

# THE MESOSYSTEM OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND SUPPORT, ITS ACTORS AND THEIR COLLABORATIONS



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## BACKGROUND

Persons with psychiatric conditions often:

- **Need long-term integrated care & supports**  
From intersectional providers  
Tend to fall between welfare structures
- **Mesosystem fragmentation**  
Integrated care is rarely available  
Despite strong evidence for its superior effectiveness

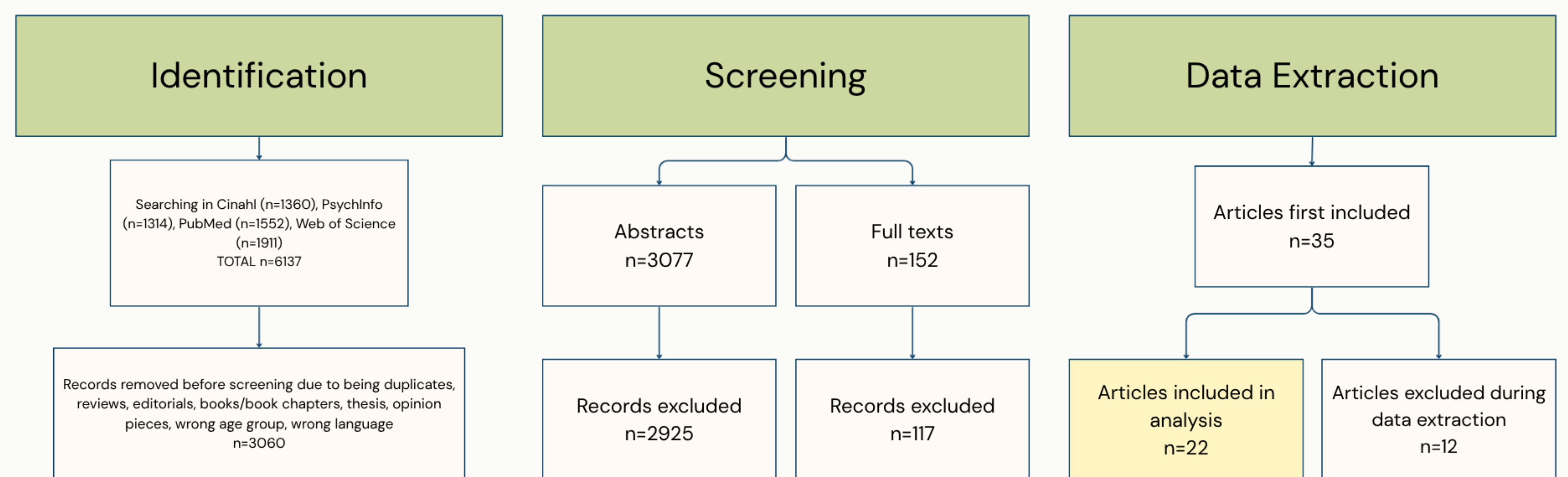
## AIM

Map and characterize collaborations among actors/entities in the mesosystem of mental health services & support

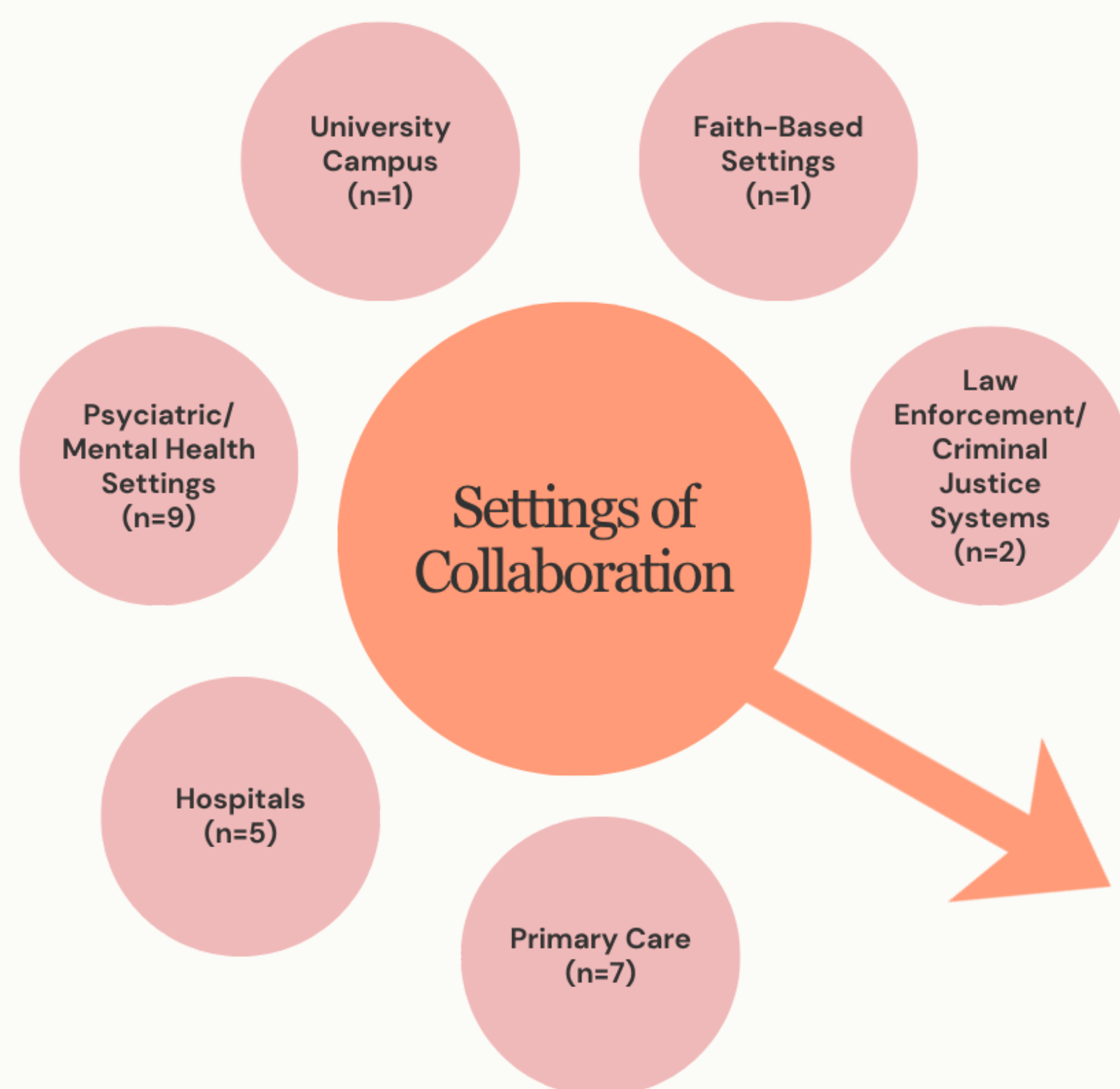
- Who are collaborating mesosystem actors/entities?
- How do they collaborate?
- How are collaborations organized and implemented?
- How may this inform mesosystem redesign?

## What is a mesosystem?

“an interrelated set of peer microsystems that provide care to certain populations or support the care provided to these populations” (p. 203, Mueser et al)



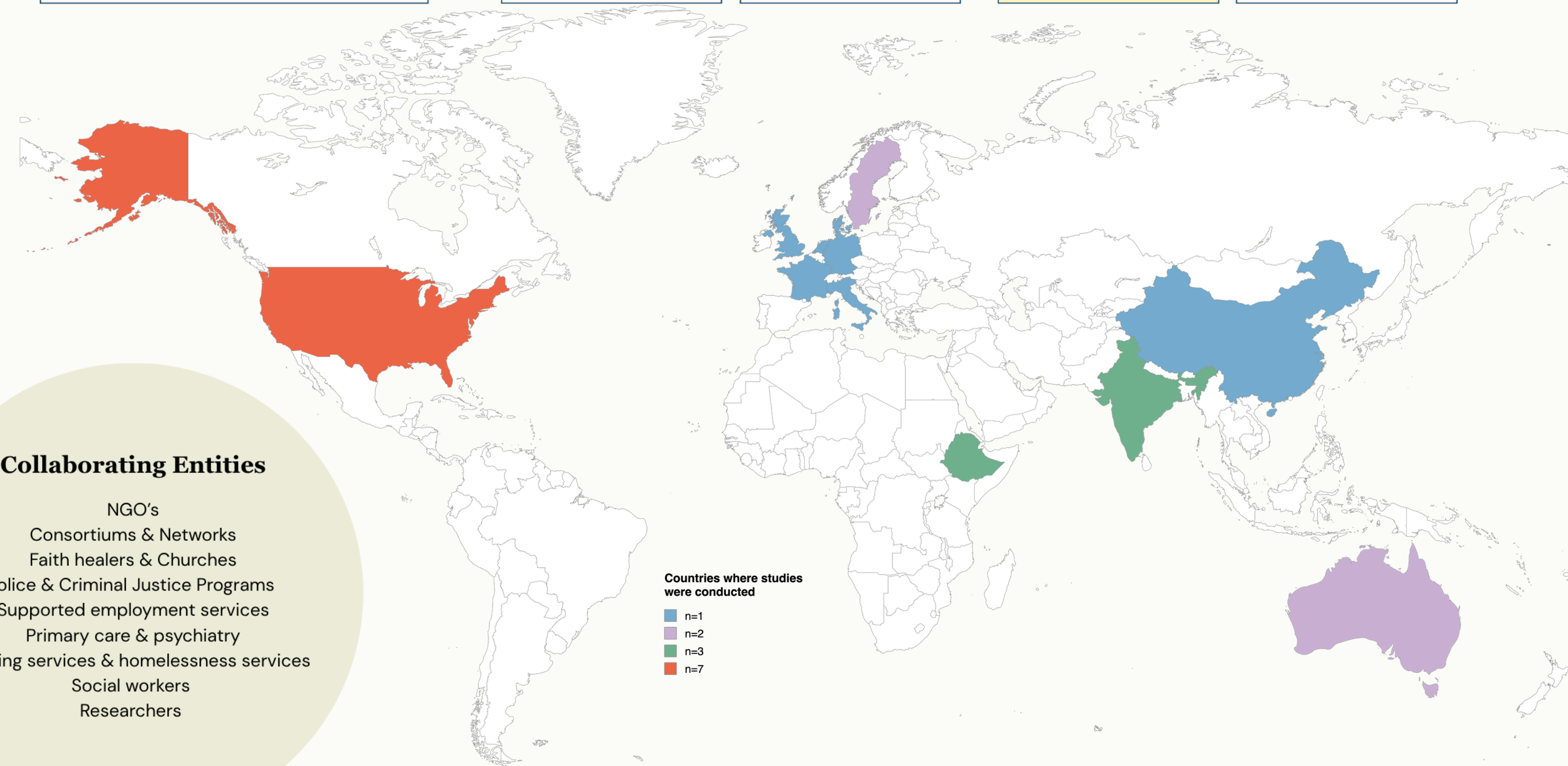
## Settings of Collaboration



**Study Types**  
Quantitative = 4  
Qualitative = 9  
Mixed Methods = 9

## Collaborating Entities

NGO's  
Consortiums & Networks  
Faith healers & Churches  
Police & Criminal Justice Programs  
Supported employment services  
Primary care & psychiatry  
Housing services & homelessness services  
Social workers  
Researchers



## METHODS

- Integrative literature review
- Prospero CRD42024543891
- Study Protocol: BMJ Open
- Sample size in studies varies from 12 to 3172 participants
- Study population includes practitioners and/or patient study populations
- Most studies do not clarify exact age of target groups

**Exclusion criteria**  
reviews; non-research articles; study protocols;  
age of target group (non adults); wrong population (not mental illness centric); comorbidities/COVID;  
no collaboration; only experiences/perceptions; treatment (only)

## Inclusion criteria

Mesosystem Level  
Two mesosystem actors/entities  
Mental Health  
Language

## FINDINGS

Effective collaboration among actors/entities includes:

- Acknowledgement of inherent complexity
- Explicit role definitions & shared goals
- Fostering trust & shared ownership
- Formal tools & agreements complemented with adaptive strategies
- Power imbalances & cultural differences acknowledged & addressed
- Clarification of roles & responsibilities
- Investment in communication infrastructure
- Securing of sustained financial support

Collaboration is not static

- An ongoing process of negotiation, adaptation, & relationship-building
- Collaboration is both structural & relational process