
change their behavior

Thank you!

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