

# **3ie database of systematic reviews in international development: search strategy and procedures**

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**International Initiative  
for Impact Evaluation**

## **About 3ie**

The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) was set up in 2008 to meet growing demand for more and better evidence of what development interventions in low- and middle-income countries work and why. By funding rigorous impact evaluations and systematic reviews and by making evidence accessible and useful to policymakers and practitioners, 3ie is helping to improve the lives of people living in poverty.

## **About this document**

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## **1. Background**

The use of systematic reviews to summarise and appraise literature on social and economic development interventions in low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs) is gathering pace. There is a range of existing systematic reviews with relevance to L&MICS, mainly in the areas of public health, education and nutrition. In addition, over the last five years more than 100 systematic reviews on topics of relevance to international development have been commissioned.

Reviews are spread across different databases and journals, as well as in the grey literature. To avoid duplication and make systematic reviews of relevance to L&MICS easily available to users it is desirable to make information on all systematic reviews available in one place.

The primary objective of the 3ie systematic review database is to build an open access, searchable database which provides a single point of access for policymakers, practitioners and academics looking for systematic reviews of evidence on social and economic development interventions in low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs).

The database will:

- Provide a resource for policy and programme designers to access high quality evidence on what works, what doesn't, why and in what contexts.
- Assess the quality of the existing systematic reviews literature in international development and provide methodological guidance.
- Avoid duplication of efforts and ensure systematic reviews of social and economic development interventions build on existing work.

The database is based on regular systematic searches of a range of academic databases and other repositories of systematic reviews. Reviews meeting the inclusion criteria for the database are summarised and critically appraised using the form included here as appendix 1. To ensure the quality of the summaries and our critical appraisal of review reports we have a rigorous quality assurance system, including internal peer-review, final review done by a third person, and review by study authors before publication. The database is freely available from the 3ie website: <http://www.3ieimpact.org/en/evidence/systematic-reviews/>

The purpose of this document is to outline in detail the types of studies included in the database and the procedures used for identifying studies for inclusion in the database.

### *Scope of 3ie database of systematic reviews*

The database includes systematic reviews which meet the following criteria: (1) Assess the effects of one or more social or economic development intervention(s); (2) Relate to, or include as a majority, evidence from low- and or middle-income countries; (3) Published after January 1993, the year that the Cochrane Collaboration was established.

We exclude the following reviews:

- Reviews only containing evidence from high income countries
- Literature reviews which do not describe methods used for search, data collection and synthesis
- Systematic reviews of efficacy trials (trials undertaken in clinical or laboratory settings)
- Systematic reviews published before 1993

## **2. Search methods**

The search for the 3ie database of systematic reviews is comprehensive and systematic, using detailed search strategies developed in collaboration with an experienced information specialist. It draws on principles for systematic searching applied in systematic reviews and the strategy as outlined in this draft is being further developed iteratively to capture new resources and incorporate more specific search terms into the search strategy.

### *Resources covered by the search*

The bibliographic databases chosen for searching represent the disciplines and sectors that engage in international development research covering economics, health and social welfare, agriculture and education. While there is some overlap between databases, each database will have unique material, and those chosen are broadly representative of the disciplines in international development.

A difficulty is in identifying papers that are published in low- and middle-income country (L&MIC) journals – many databases are biased in favour of Western and

English language journals, but some included below do include L&MIC publications. In addition a range of the web site resources we search are associated with key organisations that are active in international development research.

It is well recognised that the publication of social sciences research is not confined to academic, peer-reviewed journals but is also contained in what is called 'grey' or 'fugitive' literature. This literature – published unconventionally in reports or monographs by NGOs, governments and research organisations - is often difficult to find (often not indexed in bibliographic databases) and many systematic reviews in the social sciences are now being published in this way. It is standard practice, therefore, to seek out this grey literature and some of the database resources searched reflect this practice, by including databases such as IDEAS and JOLIS that contain both serial and monographic resources.

When selecting the sources included in our regular searches we have aimed to strike a balance between being comprehensive, and the search strategy is manageable to implement on a regular basis. Thus, the general search strategy covers a collection of key academic databases in the social sciences, as well as a range of institutional websites and libraries which we know contain systematic reviews. We combine this with a more comprehensive and targeted search in subject specific journals as part of our project on evidence gap maps (Snilstveit *et al.* 2013), and so over time the search becomes increasingly comprehensive.

### *Academic databases*

The academic databases included in our regular search are listed below, with more information and full search strategies included in appendix 2<sup>1</sup>:

- Academic Search Complete (Ebsco): <http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/academic-search-complete>
- Africa-Wide (Ebsco): <http://www.nisc.co.za/databases?id=1>
- Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA – Proquest): <http://www.proquest.com/products-services/ASSIA-Applied-Social-Sciences-Index-and-Abstracts.html>

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1 Other databases under review include Medline, Embase and WHO Global Health Library, AgEcon and Agricola. Incorporating additional health databases to the general search strategy will depend on developing strategies which are specific to non-clinical aspects of health, as otherwise it becomes unmanageable.

- CAB Abstracts (Ovid): <http://www.cabi.org/publishing-products/online-information-resources/cab-abstracts/>
- Cochrane Library (Wiley): <http://www.thecochranelibrary.com/view/0/AboutTheCochraneLibrary.htm>
- Econlit (Ovid): <http://www.aeaweb.org/econlit/>
- Global Health (CABI) – Ovid: <http://www.cabi.org/publishing-products/online-information-resources/global-health/>
- International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS - Proquest): <http://www.proquest.co.uk/en-UK/catalogs/databases/detail/ibss-set-c.shtml>
- PAIS International (Proquest): <http://www.proquest.com/products-services/pais-set-c.html>
- Popline: <http://www.popline.org/>
- Scopus: <http://www.elsevier.com/online-tools/scopus>
- SocIndex (Ebsco): <http://www.ebscohost.com/biomedical-libraries/socindex>
- Web of Science (SSCI & AHCI): <http://thomsonreuters.com/web-of-science/>
- Worldwide Political Science Abstracts (WPSA – Proquest): <http://www.proquest.com/libraries/academic/databases/polsci-set-c.html>

*Sources of grey literature, institutional websites and libraries:*

The sources of grey literature, institutional websites and libraries included in our regular search are listed below, with more information and full search strategies included in appendix 3.

- British Library of Development Studies (BLDS): <http://blds.ids.ac.uk/search/srchady.html>
- Centre for Reviews and Dissemination DARE database: <http://www.crd.york.ac.uk/crdweb/Home.aspx?DB=DARE&SessionID=&SearchID=&E=0&D=0&H=0&SearchFor=>
- Campbell Collaboration Library: <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/>
- Collaboration for Environmental Evidence: <http://www.environmentalevidence.org/Library.html>



- Department for International Development (DFID): <http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/SystematicReviews.aspx#aSystematicReviewTop>
- Eldis: [www.eldis.org](http://www.eldis.org)
- EPPI-Centre: <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=185&language=en-US>
- Evipnet: <http://global.evipnet.org>
- Google Scholar: [scholar.google.co.uk/](http://scholar.google.co.uk/)
- Health Evidence.ca: [www.healthevidence.org](http://www.healthevidence.org)
- IDEAS: <http://ideas.repec.org/>
- International Child Health Review Collaboration: <http://www.ichrc.org/>
- JOLIS: <http://external.worldbankimflib.org/external.htm>
- Meta-Analysis of Economics Research group (MAER): <http://www.hendrix.edu/maer-network/>
- Support collaboration: <http://www.support-collaboration.org/>

Other techniques such as snowballing<sup>2</sup>, citation tracking and use of list serves are also used on a regular basis to ensure that the data base is as comprehensive as possible.

### *Search terms: academic databases*

Searching bibliographic databases requires familiarity with the field structure and indexing system of each database as well as the particular platform being used to run the search. A prior understanding of whether a database has an indexing system (controlled language) or whether it can only be searched using text words (natural language) will greatly enhance the effectiveness of a search and the number of papers retrieved. Similarly, the search platform of the host providing the

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<sup>2</sup>Defined as finding additional papers from the cited references in known relevant studies. See Greenhalgh T & Peacock R. (2005). Effectiveness and efficiency of search methods in systematic reviews of complex evidence: audit of primary sources. *BMJ* 331(7524): 1064-5.

database (e.g. Ovid, Ebsco, Proquest) will make a big difference to the quality of searches depending on the sophistication of its search software. There is now an increasing tendency for database hosts to adopt search systems that are too simplistic to permit complex and effective searching with any degree of confidence for systematic reviews. The search strategies for the academic databases are therefore a mix of controlled and natural language searches where indexing systems are available, and natural language searches on their own.

The focus of the systematic review database is broad, in that we aim to include systematic reviews of effects of any social, economic or health intervention of relevance to LMICs. Thus we have not developed a comprehensive set of intervention-specific search terms. The search strategy is designed to be sufficiently sensitive to capture any systematic review meeting our database inclusion criteria, and we also include a range of topic specific databases in our search strategy, including CAB Abstracts for agriculture, Global Health (CABI) and the Cochrane Library for health and ERIC for Education. The search strategies have been developed based on the other two key concepts reflected in our inclusion criteria, namely systematic reviews and LMICs, as outlined below.

To expand our search we are also currently developing a list of intervention terms iteratively as part of a project on evidence gap maps linked to the database (<http://www.3ieimpact.org/en/about/what-3ie-does/systematic-reviews-programme/evidence-gap-maps/>). In brief, evidence gap maps are thematic collections of evidence on effects covering a range of thematic areas such as maternal health, HIV and AIDS, education and agriculture. Producing an evidence gap map includes developing a framework of the interventions and outcomes covered by the thematic area of focus, and then conducting a systematic search for systematic reviews (and in some cases impact evaluations) falling within the scope of that framework (Snilstveit *et al.* 2013). In doing so we draw on the existing 'general' search strategy for the systematic review database, combined with intervention terms to produce a more specific search strategy. The search is then run across all the databases included in our regular search, and the complete strategy is added to the search we run every quarter. Thus, as more gap maps are developed the specificity of the search strategy for the database is gradually improved.

## *Systematic review terms*

We developed a search string (filter) for systematic reviews based on a number of published filters<sup>3</sup>. However, because of large numbers of irrelevant papers being retrieved in some databases we have adapted the filter for some databases by removing the more sensitive and less-specific terms in the interests of a more focused search for those databases. The generic search strategy is included below and search strategies for individual databases are included in appendix 2.

### *Generic systematic review filter (Ovid platform)*

((systematic\* or synthes\*) adj3 (research or evaluation\* or finding\* or thematic\* or report or descriptive or explanatory or narrative or meta\* or review\* or data or literature or studies or evidence or map or quantitative or study or studies or paper or impact or impacts or effect\* or compar\*)).ti,ab,sh.

OR

("meta regression" or "meta synth\*" or "meta-synth\*" or "meta analy\*" or "metaanaly\*" or "meta-analy\*" or "metanaly\*" or "metaregression" or "meta-regression" or "methodologic\* overview" or "pool\* analys\*" or "pool\* data" or "quantitative\* overview" or "research integration").ti,ab,sh.

OR

(review adj3 (effectiveness or effects or systemat\* or synth\* or integrat\* or map\* or methodologic\* or quantitative or evidence or literature)).ti,ab,sh.

### *Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) terms*

We developed a search string (filter) with L&MIC geographical terms to help us focus our results on studies with explicit mention of L&MICs. The geographic headings are based on the World Bank's definition of low- and middle-income countries for July 2012 and updated annually<sup>4</sup>. This part of the search also encompassed elements of the L&MICs filter devised by the Cochrane EPOC group<sup>5</sup>.

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3 These came from EPPI Centre (<http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/>), the InterTasc group site (<https://sites.google.com/a/york.ac.uk/issg-search-filters-resource/home>) and from initial search results.

4 <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups>

5 <http://epocoslo.cochrane.org/lmic-filters>

The generic search strategy is included below and search strategies for individual databases are included in appendix 2.

*Detailed search strategies: Sources of grey literature, institutional websites and libraries*

The search capabilities of the websites listed vary greatly and many of them are poorly developed making it difficult to conduct specific searches. For websites which do not have any search facilities, all the publication titles are screened for inclusion according to the database inclusion criteria. For websites where complicated search strings cannot be handled by the search facility the strategy is to search using broad key words such as 'systematic review' and/or 'developing countries' or 'LMICs'.

*Search frequency and procedures*

A set of draft search strategies were developed in 2011 for searching a limited number of databases. This was further revised and extended in 2013 with a larger number of databases to be searched. Once strategies were finalised we searched databases from 1990 to 2013, and search strategies were saved to produce monthly update alerts. These saved searches can be amended at any time to reflect new topics and terms. Some academic databases do not have this facility, nor do the sources of grey literature include this option, and for these sources we conduct searches every three months (May, August, November and February).

Search results are downloaded into the reference management software Endnote. Duplicates are removed and titles and abstracts are screened against the database inclusion criteria every quarter. The full text of potentially eligible studies is obtained and screened, recording the reasons for exclusion where applicable. All systematic reviews deemed eligible for inclusion are assessed a second time before being summarised and added to the 3ie database.

## **Appendix 1: Data to be collected and summarised for database entries: terms of reference**

- (1) Existing record on database:
- (2) Title:
- (3) Author:
- (4) Geographical coverage:
- (5) Sector:
- (6) Sub-sector:
- (7) Equity focus:
- (8) Status: Completed, Protocol or Title stage (delete as appropriate)
- (9) Review type: effectiveness review (drawing on evidence from impact evaluations), or other review (delete as appropriate)
- (10) Quantitative synthesis method, if applicable:
- (11) Qualitative synthesis method, if applicable:
- (12) Background: Brief description of the interventions and motivation for the review. What is the problem? What is the intervention? How does it aim to have an impact on outcomes of interest?
- (13) Objectives:
- (14) Main findings: This section should include a brief description of findings, including number of included studies, location of studies, results of synthesis (if meta-analysis was conducted, include pooled effect size and 95 percent confidence interval for relevant syntheses), conclusions, findings regarding methodology and future research.

The section should be structured as follows (including the subheadings):

One line summary: summarise the conclusions of the review in one or two sentences

Evidence base: Number and types of studies, geographical location and thematic focus

Policy relevant findings: findings related to the effectiveness of the intervention etc

Implications for further research: any mention of issues to be addressed in future research, including issues relating to study design.

- (15) Methodology: Inclusion criteria (including population, intervention, study design (e.g., RCTs and Quasi-experimental studies), outcomes and contexts), outline of search (including main databases and time period of search, data collection and synthesis. Please see guidelines for more guidance on this section.
- (16) Applicability/external validity: Does the review discuss how generalizable the results are? What methods, if any, does the review use to assess applicability/external validity? Do the authors take any steps to improve the applicability/external validity of the findings of the review (e.g., use a theory based approach, drawing on a logic model or programme theory, and/ or reporting information along the causal chain)
- (17) Publication Source: Author, year, Title, Publication details (if journal: title, vol, no, pp; if report series/ working paper etc: Title of series and no if applicable, publisher location: publisher name; if book: publisher location: publisher name)

Example from Journal of Development Effectiveness (JDEFF) citation for journal article citation (for more refer JDEFF)

Salazar, D.J. and Alper, D.K. (2002) Reconciling environmentalism and the left: perspectives on democracy and social justice in British Columbia's environmental movement. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 35(4), pp. 527–566.

- (18) Downloadable link: Include link to downloadable paper – preferably open access, but if this is not available include link to pay per view.
- (19) Contact details of corresponding author/s:
- (20) Summary of quality assessment (from C3 in checklist below):
- (21) Checklist for making judgements about how much confidence to place in a systematic review of effects (adapted version of SURE checklist)<sup>i</sup>

Assessed by:
Date:

Section A: *Methods used to identify, include and critically appraise studies*

<p>A.1 Were the criteria used for deciding which studies to include in the review reported?</p> <p>Did the authors specify:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Types of studies</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Participants/ settings/ population</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Outcome(s)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><i>Coding guide - check the answers above</i></p> <p><i>YES: All four should be yes</i></p> <p><i>NO: All four should be no</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: Any other</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)</i></p>	

<p>A.2 Was the search for evidence reasonably comprehensive?</p> <p>Were the following done:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Language bias avoided (no restriction of inclusion based on language)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No restriction of inclusion based on publication status</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Relevant databases searched (<u>Minimum criteria</u>: All reviews should search at least one source of grey literature such as Google; for health: Medline/ Pubmed + Cochrane Library; for social sciences IDEAS + at least one database of general social science literature and one subject specific database)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reference lists in included articles checked</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Authors/experts contacted</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Can't tell</p> <p><i>Coding guide - check the answers above:</i></p> <p><i>YES: All five should be yes</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: Relevant databases and reference lists are both reported</i></p> <p><i>NO: Any other</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)</i></p>	



A.3 Does the review cover an appropriate time period?

*Is the search period comprehensive enough that relevant literature is unlikely to be omitted?*

Yes

Can't tell (only use if no information about time period for search)

No

Unsure

*Coding guide:*

*YES: Generally this means searching the literature at least back to 1990*

*NO: Generally if the search does not go back to 1990*

*CAN'T TELL: No information about time period for search*

*Note: With reference to the above – there may be important reasons for adopting different dates for the search, e.g. depending on the intervention. If you think there are limitations with the timeframe adopted for the search which have not been noted and justified by the authors, you should code this item as a NO and specify your reason for doing so in the comment box below. Older reviews should not be downgraded, but the fact that the search was conducted some time ago should be noted in the quality assessment. Always report the time period for the search in the comment box.*

*Comments (note search period, any justification provided for the search period, or uncertainty)*

<p>A.4 Was bias in the selection of articles avoided?</p> <p>Did the authors specify:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Independent screening of full text by at least 2 reviewers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> List of included studies provided</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> List of excluded studies provided</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><i>Coding guide:</i></p> <p><i>YES: All three should be yes, although reviews published in journals are unlikely to have a list of excluded studies (due to limits on word count) and the review should not be penalised for this.</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: Independent screening and list of included studies provided are both reported</i></p> <p><i>NO: All other. If list of included studies provided, but the authors do not report whether or not the screening has been done by 2 reviewers review is downgraded to NO.</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty):</i></p>	

<p>A.5 Did the authors use appropriate criteria to assess the quality and risk of bias in analysing the studies that are included?<sup>ii</sup></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The criteria used for assessing the quality/ risk of bias were reported</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A table or summary of the assessment of each included study for each criterion was reported</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sensible criteria were used that focus on the quality/ risk of bias (and not other qualities of the studies, such as precision or applicability/external validity). "Sensible" is defined as a recognised quality appraisal tool/ checklist, or similar tool which assesses bias in included studies. Please see footnotes for details of the main types of bias such a tool should assess.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><i>Coding guide:</i></p> <p><i>YES: All three should be yes</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: The first and third criteria should be reported. If the authors report the criteria for assessing risk of bias and report a summary of this assessment for each criterion, but the criteria may be only partially sensible (e.g. do not address all possible risks of bias, but do address some), we downgrade to PARTIALLY.</i></p> <p><i>NO: Any other</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)</i></p>	

<p>A.6 Overall – how much confidence do you have in the methods used to identify, include and critically appraise studies?</p> <p><i>Summary assessment score A relates to the 5 questions above.</i></p> <p><i>High confidence applicable when the answers to the questions in section A are all assessed as 'yes'</i></p> <p><i>Low confidence applicable when any of the following are assessed as 'NO' above: not reporting explicit selection criteria (A1), not conducting reasonably comprehensive search (A2), not avoiding bias in selection of articles (A4), not assessing the risk of bias in included studies (A5)</i></p> <p><i>Medium confidence applicable for any other – i.e. section A3 is assessed as 'NO' or 'can't tell' and remaining sections are assessed as 'partially' or 'can't tell'</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Low confidence (limitations are important enough that the results of the review are not reliable)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medium confidence (limitations are important enough that it would be worthwhile to search for another systematic review and to interpret the results of this review cautiously, if a better review cannot be found)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High confidence (only minor limitations)</p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations).</i></p>	

Section B: *Methods used to analyse the findings*

<p>B.1 Were the characteristics and results of the included studies reliably reported?</p> <p>Was there:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Independent data extraction by at least 2 reviewers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A table or summary of the characteristics of the participants, interventions and outcomes for the included studies</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A table or summary of the results of all the included studies</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable (e.g. no included studies)</p> <p><i>Coding guide:</i></p> <p><i>YES: All three should be yes</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: Criteria one and three are yes, but some information is lacking on second criteria.</i></p> <p><i>No: None of these are reported. If the review does not report whether data was independently extracted by 2 reviewers (possibly a reporting error), we downgrade to NO.</i></p> <p><i>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)</i></p>	

<p>B.2 Are the methods used by the review authors to analyse the findings of the included studies clear, including methods for calculating effect sizes if applicable?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially  <input type="checkbox"/> No  <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data) </p> <p><i>Coding guide:</i></p> <p><i>YES: Methods used clearly reported. If it is clear that the authors use narrative synthesis, they don't need to say this explicitly.</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: Some reporting on methods but lack of clarity</i></p> <p><i>NO: Nothing reported on methods</i></p> <p><i>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)</i></p>	

<p>B.3 Did the review describe the extent of heterogeneity?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Did the review ensure that included studies were similar enough that it made sense to combine them, sensibly divide the included studies into homogeneous groups, or sensibly conclude that it did not make sense to combine or group the included studies?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Did the review discuss the extent to which there were important differences in the results of the included studies?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If a meta-analysis was done, was the <math>I^2</math>, chi square test for heterogeneity or other appropriate statistic reported? If no statistical test was reported, is a qualitative justification made for the use of random effects?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data)</p> <p><i>Coding guide:</i></p> <p><i>YES: First two should be yes, and third category should be yes if applicable should be yes</i></p> <p><i>PARTIALLY: The first category is yes</i></p> <p><i>NO: Any other</i></p> <p><i>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</i></p>
<p><i>Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)</i></p>	



B.4 Were the findings of the relevant studies combined (or not combined) appropriately relative to the primary question the review addresses and the available data?

- Yes
- Partially
- No
- Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data)
- Can't tell

How was the data analysis done?

- Descriptive only
- Vote counting based on direction of effect
- Vote counting based on statistical significance
- Description of range of effect sizes
- Meta-analysis
- Meta-regression
- Other: specify
- Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data)

*Coding guide:*

*YES: If appropriate table, graph or meta-analysis AND appropriate weights AND unit of analysis errors addressed (if appropriate).*

*PARTIALLY: If appropriate table, graph or meta-analysis AND appropriate weights AND unit of analysis errors not addressed (and should have been).*

*NO: If narrative OR vote counting (where quantitative analyses would have been possible) OR inappropriate reporting of table, graph or meta-analyses.*

*NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data*

*CAN'T TELL: if unsure (note reasons in comments below)*

How were the studies weighted in the analysis?

- Equal weights (this is what is done when vote counting is used)
- By quality or study design (this is rarely done)
- Inverse variance (this is what is typically done in a meta-analysis)
- Number of participants (sample size)
- Other: specify
- Not clear
- Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data)

Did the review address unit of analysis errors?

- Yes - took clustering into account in the analysis (e.g. used intra-cluster correlation coefficient)
- No, but acknowledged problem of unit of analysis errors
- No mention of issue

*Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)*

B. 5 Does the review report evidence appropriately?

The review makes clear which evidence is subject to low risk of bias in assessing causality (attribution of outcomes to intervention), and which is likely to be biased, and does so appropriately

Where studies of differing risk of bias are included, results are reported and analysed separately by risk of bias status

- Yes
- No
- Partially
- Not applicable

*Coding guide:*

*YES: Both criteria should be fulfilled (where applicable)*

*NO: Criteria not fulfilled*

*PARTIALLY: Only one criteria fulfilled, or when there is limited reporting of quality appraisal (the latter applies only when inclusion criteria for study design are appropriate)*

*NOT APPLICABLE: No included studies*

*Note on reporting evidence and risk of bias: For reviews of effects of 'large n' interventions, experimental and quasi-experimental designs should be included (if available). For reviews of effects of 'small n' interventions, designs appropriate to attribute changes to the intervention should be included (e.g. pre-post with assessment of confounders)*

*Please specify included study designs and any other comments (note important limitations or uncertainty):*

B.6 Did the review examine the extent to which specific factors might explain differences in the results of the included studies?

Were factors that the review authors considered as likely explanatory factors clearly described?

Was a sensible method used to explore the extent to which key factors explained heterogeneity?

Descriptive/textual

Graphical

Meta-analysis by sub-groups

Meta-regression

Other

Yes

Partially

No

Not applicable

*Coding guide:*

*YES: Explanatory factors clearly described and appropriate methods used to explore heterogeneity*

*PARTIALLY: Explanatory factors described but for meta-analyses, sub-group analysis or meta-regression not reported (when they should have been)*

*NO: No description or analysis of likely explanatory factors*

*NOT APPLICABLE: e.g. too few studies, no important differences in the results of the included studies, or the included studies were so dissimilar that it would not make sense to explore heterogeneity of the results*

*Comments (note important limitations or uncertainty)*

B.7 Overall - how much confidence do you have in the methods used to analyse the findings relative to the primary question addressed in the review?

*Summary assessment score B relates to the 5 questions in this section, regarding the analysis.*

*High confidence applicable when all the answers to the questions in section B are assessed as 'yes'.*

*Low confidence applicable when any of the following are assessed as 'NO' above: critical characteristics of the included studies not reported (B1), not describing the extent of heterogeneity (B3), combining results inappropriately (B4), reporting evidence inappropriately (B5).*

*Medium confidence applicable for any other: i.e. the "Partial" option is used for any of the 6 preceding questions or questions and/or B.2 and/ or B.6 are assessed as 'no'.*

Low confidence (limitations are important enough that the results of the review are not reliable)

Medium confidence (limitations are important enough that it would be worthwhile to search for another systematic review and to interpret the results of this review cautiously, if a better review cannot be found)

High confidence (only minor limitations)

*Use comments to specify if relevant, to flag uncertainty or need for discussion*

Section C: Overall assessment of the reliability of the review

<p>C.1 Are there any other aspects of the review not mentioned before which lead you to question the results?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional methodological concerns – only one person reviewing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Robustness</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Conflicts of interest (of the review authors or for included studies)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No other quality issues identified</p>
<p>C.2 Are there any mitigating factors which should be taken into account in determining the reviews reliability?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Limitations acknowledged</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No strong policy conclusions drawn (including in abstract/ summary)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other factors</p>
<p><i>Use comments to specify if relevant, to flag uncertainty or need for discussion</i></p>	

C.3 Based on the above assessments of the methods how would you rate the reliability of the review?

Low confidence in conclusions about effects:

The systematic review has the following major limitations...

Medium confidence in conclusions about effects:

The systematic review has the following limitations...

High confidence in conclusions about effects :

If applicable: The review has the following minor limitations...

*Coding guide:*

High confidence in conclusions about effects: high confidence noted overall for sections A and B, unless moderated by answer to C1.

Medium confidence in conclusions about effects: medium confidence noted overall for sections A or B, unless moderated by answer to C1 or C2.

Low confidence in conclusions about effects: low confidence noted overall for sections A or B, unless moderated by answer to C1 or C2.

Limitations should be summarised above, based on what was noted in Sections A, B and C.

## Appendix 2

### 1. Academic Search Complete (Ebsco):

<http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/academic-search-complete>

A large multidisciplinary database covering nearly 14,000 journals in the sciences, social sciences and humanities, with a full-text search function. Title, abstract and subject index searches were included in the strategy.

S16 S14 AND S15

S15 S1 or S2 or S3 or S4 or S5 or S6 or S7 or S8 or S9

S14 S10 or S11 or S12 or S13

S13 TI ( ("literature search" OR "database search" OR "bibliographic\* search" OR "comprehensive search" OR "extensive search" OR "exhaustive search" OR "purposive search" OR "representative search" or "systemat\* search") ) OR AB ( ("literature search" OR "database search" OR "bibliographic\* search" OR "comprehensive search" OR "extensive search" OR "exhaustive search" OR "purposive search" OR "representative search" or "systemat\* search") ) OR SU ( ("literature search" OR "database search" OR "bibliographic\* search" OR "comprehensive search" OR "extensive search" OR "exhaustive search" OR "purposive search" OR "representative search" or "systemat\* search") )

S12 TI ( (review N3 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature)) ) OR AB ( (review N3 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature)) ) OR SU ( (review N3 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature)) )

S11 TI ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") ) OR AB ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") ) OR SU ( ("Meta regression"

OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") )

S10 TI ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) ) OR AB ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) ) OR SU ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) )

S9 TI ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") ) OR AB ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") ) OR SU ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") )

S8 TI ( (Imic or Imics or "third world" or "lami country" or "lami countries") ) OR AB ( (Imic or Imics or "third world" or "lami country" or "lami countries") ) OR SU ( (Imic or Imics or "third world" or "lami country" or "lami countries") )

S7 TI (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) OR AB (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) OR SU (low 3 middle N3 countr\*)

S6 TI ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") ) OR AB ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") ) OR SU ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") )

S5 TI ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income) N1 (economy or economies) ) OR AB ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income) N1 (economy or economies) ) OR SU ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income) N1 (economy or economies) )



S4 TI ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) ) OR AB ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) ) OR SU ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) )

S3 AB Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland

OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR TadzhiKistan OR Tadjikistan OR TadzhiK OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

S2 TI Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR TadzhiKistan OR Tadjikistan OR TadzhiK OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR

Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

S1 SU Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadzhiistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR

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## **2. Africa-Wide (Ebsco) - <http://www.nisc.co.za/databases?id=1>**

A multidisciplinary database which amalgamates several databases and includes information which documents research and publications by Africans and about Africa from a number of research centres in Africa and elsewhere. Many of the resources are from South Africa, but it also includes resources on francophone Africa (IBISCUS), African Journals Online (AJOL) and a development database on Africa. Africa-Wide covers close to 4 million news articles, scholarly publications, articles, books, reports, theses, citations, and grey literature in the fields of politics, economics, agriculture, development, health etc.

Using the Ebsco platform, the strategy made use of the index terms, title and abstract words for both systematic reviews and geographic headings and a date limited from 1990 onwards was applied. The more sensitive, less-focused filter for systematic reviews was used.

S15

S12 AND S13

Limiters - Year Published: 1990-2013

S14

S12 AND S13

S13

S10 OR S11

S12

S1 or S2 or S3 or S4 or S5 or S6 or S7 or S8 or S9

S11

TI ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") ) OR AB ( ("Meta regression"

OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") ) OR SU ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") )

S10

TI ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) ) OR AB ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) ) OR SU ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) )

S9

TI ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") ) OR AB ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") ) OR SU ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") )

S8

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S7

TI (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) OR AB (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) OR SU (low 3 middle N3 countr\*)

S6

TI ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") ) OR AB ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") ) OR SU ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") )

S5

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S4

TI ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) ) OR AB ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) ) OR SU ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) )

S3

AB Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras

OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldavia OR Moldovan OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoa Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadjhikistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadjhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiriyria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

S2

TI Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR

Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadjhikistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadjhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

S1

SU Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan



OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadzhiistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadzhiik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahirya OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

### **3. ASSIA - Applied Social Sciences Index & Abstracts (Proquest):**

<http://www.proquest.com/products-services/ASSIA-Applied-Social-Sciences-Index-and-Abstracts.html>

ASSIA indexes 500+ sources in health, social services, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, race relations and education, with a focus on practice. Core disciplines include social problems such as poverty and overcrowding, abuse, crime and violence, disease and disability, mental illness and addiction, racism and sexism, inequality and discrimination. Also covered are social issues affecting gender, family, education and employment, housing, migration, child and adolescent development, and ageing.

1. TI,AB,SU("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration")

2. TI,AB,SU((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) NEAR/4 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*))

3. TI,AB,SU(review NEAR/4 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature))

4. TI,AB,SU(Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadhikistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR

Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara")

5. 1 OR 2 OR 3

6. 4 AND 5

**4. CAB Abstracts (Ovid):** <http://www.cabi.org/publishing-products/online-information-resources/cab-abstracts/>

CAB ABSTRACTS is a bibliographic database compiled by CAB INTERNATIONAL. Over three million records have been added to the database since its computerization in 1973 giving access to over 7 million records with over 350,000 abstracts added each year. It has been chosen for its coverage of the applied life sciences which include agriculture, environment and land use, applied economics, food science and nutrition, major topics for the SR database.

This database is complementary with Global Health, also from CABI, and has a similar thesaurus system. The search strategy has included subject headings as well as title and abstract word searching.

1. (Afghanistan or Albania or Algeria or Angola or Antigua or Barbuda or Argentina or Armenia or Armenian or Aruba or Azerbaijan or Bahrain or Bangladesh or Barbados or Benin or Belize or Bhutan or Bolivia or Botswana or Brazil or Brasil or "Burkina Faso" or "Burkina Fasso" or "Upper Volta" or Burundi or Urundi or Cambodia or "Khmer Republic" or Kampuchea or Cameroon or Cameroons or Cameron or Camerons or "Cape Verde" or "Central African Republic" or Chad or Chile or China or Colombia or Comoros or "Comoro Islands" or Comores or Mayotte or Congo or Zaire or "Costa Rica" or "Cote d'Ivoire" or "Ivory Coast" or Cuba or "Djibouti" or "French Somaliland" or Dominica or "Dominican Republic" or "East Timor" or "East Timur" or "Timor Leste" or Ecuador or Egypt or "United Arab Republic" or "El Salvador" or Eritrea or Ethiopia or Fiji or Gabon or "Gabonese Republic" or Gambia or Gaza or "Georgia Republic" or "Georgian Republic" or Ghana or "Gold Coast" or Grenada or Guatemala or Guinea or Guam or Guiana or Guyana or Haiti or Honduras or India or Maldives or Indonesia or Iran or Iraq or Jamaica or Jordan or Kazakhstan or Kazakh or Kenya or Kiribati or Korea or Kosovo or Kyrgyzstan or Kirghizia or "Kyrgyz Republic" or Kirghiz or Kirgizstan or "Lao PDR" or Laos or Lebanon or Lesotho or Basutoland or Liberia or Libya or Madagascar or

"Malagasy Republic" or Malaysia or Malaya or Malay or Sabah or Sarawak or Malawi or Nyasaland or Mali or "Marshall Islands" or Mauritania or Mauritius or "Agalega Islands" or Mexico or Micronesia or "Middle East" or Moldova or Moldavia or Moldovian or Mongolia or Montenegro or Morocco or Ifni or Mozambique or Myanmar or Myanma or Burma or Namibia or Nepal or Antilles or "New Caledonia" or Nicaragua or Niger or Nigeria or "Mariana Islands" or Oman or Muscat or Pakistan or Palau or Palestine or Panama or Paraguay or Peru or Philippines or Philipines or Phillipines or Phillippines or "Puerto Rico" or Rwanda or Ruanda or "Saint Kitts" or "St Kitts" or Nevis or "Saint Lucia" or "St Lucia" or "Saint Vincent" or "St Vincent" or "Grenadines" or "Samoa" or "Samoa Islands" or "Navigator Island" or "Navigator Islands" or "Sao Tome" or "Saudi Arabia" or Senegal or Seychelles or "Sierra Leone" or "Sri Lanka" or "Solomon Islands" or Somalia or Sudan or Suriname or Surinam or Swaziland or Syria or Tajikistan or Tadjhikistan or Tadjikistan or Tadjhik or Tanzania or Thailand or Togo or "Togolese Republic" or Tonga or Trinidad or Tobago or Tunisia or Turkey or Turkmenistan or Turkmen or Uganda or Ukraine or Uruguay or Uzbekistan or Uzbek or Vanuatu or "New Hebrides" or Venezuela or Vietnam or "Viet Nam" or "West Bank" or Yemen or Zambia or Zimbabwe or Jamahiriya or Jamahiryria or Libia or Mocambique or Principe or Syrian or "Indian Ocean" or Melanesia or "Western Sahara").ti,ab,sh.

2. Developing Countries.sh,ti,ab.

3. (Africa or Asia or Caribbean or West Indies or South America or Latin America or Central America).sh,ti,ab.

4. ((developing or less\* developed or under developed or underdeveloped or middle income or low\* income or underserved or under served or deprived or poor\*) adj (countr\* or nation? or population? or world)).ti,ab.

5. ((developing or less\* developed or under developed or underdeveloped or middle income or low\* income) adj (economy or economies)).ti,ab.

6. (low\* adj (gdp or gnp or gross domestic or gross national)).ti,ab.

7. (low adj3 middle adj3 countr\*).ti,ab.

8. (lmic or Imics or third world or lami countr\*).ti,ab.

9. transitional countr\*.ti,ab.

10. or/1-9

11. ((Systematic\* or synthes\*) adj3 (Research or evaluation\* or finding\* or thematic\* or report or descriptive or explanatory or narrative or meta\* or review\*

or data or literature or studies or evidence or map or quantitative or study or studies or paper or impact or impacts or effect\* or compar\*).ti,ab,sh.

12. ("Meta regression" or "meta synth\*" or "meta-synth\*" or "meta analy\*" or "metaanaly\*" or "meta-analy\*" or "metanaly\*" or "Metaregression" or "Meta-regression" or "Methodologic\* overview" or "pool\* analys\*" or "pool\* data" or "Quantitative\* overview" or "research integration").ti,ab,sh.

13. (review adj3 (effectiveness or effects or systemat\* or synth\* or integrat\* or map\* or methodologic\* or quantitative or evidence or literature)).ti,ab,sh.

14. or/11-13

15. 10 and 14

16. 2013\*.up.

17. ("201208\*" or "201209\*" or "201210\*" or "201211\*" or "201212\*").up.

18. 16 or 17

19. 15 and 18

## **5. Cochrane Library:**

<http://www.thecochranelibrary.com/view/0/AboutTheCochraneLibrary.html>

The Cochrane Library contains a number of databases relating to evidence-based health care, but only the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) was searched. Other databases such as the Health Technology Assessments and NHS Economic Evaluations Database will be reviewed later. From June 2013 the CDSR is continuously updated with new completed systematic reviews and protocols. The Cochrane Library allows the use of Medline's Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) to improve retrieval as well as title and abstract word searching and this is reflected in the search strategy.

Since this is a systematic reviews database the filter for LMICs was the only element searched. However many of the results are clinical and this being outside our remit, consideration is being given to trying to devise a non-clinical filter which could be applied to other health databases such as Medline and Embase, perhaps using 'floating' MeSH subheadings which might include prevention and control, ethnology, utilization, legislation etc.

#1 MeSH descriptor: [Developing Countries] explode all trees

#2 MeSH descriptor: [Africa] explode all trees

- #3 MeSH descriptor: [Asia] explode all trees
- #4 MeSH descriptor: [Caribbean Region] explode all trees
- #5 MeSH descriptor: [West Indies] explode all trees
- #6 MeSH descriptor: [South America] explode all trees
- #7 MeSH descriptor: [Latin America] explode all trees
- #8 MeSH descriptor: [Central America] explode all trees
- #9 Africa or Asia or Caribbean or "West Indies" or "South America" or "Latin America" or "Central America"
- #10 Afghanistan or Albania or Algeria or Angola or Antigua or Barbuda or Argentina or Armenia or Armenian or Azerbaijan or Bangladesh or Barbados or Benin or Byelarus or Byelorussian or Belarus or Belorussian or Belorussia or Belize or Bhutan or Bolivia or Bosnia or Herzegovina or Hercegovina or Botswana or Brazil or Bulgaria or "Burkina Faso" or "Burkina Fasso" or "Upper Volta" or Burundi or Urundi or Cambodia or "Khmer Republic" or Kampuchea or Cameroon or Cameroons or Cameron or Camerons or "Cape Verde" or "Central African Republic" or Chad or Chile or China or Colombia or Comoros or "Comoro Islands" or Comores or Mayotte or Congo or Zaire or "Costa Rica" or "Cote d'Ivoire" or "Ivory Coast" or Croatia or Cuba or Djibouti or "French Somaliland" or Dominica or "Dominican Republic" or "East Timor" or "East Timur" or "Timor Leste" or Ecuador or Egypt or "United Arab Republic" or "El Salvador" or Eritrea or Ethiopia or Fiji or Gabon or "Gabonese Republic" or Gambia or Gaza or "Georgia Republic" or "Georgian Republic" or Ghana or "Gold Coast" or Grenada or Guatemala or Guinea or Guam or Guiana or Guyana or Haiti or Honduras or India or Maldives or Indonesia or Iran or Iraq or Jamaica or Jordan or Kazakhstan or Kazakh or Kenya or Kiribati or Korea or Kosovo or Kyrgyzstan or Kirghizia or "Kyrgyz Republic" or Kirghiz or Kirgizstan or "Lao PDR" or Laos or Latvia or Lebanon or Lesotho or Basutoland or Liberia or Libya or Lithuania or Macedonia or Madagascar or "Malagasy Republic" or Malaysia or Malaya or Malay or Sabah or Sarawak or Malawi or Nyasaland or Mali or "Marshall Islands" or Mauritania or Mauritius or "Agalega Islands" or Mexico or Micronesia or "Middle East" or Moldova or Moldovia or Moldovian or Mongolia or Montenegro or Morocco or Ifni or Mozambique or Myanmar or Myanma or Burma or Namibia or Nepal or "Netherlands Antilles" or "New Caledonia" or Nicaragua or Niger or Nigeria or "Northern Mariana Islands" or Oman or Muscat or Pakistan or Palau or Palestine or Panama or Paraguay or Peru or Philippines or Philipines or Phillipines or Phillippines or "Papua New Guinea" or Portugal or Romania or Rumania or Roumania or Russia or Russian or Rwanda or Ruanda or "Saint Lucia" or "St Lucia" or "Saint Vincent" or

"St Vincent" or Grenadines or Samoa or "Samoa Islands" or "Navigator Island" or "Navigator Islands" or "Sao Tome" or Senegal or Serbia or Montenegro or Seychelles or "Sierra Leone" or "Sri Lanka" or Ceylon or "Solomon Islands" or Somalia or Sudan or Suriname or Surinam or Swaziland or "South Africa" or Syria or Tajikistan or Tadjhikistan or Tadjikistan or Tadjhik or Tanzania or Thailand or Togo or "Togolese Republic" or Tonga or Trinidad or Tobago or Tunisia or Turkey or Turkmenistan or Turkmen or Uganda or Ukraine or Uruguay or USSR or "Soviet Union" or "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" or Uzbekistan or Uzbek or Vanuatu or "New Hebrides" or Venezuela or Vietnam or "Viet Nam" or "West Bank" or Yemen or Yugoslavia or Zambia or Zimbabwe

#11 (developing or "less\* developed" or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or "low\* income" or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) next (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world or state\*)

#12 (developing or "less\* developed" or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or "low\* income") next (economy or economies)

#13 (low\* next (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national"))

#14 (low next/3 middle next/3 countr\*)

#15 lmic or lmic's or "third world" or "lami countr\*"

#16 "transitional countr\*"

#17 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16

## **6. Econlit (Ovid):** <http://www.aeaweb.org/econlit/>

EconLit, the American Economic Association's bibliographic database, is an important source of economic literature. It is an expanded version of the Journal of Economic Literature (JEL) and is a source of citations and abstracts to economic research going back to 1961 and indexes journals, books, dissertations, working papers, collective volume articles, and the full text of book reviews. EconLit indexes over 500 journals and over 600 collective volume articles per year.

Econlit has its own thesaurus indexing system and focuses in detail on economic terms but its non-economic study method terms are not so detailed, so greater reliance has been placed on the text word (title/abstract) searching for the geographic and systematic review parts of the search to retrieve relevant papers.

1. (Afghanistan or Albania or Algeria or Angola or Antigua or Barbuda or Argentina or Armenia or Armenian or Aruba or Azerbaijan or Bahrain or Bangladesh or Barbados or Benin or Belize or Bhutan or Bolivia or Botswana or Brazil or Brasil or "Burkina Faso" or "Burkina Fasso" or "Upper Volta" or Burundi or Urundi or Cambodia or "Khmer Republic" or Kampuchea or Cameroon or Cameroons or Cameron or Camerons or "Cape Verde" or "Central African Republic" or Chad or Chile or China or Colombia or Comoros or "Comoro Islands" or Comores or Mayotte or Congo or Zaire or "Costa Rica" or "Cote d'Ivoire" or "Ivory Coast" or Cuba or "Djibouti" or "French Somaliland" or Dominica or "Dominican Republic" or "East Timor" or "East Timur" or "Timor Leste" or Ecuador or Egypt or "United Arab Republic" or "El Salvador" or Eritrea or Ethiopia or Fiji or Gabon or "Gabonese Republic" or Gambia or Gaza or "Georgia Republic" or "Georgian Republic" or Ghana or "Gold Coast" or Grenada or Guatemala or Guinea or Guam or Guiana or Guyana or Haiti or Honduras or India or Maldives or Indonesia or Iran or Iraq or Jamaica or Jordan or Kazakhstan or Kazakh or Kenya or Kiribati or Korea or Kosovo or Kyrgyzstan or Kirghizia or "Kyrgyz Republic" or Kirghiz or Kirgizstan or "Lao PDR" or Laos or Lebanon or Lesotho or Basutoland or Liberia or Libya or Madagascar or "Malagasy Republic" or Malaysia or Malaya or Malay or Sabah or Sarawak or Malawi or Nyasaland or Mali or "Marshall Islands" or Mauritania or Mauritius or "Agalega Islands" or Mexico or Micronesia or "Middle East" or Moldova or Moldovia or Moldovian or Mongolia or Montenegro or Morocco or Ifni or Mozambique or Myanmar or Myanma or Burma or Namibia or Nepal or Antilles or "New Caledonia" or Nicaragua or Niger or Nigeria or "Mariana Islands" or Oman or Muscat or Pakistan or Palau or Palestine or Panama or Paraguay or Peru or Philippines or Philipines or Phillipines or Phillippines or "Puerto Rico" or Rwanda or Ruanda or "Saint Kitts" or "St Kitts" or Nevis or "Saint Lucia" or "St Lucia" or "Saint Vincent" or "St Vincent" or "Grenadines" or "Samoa" or "Samoan Islands" or "Navigator Island" or "Navigator Islands" or "Sao Tome" or "Saudi Arabia" or Senegal or Seychelles or "Sierra Leone" or "Sri Lanka" or "Solomon Islands" or Somalia or Sudan or Suriname or Surinam or Swaziland or Syria or Tajikistan or Tadjhikistan or Tadjikistan or Tadjhik or Tanzania or Thailand or Togo or "Togolese Republic" or Tonga or Trinidad or Tobago or Tunisia or Turkey or Turkmenistan or Turkmen or Uganda or Ukraine or Uruguay or Uzbekistan or Uzbek or Vanuatu or "New Hebrides" or Venezuela or Vietnam or "Viet Nam" or "West Bank" or Yemen or Zambia or Zimbabwe or Jamahiriya or Jamahiryria or Libia or Mocambique or Principe or Syrian or "Indian Ocean" or Melanesia or "Western Sahara").ti,ab,sh.

2. Developing Countries.sh,ti,ab.

3. (Africa or Asia or Caribbean or West Indies or South America or Latin America or Central America).sh,ti,ab.



4. ((developing or less\* developed or under developed or underdeveloped or middle income or low\* income or underserved or under served or deprived or poor\*) adj (countr\* or nation? or population? or world)).ti,ab.
5. ((developing or less\* developed or under developed or underdeveloped or middle income or low\* income) adj (economy or economies)).ti,ab.
6. (low\* adj (gdp or gnp or gross domestic or gross national)).ti,ab.
7. (low adj3 middle adj3 countr\*).ti,ab.
8. (Imic or Imics or third world or lami countr\*).ti,ab.
9. transitional countr\*.ti,ab.
10. or/1-9
11. ((Systematic\* or synthes\*) adj3 (Research or evaluation\* or finding\* or thematic\* or report or descriptive or explanatory or narrative or meta\* or review\* or data or literature or studies or evidence or map or quantitative or study or studies or paper or impact or impacts or effect\* or compar\*)).ti,ab,sh.  
[mp=heading words, abstract, title, country as subject]
12. ("Meta regression" or "meta synth\*" or "meta-synth\*" or "meta analy\*" or "metaanaly\*" or "meta-analy\*" or "metanaly\*" or "Metaregression" or "Meta-regression" or "Methodologic\* overview" or "pool\* analys\*" or "pool\* data" or "Quantitative\* overview" or "research integration").ti,ab,sh. [mp=heading words, abstract, title, country as subject]
13. (review adj3 (effectiveness or effects or systemat\* or synth\* or integrat\* or map\* or methodologic\* or quantitative or evidence or literature)).ti,ab,sh.  
[mp=heading words, abstract, title, country as subject]
14. or/11-13
15. 10 and 14
16. ("201208" or "201209" or "201210" or "201211" or "201212" or "201301" or "201302" or "201303" or "201304" or "201305" or "201306").up.
17. 15 and 16

**7. Global Health (CABI) – Ovid:** <http://www.cabi.org/publishing-products/online-information-resources/global-health/>

GLOBAL HEALTH brings together the resources of two internationally renowned databases - the Public Health and Tropical Medicine (PHTM) database, previously produced by the Bureau of Hygiene and Tropical Diseases (BHTD), and the human health and diseases information extracted from CAB ABSTRACTS.

Dating back to 1973, together they provide a unique resource which offers a substantially deeper subject coverage of information related to human health and communicable diseases than many other sources currently available, particularly in relation to health in low- and middle-income countries. Derived from over 6,000 journals, reports, books and conferences, Global Health contains over 2.1 million scientific records from 1973 to the present. More than 170,000 records are added each year, and over 96% of these records include an English abstract. A particular strength is in its inclusion of journal titles published in LMICs not usually included in most medical databases; 40% of its material is unique to the database.

The Global Health database covers the following aspects of human health and disease:

communicable diseases (including HIV/AIDS), tropical diseases, i.e, diseases in the tropics (including field and experimental studies), parasitic diseases and parasitology - medical entomology, human nutrition (including food composition, food poisoning, effects of diet on health, nutritional disorders, and experimental aspects), community and public health (including chronic diseases, occupational health, health status indicators, the impact of agriculture on health, and cancer epidemiology)

Search strategy: Global Health has a thesaurus index system and for both elements of the search (geographic and study methods) index terms were searched using the Ovid field 'sh' as well as for title and abstract words (ti,ab). No health filter has been used for this database as the numbers retrieved for scanning were manageable.

1. (Afghanistan or Albania or Algeria or Angola or Antigua or Barbuda or Argentina or Armenia or Armenian or Aruba or Azerbaijan or Bahrain or Bangladesh or Barbados or Benin or Belize or Bhutan or Bolivia or Botswana or Brazil or Brasil or "Burkina Faso" or "Burkina Fasso" or "Upper Volta" or Burundi or Urundi or Cambodia or "Khmer Republic" or Kampuchea or Cameroon or Cameroons or Cameron or Camerons or "Cape Verde" or "Central African Republic" or Chad or Chile or China or Colombia or Comoros or "Comoro Islands" or Comores or Mayotte or Congo or Zaire or "Costa Rica" or "Cote d'Ivoire" or "Ivory Coast" or Cuba or

"Djibouti" or "French Somaliland" or Dominica or "Dominican Republic" or "East Timor" or "East Timur" or "Timor Leste" or Ecuador or Egypt or "United Arab Republic" or "El Salvador" or Eritrea or Ethiopia or Fiji or Gabon or "Gabonese Republic" or Gambia or Gaza or "Georgia Republic" or "Georgian Republic" or Ghana or "Gold Coast" or Grenada or Guatemala or Guinea or Guam or Guiana or Guyana or Haiti or Honduras or India or Maldives or Indonesia or Iran or Iraq or Jamaica or Jordan or Kazakhstan or Kazakh or Kenya or Kiribati or Korea or Kosovo or Kyrgyzstan or Kirghizia or "Kyrgyz Republic" or Kirghiz or Kirgizstan or "Lao PDR" or Laos or Lebanon or Lesotho or Basutoland or Liberia or Libya or Madagascar or "Malagasy Republic" or Malaysia or Malaya or Malay or Sabah or Sarawak or Malawi or Nyasaland or Mali or "Marshall Islands" or Mauritania or Mauritius or "Agalega Islands" or Mexico or Micronesia or "Middle East" or Moldova or Moldovia or Moldovian or Mongolia or Montenegro or Morocco or Ifni or Mozambique or Myanmar or Myanma or Burma or Namibia or Nepal or Antilles or "New Caledonia" or Nicaragua or Niger or Nigeria or "Mariana Islands" or Oman or Muscat or Pakistan or Palau or Palestine or Panama or Paraguay or Peru or Philippines or Philipines or Phillipines or Philippines or "Puerto Rico" or Rwanda or Ruanda or "Saint Kitts" or "St Kitts" or Nevis or "Saint Lucia" or "St Lucia" or "Saint Vincent" or "St Vincent" or "Grenadines" or "Samoa" or "Samoan Islands" or "Navigator Island" or "Navigator Islands" or "Sao Tome" or "Saudi Arabia" or Senegal or Seychelles or "Sierra Leone" or "Sri Lanka" or "Solomon Islands" or Somalia or Sudan or Suriname or Surinam or Swaziland or Syria or Tajikistan or Tadzhiistan or Tadjikistan or Tadzhiik or Tanzania or Thailand or Togo or "Togolese Republic" or Tonga or Trinidad or Tobago or Tunisia or Turkey or Turkmenistan or Turkmen or Uganda or Ukraine or Uruguay or Uzbekistan or Uzbek or Vanuatu or "New Hebrides" or Venezuela or Vietnam or "Viet Nam" or "West Bank" or Yemen or Zambia or Zimbabwe or Jamahiriya or Jamahiryria or Libia or Mocambique or Principe or Syrian or "Indian Ocean" or Melanesia or "Western Sahara").ti,ab,sh.

2. Developing Countries.sh,ti,ab.

3. (Africa or Asia or Caribbean or West Indies or South America or Latin America or Central America).sh,ti,ab.

4. ((developing or less\* developed or under developed or underdeveloped or middle income or low\* income or underserved or under served or deprived or poor\*) adj (countr\* or nation? or population? or world)).ti,ab.

5. ((developing or less\* developed or under developed or underdeveloped or middle income or low\* income) adj (economy or economies)).ti,ab.

6. (low\* adj (gdp or gnp or gross domestic or gross national)).ti,ab.

7. (low adj3 middle adj3 countr\*).ti,ab.
8. (lmic or lmics or third world or lami countr\*).ti,ab.
9. transitional countr\*.ti,ab.
10. or/1-9
11. ((Systematic\* or synthes\*) adj3 (Research or evaluation\* or finding\* or thematic\* or report or descriptive or explanatory or narrative or meta\* or review\* or data or literature or studies or evidence or map or quantitative or study or studies or paper or impact or impacts or effect\* or compar\*)).ti,ab,sh.  
[mp=abstract, title, original title, broad terms, heading words]
12. ("Meta regression" or "meta synth\*" or "meta-synth\*" or "meta analy\*" or "metaanaly\*" or "meta-analy\*" or "metanaly\*" or "Metaregression" or "Meta-regression" or "Methodologic\* overview" or "pool\* analys\*" or "pool\* data" or "Quantitative\* overview" or "research integration").ti,ab,sh. [mp=abstract, title, original title, broad terms, heading words]
13. (review adj3 (effectiveness or effects or systemat\* or synth\* or integrat\* or map\* or methodologic\* or quantitative or evidence or literature)).ti,ab,sh.  
[mp=abstract, title, original title, broad terms, heading words]
14. or/11-13
15. 10 and 14
16. 2013\*.up.
17. ("201208\*" or "201209\*" or "201210\*" or "201211\*" or "201212\*").up.
18. 16 or 17
19. 15 and 18

## **8. IBSS – International Bibliography of the Social Sciences**

**(Proquest):** <http://www.proquest.co.uk/en-UK/catalogs/databases/detail/ibss-set-c.shtml>

The International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) is an important online resource for social science and interdisciplinary research. It includes over two million bibliographic references to journal articles and to books, reviews and selected chapters dating back to 1951. It is unique in its broad coverage of

international material and incorporates over 100 languages and countries. Over 2,800 journals are regularly indexed and some 7,000 books are included each year. Abstracts are provided for half of all current journal articles.

Unfortunately complex searches with long search sets are difficult to run as the Proquest platform frequently times out. Recourse to simpler searches and sometimes breaking up a longer search into smaller searches (with results from each being imported into one Endnote file) may be necessary. Subject headings as well as title/abstract words were searched. The strategy was limited by date from August 2012 since this database had already been searched before and results scanned.

1. TI,AB,SU("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration")

2. TI,AB,SU((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) NEAR/4 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*))

3. TI,AB,SU(review NEAR/4 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature))

4. TI,AB,SU(Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos

OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldavia OR Moldovan OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoa Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadzhiestan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadjhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara")

5. 1 OR 2 OR 3

6. 4 AND 5

**9. PAIS International (Proquest):** <http://www.proquest.com/products-services/pais-set-c.html>

PAIS International (originally Public Affairs Information Service) indexes journal articles, books, government documents, statistical directories, grey literature, research reports, conference papers, web content from a large number of worldwide sources in different languages. Its coverage includes policy-oriented literature of the academic social sciences such as economics, finance, law, education, the military, political science, public administration, international law and relations, the environment, demography, public health, science and technology.

1. TI,AB,SU("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration")

2. TI,AB,SU((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) NEAR/4 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*))

3. TI,AB,SU(review NEAR/4 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature))

4. TI,AB,SU(Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadhikistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR

Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara")

5. 1 OR 2 OR 3

6. 4 AND 5

**10. Popline:** <http://www.popline.org/>

Popline is the most important database on population, family planning and related reproductive health and development literature. A free resource, produced by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs, it has a wide remit covering resources of use to programme managers, policy makers, and service providers in low- and middle-income countries and in development-supportive agencies and organizations. It includes scientific articles, reports, books, and unpublished documents, and is particularly strong in grey literature and in hard-to-find resources published in L&MICs and by NGOs and development agencies.

The search platform is not capable of sophisticated searches and therefore a much simplified single string strategy for the systematic reviews filter only has had to be used. The advanced search option was used to limit the search string to title words and keywords/index terms. Since the focus of the database is on L&MICs, the L&MICs filter was not applied in this search.

((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) and (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) OR "Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration" OR (review and (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature))



**11. Scopus:** <http://www.elsevier.com/online-tools/scopus>

Scopus is one of the largest multidisciplinary databases covering 21,000 journals, books and reports from over 5000 publishers worldwide. The sensitive strategy adopted using title, abstract and Scopus keywords (including both author keywords and index terms) resulted in a large number of (mainly scientific) papers most of which were outside the database's remit. A Scopus subject filter was therefore used to reduce this large number to a more manageable and focused number of papers, covering the social sciences, economics, econometrics and finance.

(((((TITLE-ABS-KEY((afghanistan OR albania OR algeria OR angola OR argentina OR armenia OR armenian OR aruba OR azerbaijan OR bangladesh OR benin OR byelarus OR byelorussian OR belarus OR belorussian OR belorussia OR belize OR bhutan OR bolivia OR bosnia OR herzegovina OR hercegovina OR botswana OR brasil OR brazil OR bulgaria OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR burundi OR urundi OR cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR kampuchea OR cameroon OR cameroons OR cameron OR camérons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR chad OR china OR colombia OR comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR comores OR mayotte OR congo OR zaire OR "Costa Rica\*" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR cuba OR djibouti OR "French Somaliland" OR dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR ecuador OR egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR eritrea OR ethiopia OR fiji OR gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR gambia OR gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR ghana OR grenada OR guatemala OR guinea OR guiana OR guyana OR haiti OR hungary OR honduras OR india OR maldives OR indonesia OR iran OR iraq OR jamaica OR jordan OR kazakhstan OR kazakh OR kenya OR kiribati OR korea OR kosovo OR kyrgyzstan OR kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR kirghiz OR kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR laos OR lebanon OR lesotho OR basutoland OR liberia OR libya OR macedonia OR madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR malaysia OR malaya OR malay OR sabah OR sarawak OR malawi OR mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR mauritania OR mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR mexico OR micronesia OR "Middle East" OR moldova OR moldovia OR moldovian OR mongolia OR montenegro OR morocco OR ifni OR mozambique OR myanmar OR myanma OR burma OR namibia OR nepal OR "Netherlands Antilles" OR "New Caledonia" OR nicaragua OR niger OR nigeria OR pakistan OR palau OR palestine OR panama OR paraguay OR peru OR philippines OR philipines OR phillipines OR phillippines OR "Puerto Ric\*" OR romania OR rumania OR roumania OR rwanda OR ruanda OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR grenadines OR samoa OR "Samoa Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR senegal OR serbia OR montenegro OR seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR somalia OR "South Africa" OR sudan OR suriname OR surinam OR swaziland OR syria OR tajikistan OR

tadzhikistan OR tadjikistan OR tadzhik OR tanzania OR thailand OR togo OR togolese republic OR tonga OR tunisia OR turkey OR turkmenistan OR turkmen OR uganda OR ukraine OR uzbekistan OR uzbek OR vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR venezuela OR vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR yemen OR yugoslavia OR zambia OR zimbabwe))) OR (TITLE-ABS-KEY("Developing Countries" OR africa OR asia OR caribbean OR "West Indies" OR "South America" OR "Latin America" OR "Central America" OR ((developing OR "less\* developed" OR "under developed" OR underdeveloped OR "middle income" OR "low\* income" OR underserved OR "under served" OR deprived OR poor\*) W/1 (countr\* OR nation\* OR population\* OR world)))) OR (TITLE-ABS-KEY(((developing OR "less\* developed" OR "under developed" OR underdeveloped OR "middle income" OR "low\* income") W/1 (economy OR economies)) OR (low\* W/1 (gdp OR gnp OR "gross domestic" OR "gross national")) OR (low W/3 middle W/3 countr\*)) OR (TITLE-ABS-KEY(((lmic OR lmics OR "third world" OR "lami countr\*")) OR "transitional countr\*")))) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY(((systematic\* OR synthes\*) W/1 (research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\* OR comprehensive OR overview)) OR "Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration" OR (review W/1 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature)))))) AND (LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "SOC") OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "SOC") OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "ECON"))

**12. SocIndex (Ebsco):** <http://www.ebscohost.com/biomedical-libraries/socindex>

SocINDEX covers the field of sociology, encompassing all sub-disciplines and closely related areas of study. These include abortion, criminology and criminal justice, demography, ethnic and racial studies, gender studies, marriage and family, political sociology, religion, rural and urban sociology, social development, social psychology, social structure, social work, socio-cultural anthropology, sociological history, sociological research, sociological theory, substance abuse and other addictions, violence and many others. 1300 core journals covering the above disciplines are indexed, and another 2900 journals selectively indexed, as well as books, reports and conference proceedings. Both title/abstract words and subject headings were searched.

S14

S12 AND S13

S13

S10 OR S11

S12

S1 or S2 or S3 or S4 or S5 or S6 or S7 or S8 or S9

S11

TI ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") ) OR AB ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") ) OR SU ( ("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration") )

S10

TI ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) ) OR AB ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) ) OR SU ( ((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) N3 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*)) )

S9

TI ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") ) OR AB ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") ) OR SU ( ("transitional country" or "transitional countries") )

S8

TI ( (Imic or Imics or "third world" or "lami country" or "lami countries") ) OR AB ( (Imic or Imics or "third world" or "lami country" or "lami countries") ) OR SU ( (Imic or Imics or "third world" or "lami country" or "lami countries") )

S7

TI (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) OR AB (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) OR SU (low 3 middle N3 countr\*) S6

TI ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") ) OR AB ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") ) OR SU ( low\* N1 (gdp or gnp or "gross domestic" or "gross national") )

S5

TI ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income) N1 (economy or economies) ) OR AB ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income) N1 (economy or economies) ) OR SU ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income) N1 (economy or economies) )

S4

TI ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) ) OR AB ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) ) OR SU ( (developing or less\* N1 developed or "under developed" or underdeveloped or "middle income" or low\* N1 income or underserved or "under served" or deprived or poor\*) N1 (countr\* or nation\* or population\* or world) )

S3

AB Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana

OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadjhikistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadjhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

S2

TI Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR

Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR  
Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central  
African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR  
"Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR  
"Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR  
Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor  
Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea  
OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR  
"Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada  
OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras  
OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR  
Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan  
OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos  
OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR  
"Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR  
Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR  
"Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR  
Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR  
Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles  
OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR  
Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR  
Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR  
Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St  
Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR  
"Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR  
"Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR  
"Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland  
OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadjhikistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadjhik OR Tanzania OR  
Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR  
Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR  
Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela  
OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe  
OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR  
"Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

S1

SU Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR  
Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR  
Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana  
OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR  
Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR

Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadzhiistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadzhiik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiriyria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara"

**13. Web of Science (SSCI & AHCI):** <http://thomsonreuters.com/web-of-science/>

Two of the databases from Web of Science – Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) and Arts & Humanities Index (AHCI) – have been searched. SSCI indexes over 3000 social sciences journals which are selected on the basis of impact factor to

represent all areas of the social sciences. AHCI indexes over 1700 journals. This database system primarily uses natural language searching although there is a keywords search system, which has been used in the search strategy below. This involves using the TS fields which represent title and abstract words and 'keywords plus' terms; this does result in a more sensitive search often with too many unfocused results, probably from the inclusion of the 'keywords plus' field, which are taken from the titles of an article's cited references. A useful feature of this database system is its ability to run citation searches of relevant papers cited by those retrieved in a subject search. This can be used to ensure papers are not missed by conventional subject searches.

#9 #8 AND #4

#8 #7 OR #6 OR #5

#7 TS=(review NEAR (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature))

#6 TS=("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration")

#5 TS=((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) NEAR (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\* OR comprehensive OR overview))

#4 #3 OR #2 OR #1

#3 TS=((developing OR "low income" OR "less developed" OR "lesser developed" OR "middle income" OR "under developed" OR "underdeveloped" OR underserved OR "under served" OR deprived OR poor OR "low and middle income") NEAR (countr\* OR nation OR nations OR region OR world OR population OR economy OR economies)) OR TS=(low NEAR (GDP OR GNP OR "gross domestic" OR "gross national")) OR TS=(LMIC OR LMICS OR "third world" OR "LAMI countr\*" OR "transitional countr\*")

#2 TS=(Africa or Asia or Caribbean or "West Indies" or "South America" or "Latin America" or "Central America")

#1 TS=(Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR



Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana  
OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR  
Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR  
Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central  
African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR  
"Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR  
"Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR  
Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor  
Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea  
OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR  
"Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada  
OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras  
OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR  
Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan  
OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos  
OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR  
"Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR  
Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR  
"Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR  
Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR  
Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles  
OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR  
Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR  
Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR  
Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St  
Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR  
"Samoan Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR  
"Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR  
"Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland  
OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadzhiistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadzhiik OR Tanzania OR  
Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR  
Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR  
Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela  
OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe  
OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR  
"Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara")

#### **14. WPSA - Worldwide Political Science Abstracts (Proquest):**

<http://www.proquest.com/libraries/academic/databases/polsci-set-c.html>

Worldwide Political Science Abstracts (WPSA) provides citations, abstracts, and indexing of the international serials literature from over 2500 journals in political science and its complementary fields, including international relations, law, and public administration/policy. Emphasis is placed on indexing international sources with over 60% being published outside the United States. In addition, books, reports, dissertations are also included. Specific areas of coverage include: developing nations, economic policy, government and political systems, environmental policy, politics and communication, politics and society, public administration and welfare systems.

1. TI,AB,SU("Meta regression" OR "meta synth\*" OR "meta-synth\*" OR "meta analy\*" OR "metaanaly\*" OR "meta-analy\*" OR "metanaly\*" OR "Metaregression" OR "Meta-regression" OR "Methodologic\* overview" OR "pool\* analys\*" OR "pool\* data" OR "Quantitative\* overview" OR "research integration")

2. TI,AB,SU((Systematic\* OR synthes\*) NEAR/4 (Research OR evaluation\* OR finding\* OR thematic\* OR report OR descriptive OR explanatory OR narrative OR meta\* OR review\* OR data OR literature OR studies OR evidence OR map OR quantitative OR study OR studies OR paper OR impact OR impacts OR effect\* OR compar\*))

3. TI,AB,SU(review NEAR/4 (effectiveness OR effects OR systemat\* OR synth\* OR integrat\* OR map\* OR methodologic\* OR quantitative OR evidence OR literature))

4. TI,AB,SU(Afghanistan OR Albania OR Algeria OR Angola OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Argentina OR Armenia OR Armenian OR Aruba OR Azerbaijan OR Bahrain OR Bangladesh OR Barbados OR Benin OR Belize OR Bhutan OR Bolivia OR Botswana OR Brazil OR Brasil OR "Burkina Faso" OR "Burkina Fasso" OR "Upper Volta" OR Burundi OR Urundi OR Cambodia OR "Khmer Republic" OR Kampuchea OR Cameroon OR Cameroons OR Cameron OR Camerons OR "Cape Verde" OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Chile OR China OR Colombia OR Comoros OR "Comoro Islands" OR Comores OR Mayotte OR Congo OR Zaire OR "Costa Rica" OR "Cote d'Ivoire" OR "Ivory Coast" OR Cuba OR "Djibouti" OR "French Somaliland" OR Dominica OR "Dominican Republic" OR "East Timor" OR "East Timur" OR "Timor Leste" OR Ecuador OR Egypt OR "United Arab Republic" OR "El Salvador" OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Fiji OR Gabon OR "Gabonese Republic" OR Gambia OR Gaza OR "Georgia Republic" OR "Georgian Republic" OR Ghana OR "Gold Coast" OR Grenada OR Guatemala OR Guinea OR Guam OR Guiana OR Guyana OR Haiti OR Honduras

OR India OR Maldives OR Indonesia OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jamaica OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Kazakh OR Kenya OR Kiribati OR Korea OR Kosovo OR Kyrgyzstan OR Kirghizia OR "Kyrgyz Republic" OR Kirghiz OR Kirgizstan OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR Lebanon OR Lesotho OR Basutoland OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR "Malagasy Republic" OR Malaysia OR Malaya OR Malay OR Sabah OR Sarawak OR Malawi OR Nyasaland OR Mali OR "Marshall Islands" OR Mauritania OR Mauritius OR "Agalega Islands" OR Mexico OR Micronesia OR "Middle East" OR Moldova OR Moldovia OR Moldovian OR Mongolia OR Montenegro OR Morocco OR Ifni OR Mozambique OR Myanmar OR Myanma OR Burma OR Namibia OR Nepal OR Antilles OR "New Caledonia" OR Nicaragua OR Niger OR Nigeria OR "Mariana Islands" OR Oman OR Muscat OR Pakistan OR Palau OR Palestine OR Panama OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Philippines OR Philipines OR Phillipines OR Phillippines OR "Puerto Rico" OR Rwanda OR Ruanda OR "Saint Kitts" OR "St Kitts" OR Nevis OR "Saint Lucia" OR "St Lucia" OR "Saint Vincent" OR "St Vincent" OR "Grenadines" OR "Samoa" OR "Samoa Islands" OR "Navigator Island" OR "Navigator Islands" OR "Sao Tome" OR "Saudi Arabia" OR Senegal OR Seychelles OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Sri Lanka" OR "Solomon Islands" OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Suriname OR Surinam OR Swaziland OR Syria OR Tajikistan OR Tadzhiistan OR Tadjikistan OR Tadhik OR Tanzania OR Thailand OR Togo OR "Togolese Republic" OR Tonga OR Trinidad OR Tobago OR Tunisia OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Turkmen OR Uganda OR Ukraine OR Uruguay OR Uzbekistan OR Uzbek OR Vanuatu OR "New Hebrides" OR Venezuela OR Vietnam OR "Viet Nam" OR "West Bank" OR Yemen OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Jamahiriya OR Jamahiryria OR Libia OR Mocambique OR Principe OR Syrian OR "Indian Ocean" OR Melanesia OR "Western Sahara")

5. 1 OR 2 OR 3

6. 4 AND 5

## Appendix 3

### 1. British Library of Development Studies (BLDS) –

<http://blds.ids.ac.uk/search/srchady.html>

The British Library of Development Studies (BLDS) is affiliated with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and has Europe's largest collection of economic and social change materials. The library holds over 1000 journal titles, 10,000 newspaper articles, annual reports, and newsletters, and over 80,000 monographs (including individual research reports, working papers and books).

The library's sources include – but are not limited to - developing country governments, donor governments, international organisations (such as the World Bank and UN) and NGOs.

#### Search Strategy:

Advanced Search (do not use Boolean operators within the search box, only the one between the two boxes)

1. synth\* OR systemat\* (all fields) (date limit 1993 -2014). .
2. Meta\* OR pool\* anal\* (all fields) (date limit 1993 -2014).
3. systematic AND review (all fields) (date limit 1993 -2014).

### 2. Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (DARE) database –

<http://www.crd.york.ac.uk/crdweb/Home.aspx?DB=DARE&SessionID=&SearchID=&E=0&D=0&H=0&SearchFor=>

The Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD), based at the University of York has several databases of health related systematic reviews, economic evaluations and report summaries. The Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE) is focused on systematic reviews of effects covering both healthcare interventions, the delivery of health services and other wider factors affecting health (such as infrastructure and social factors). The CRD update the database weekly.

#### Search Strategy

There is no separate search strategy for the DARE database as the database is covered in our search of Evipnet.

### **3. Campbell Library of Systematic Reviews -**

<http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/>

The Campbell Collaboration is an international research network that produces systematic reviews of the effects of social interventions. Its work covers four main areas: education, crime and justice, social welfare, and international development. All systematic reviews published in the Campbell Library have been subject to rigorous peer-review.

#### Search Strategy

Our first search of this database will involve screening all titles. Thereafter, only newly added titles will be screened.

### **4. Collaboration for Environmental Evidence -**

<http://www.environmentalevidence.org/Library.html>

The Collaboration for Environmental Evidence (CEE) is a group of scientists and other interested parties with an interest in conservation and global environmental issues. The aim of the CEE is to make evidence on these topics easily available so that it can be used to inform policy.

The CEE library contains systematic reviews on the effectiveness of human interventions in environmental management of human activities. All documents submitted to CEE undergo peer review and are summarised in order to make them user-friendly.

#### Search Strategy

This website has no search platform. As such, the search strategy for this resource is to screen all titles, protocols and reviews. Results can, however, be arranged by date order so monthly search updates involve screening items which have been added since the previous search.

## **5. R4D, Department for International Development (DFID) –**

<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/SystematicReviews.aspx#aSystematicReviewTo>  
[p](#)

R4D is an online portal containing DFID-funded research and documentation from DFID-funded project. It includes over 40,000 records relating to current and past research. The portal is open-access.

### Search strategy

The platform allows users to browse by theme. For the SR database, the search is limited by date and document type (systematic reviews) and then all titles screened for inclusion.

## **6. ELDIS – [www.eldis.org](http://www.eldis.org)**

Eldis is an online international development information service hosted by IDS. It provides free access to international development research and policy documents, which are editorially selected by Eldis staff members. The collection includes over 30,000 summaries as well as links to open-access full-text documents.

### Search strategy

The ELDIS website has a very basic search platform. Currently the strategy involves searching keywords such as 'systematic review' or subject-specific keywords such as 'WASH' or 'HIV'. It is also not possible to order hits by date, meaning that new additions to the database are not easily identified when conducting monthly search updates.

For this reason, searching of this database is currently on hold while the search strategy is refined. ELDIS have also been contacted for further information on the best strategy for using their database in order to yield the results we want.

## **7. EPPI-Centre –**

<http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=185&language=en-US>

The EPPI-Centre, based at the Institute of Education in London supports a number of databases containing both primary research and systematic reviews. It is involved in two main areas of work: systematic reviews and research use.

### Search Strategy

New EPPI-Centre reviews are screened monthly for new records.

## **8. Evipnet** – <http://global.evipnet.org>

EVIPNet was formed in 2005, following a call from the WHO to 'establish mechanisms to transfer knowledge in support of evidence-based public health and health-care delivery systems, and evidence-based health related policies.' EVIPNet is a network of policymakers, researchers and civil society who promote the use of health research evidence in policymaking, and with a specific focus on low and middle-income countries and policy implementation through the use of the best scientific evidence available. EVIPNet comprises networks that bring together country-level teams, which are coordinated at both regional and global levels.

### Search Strategies

Currently the strategy involves searching keywords such as 'systematic review' or subject-specific keywords such as 'WASH' or 'HIV'. However, EVIPNet does have an advanced search platform so a more specific search strategy is currently in development.

## **9. Google Scholar** – [scholar.google.co.uk/](http://scholar.google.co.uk/)

Google Scholar provides a broad range of academic literature from a very large number of sources. It includes published academic work, as well as theses, books, abstracts, and documents from professional societies, online repositories and universities.

### Search Strategy.

Google scholar: use advanced search, un-tick patents, tick appropriate subject fields (eg: all apart from chemistry..., engineering..., physics...

With all of the words: developing countries

With the exact phrase: systematic review

Arrange hits by date: most recent first (this way, only documents uploaded since the previous search need be screened).

## **10. Health Evidence.org**

Health Evidence is a registry of health-related research evidence hosted by McMaster University in Canada. It provides public health workers and policymakers with a searchable database of research evidence relevant to healthcare in several

different contexts. The database has over 4000 quality-rated systematic reviews evaluating the effectiveness of public health interventions.

### Search Strategy

Our first search of this database involved screening all titles using the LMIC filter. Since this initial screening of the database, only newly added titles are screened (also using the L&MIC filter).

## **11. IDEAS**

IDEAS is a bibliographic database of economics research, aiming to enhance the availability and dissemination of research in this area. It is largest freely-available resource on the internet, with over 1,500,000 records. Full-text download is available for almost all of these. Search Strategy

| = OR, + = AND

Date limits: 2009-2014

Search mode: Boolean, exact word form, no synonyms, whole record search (1197 hits)

((Meta) + (regression| analysis)) | ((Synthesis| review |syntheses| synthesise) + (evidence| systematic | systematically | effectiveness))

## **12. JOLIS**

JOLIS is a joint IMF and World Bank library containing information, reports, research and other resources for the use of IMF and World Bank staff. A selection of the information is also available to the public in order to ensure that economic research and other sector work are made widely available.

### Search Strategy

Jolis is searched using "systematic review" as a keyword and all results screened. For monthly search updates, results are screened from the date of the previous search.



### 13. Meta-Analysis of Economics Research group (MAER)

The MAER Network is a network of economists and other academics who are involved in conducting meta-analysis. The networks serves as a clearinghouse for this kind of research and aims to improve communication between those working in this field.

#### Search Strategy

The volume of resources on this website is small compared to other databases in this list. The publications list is e screened every two months for new titles.

### 14. SUPPORT Collaboration

The SUPPORT Collaboration project, based at the University of Aberdeen, is an international collaboration of scientists and policymakers from Europe and several low- and middle-income countries focussing on health care research.

#### Search Strategy

The website is screened monthly for new publications.

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i

Adapted from Supporting the Use of Research Evidence (SURE) Collaboration. SURE checklist for making judgements about how much confidence to place in a systematic review. In: SURE guides for preparing and using policy briefs. [www.evipnet.org/sure](http://www.evipnet.org/sure)

ii

**Risk of bias** is the extent to which bias may be responsible for the findings of a study.

**Bias** is a systematic error or deviation from the truth in results or inferences. In studies of the effects of social, economic and health care interventions, the main types of bias arise from systematic differences in the groups that are compared (selection bias), the intervention that is provided, or exposure to other factors apart from the intervention of interest (performance bias/contamination), withdrawals or exclusions of people entered into a study (attrition bias) or how outcomes are assessed (detection bias) and reported (reporting bias). Reviews of social science studies may be particularly affected by reporting bias, where a biased subset of all the relevant data and analyses is presented.

Assessments of the risk of bias are sometimes also referred to as assessments of the **validity** or **quality** of a study.

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Validity is the extent to which a result (of a measurement or study) is likely to be true.

Quality is a vague notion of the strength or validity of a study, often indicating the extent of control over bias.