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Filling evidence gaps on what works to improve immunisation outcomes

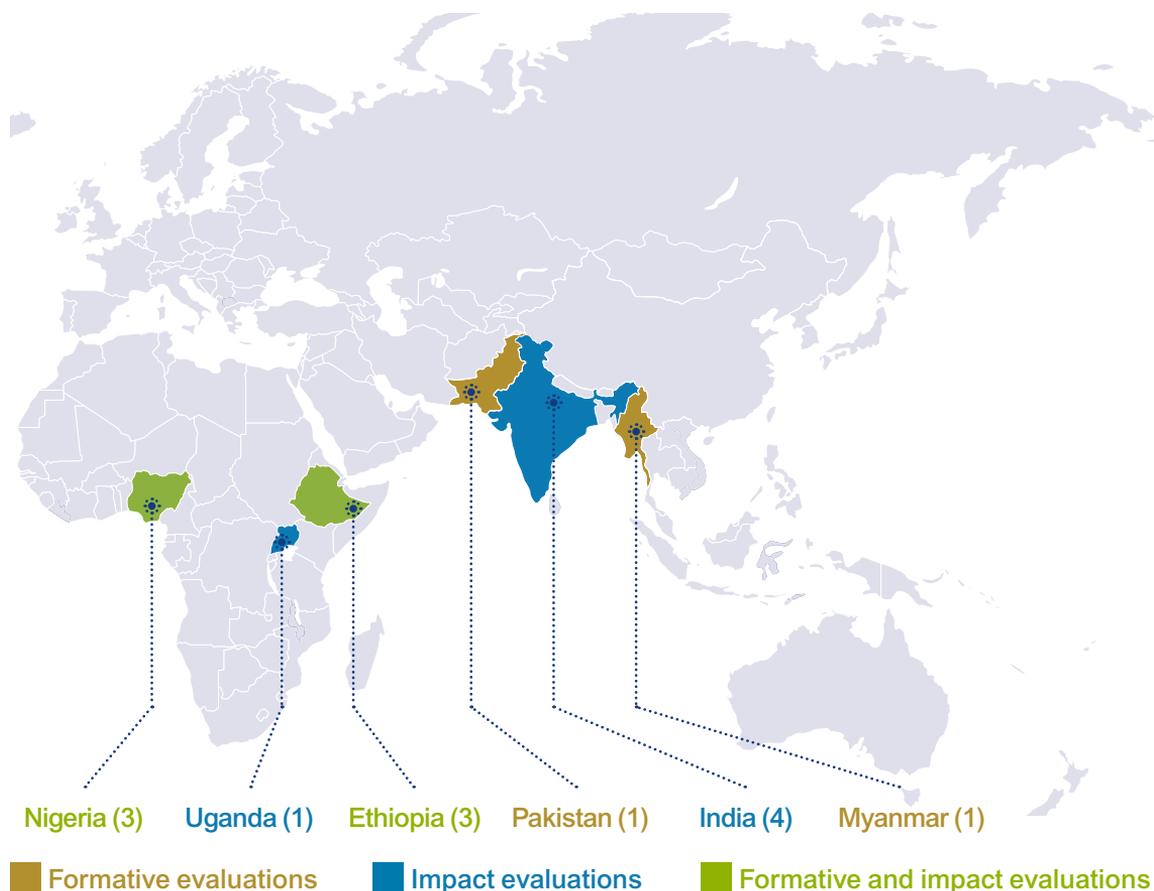
Vaccines prevent millions of child deaths each year. Over the past few years, however, global immunisation coverage has stagnated, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. In 2018, the World Health Organization estimated that 20 million children under age one had not received all their vaccinations.

A 3ie [scoping study](#) indicated the potential of innovative community-based approaches to overcome the complex contextual barriers to immunisation coverage in low- and middle-income countries. It also highlighted a clear lack of evidence on the effectiveness

of these approaches. Launched in 2015, **3ie's immunisation evidence programme** is a US\$7.4 million initiative that focuses on filling this evidence gap.

Under the programme, 3ie has supported seven impact evaluations and six formative evaluations of innovative interventions and community engagement approaches to improve immunisation outcomes in countries with low or stagnating immunisation rates. The formative evaluations test the appropriateness, feasibility and acceptability of the interventions, whilst the impact evaluations assess the effectiveness and scalability of innovative interventions.

Where are our studies located?



Tackling barriers to immunisation

3ie provided implementation and research grants for studies in diverse contexts, including fragile and hard-to-reach contexts, to evaluate interventions that leverage:

- **Community participation:** In Ethiopia, India, Myanmar and Nigeria, researchers tested interventions that promote community ownership and those that inform and mobilise communities, such as joint meetings between community members and health workers; collection of community feedback using checklists; involvement of traditional and religious leaders and other social agents; and

community-produced educational videos for increasing immunisation coverage.

- **Technology and innovation:** In India, Nigeria, Pakistan and Uganda, researchers used mobile health applications and tested novel technology solutions, such as reminder bands and digitised immunisation records, to keep caregivers and health workers on track for timely immunisation.
- **Incentives for health workers and caregivers:** In Ethiopia and India, study interventions included social recognition for health workers and in-kind incentives for caregivers to improve full immunisation rates.

Our studies have impact

Actionable findings from the formative and impact evaluations under the 3ie-funded programme are informing decision makers in:

- **Kebbi, Nigeria:** Findings about the importance of working through existing trusted community structures for community sensitisation from the formative evaluation of vaccine indicator and reminder bands have informed the Kebbi state primary healthcare agency's community engagement strategy and action plan. The agency has decided to involve community leaders to improve referral of infants to health facilities and track defaulters.
- **Rajasthan, India:** Positive evaluation findings for the Khushi Baby intervention prompted the Rajasthan government to commit to scaling it up from 5 blocks to all 11 blocks of Udaipur district. The intervention included a mobile health platform linked with wearable digital pendants.
- **Haryana, India:** The state government is partnering with the research team to pilot the most effective intervention amongst those evaluated – using community-nominated 'gossipers' to spread information. The partnership is also using process findings to systematically integrate administrative data and research evidence into the implementation of state health programmes.





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Know more

3ie is conducting a systematic review of the effectiveness of community engagement approaches in improving immunisation outcomes. We are also mapping the state of current evidence on the types of policies and programmes evaluated and the outcomes measured in the immunisation sector.



Scan this QR code to learn more about these ongoing projects.

The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) is a global leader in funding, producing, assuring the quality of and synthesising rigorous evidence. We support studies and reviews that examine what works, for whom, why and at what cost in low- and middle-income countries. We are also a global advocate for the generation and use of quality evidence in development decision-making. 3ie is a membership organisation with a global network of members and key partners. We promote evidence-informed equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

To partner with 3ie on our health sector programmes, contact us at info@3ieimpact.org.



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