

# **Protocol - Strengthening Civil Society: an evidence gap map**

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**EGM Protocol**

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## About 3ie

The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) promotes evidence-informed equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development. We support the generation and effective use of high-quality evidence to inform decision-making and improve the lives of people living in poverty in low- and middle-income countries. We provide guidance and support to produce, synthesise and quality assured evidence of what works, for whom, how, why and at what cost.

## 3ie evidence gap maps

3ie evidence gap maps (EGMs) are thematic collections of information about impact evaluations and systematic reviews that measure the effects of international development policies and programmes. The maps provide a visual display of completed and ongoing systematic reviews and impact evaluations in a sector or sub-sector, structured around a framework of interventions and outcomes.

The EGM protocol provides all the supporting documentation for the map, including the background information for the theme of the map, and details the methods that will be applied to systematically search and screen the evidence base, extract and analyse data, and develop the EGM report.

## About this evidence gap map protocol

This report presents the protocol for a systematic search to identify and map the evidence base of impact evaluations and systematic reviews of interventions that aim to strengthen civil society in low- and middle-income countries. The EGM was developed by 3ie, made possible with generous support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG Center), via a partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago. The content of this report is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not represent the opinions of 3ie, its donors or its Board of Commissioners. Any errors and omissions are also the sole responsibility of the authors. Please direct any comments or queries to the corresponding author, Miriam Berretta, [mberretta@3ieimpact.org](mailto:mberretta@3ieimpact.org).

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# 1. Background

## 1.1 Development problem being addressed

Formal and informal civil society such as civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), peoples' organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), civic clubs, trade unions, cultural and religious groups, charities, and environmental groups (MFAN 2019), as well as individual citizens, play an essential role to maintain an open society, build up democracy and the rule of law. A strong civil society is associated with a wide range of outcomes, from the creation of responsive states to spreading progressive cultural values (Putnam 1993; Carothers 1999; Peruzzotti 2007; Risse 2000; Edelman 2005). However, some criticize civil society actors for opposite reasons, such as failing to alleviate poverty, promoting civil unrest, and even promoting 'uncivil' values (Pearce 2000; Easterly 2006; Caple James 2010).

Nonetheless, civil society can enable people to claim their rights, influence and monitor development policies and practices, provide essential services to poor and marginalized communities, respond to humanitarian emergencies, and contribute to public awareness of development issues (INTRAC, 2013). They can also catalyze changes in policy, regulation and reform: improve transparency; increase community-level participation; reduce corruption; and increase responsiveness to citizen demands (WB, 2014; page 11). Political civil society supports democracies by keeping citizens more informed and aware; citizens then make better voting decisions, participate in politics and keep the government accountable and transparent. Apolitical civil society contribute to democracy by creating social capital, mutual trust and shared values that are then represented in the political sphere (Essia et al. 2009). Therefore, restrictions on civil society can weaken or violate human rights such as the right to association and freedom of expression, as a result this can also threaten democracy (Buyse, 2018; Carothers and Brechenmacher, 2014; World Economic Forum, 2013).

UN representatives have reported concerns over closing space for civil society, policymakers, think tanks, and the media (Kreienkamp, 2017). In 2015-16, 64 new restrictive laws and regulations were adopted by governments all over the world (Kreienkamp, 2017). According to CIVICUS (2020), only 3% of the world's countries have a strong and open civil society space, leaving around 5 billion people living in countries with a narrowed, obstructed, repressed, or closed civic space (CIVICUS, 2019). Closing civic spaces are found around in L&MICs and HICs, such as Russia, Hungary, and Israel (Cooper, 2018).

Often, governments use restrictions on civil society to silence or intimidate critics and reduce the opportunities for them to be exposed for abusing power and corruption (Buyse, 2018; Kreienkamp, 2017). Many governments argue that restricting funding to civil society can protect national sovereignty and security and increase transparency (Buyse, 2018). Another common explanation for restrictions on civil society is that they are necessary for counterterrorism (Mendelson, 2015). Recent events like the Arab Spring could have led to

governments restricting civil society as it demonstrated the power of civil society groups and raised concerns over loss of domestic political control (Buyse, 2018; Kreienkamp, 2017). In some instances, this has led to authoritarian governments creating paradoxical government-organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs), enabling them to meet development programs requirements to work with non-state partners without actually ceding influence to civil society.

Many governments attempt to restrict civil society's space through violence, arrests, repressive laws, bureaucratic red tape to silence or intimidate critics, and restrictions on foreign funding for civil society (FHI360, 2018; Cooper, 2018). In 2016, more than 1000 human rights defenders were killed, harassed, detained, or subject to smear campaigns; more than 75% of the ones killed were in Latin America (Cooper, 2018). Excessive surveillance, such as installing spyware on mobile phones, has been used to harass civil society members in countries such as Mexico (Cooper, 2018).

Government funding restrictions include making funding dependent on their approval, implementing caps on funding allowed, taxing the international funding received, and prohibiting funding by certain donors or for specific activities (Rutzen, 2015). In 2018, more than 50 countries had restrictions on foreign funding for civil society (Buyse, 2018). Because many civil society rely on international funding, restricting funding can prevent civil society from forming or carrying out their activities (OGP, 2019). These restrictions, therefore, affect the right to freedom of association (OGP, 2019). For example, in India, at least 30 civil society, including Greenpeace India, were, according to the government, involved in activities that were not in the national interest and therefore were refused a government license to receive foreign funding in 2016 (Cooper, 2018). Some civil society have to rely on governmental funding, which in turn can affect their ability to serve as independent advocates (McDonough and Rodriguez, 2020). Other governments have centralized the funds to create a competitive process to acquire COVID-19 funds and restrict cross-border donations, which leads to little transparency and accountability (CAF, 2020).

Since the start of 2020, the restrictions and lockdowns around the world due to COVID-19 have led to increased challenges for civil society (CIVICUS, 2020). According to ICNL's civic freedom tracker, 54 countries have implemented measures that affect expression, 136 countries have measures that affect assembly, and 5 countries have measures that affect privacy as a result of the pandemic. These affect civil society and how it can operate (ICNL, n.d.). Frontline workers, civil society activists, and other concerned people have disclosed information about the pandemic, questioned their government's response to the pandemic and exposed failings of the government's pandemic strategy. As a result, they have experienced threats to their safety and privacy as well as censorship and limitations on access to information (CIVICUS, 2020). For example, in Zimbabwe, prison sentences for up to 20 years have been introduced for spreading false statements about officials involved in the government's pandemic strategy. Many aid workers have also been arrested based on violating social distancing rules in Rwanda and Cameroon while distributing food, free protective masks, and sanitizing gel (ICLN).

Not all COVID response efforts have closed space in civil society. Some governments have moved towards implementing tax relief to boost individual donations (CAF, 2020). Other governments have centralized the funds to create a competitive process to acquire COVID-19 funds and restrict cross-border donations, which leads to little transparency and accountability (CAF, 2020).

### **1.1.1 The funding landscape**

Since the 1970s, international donors, such as the World Bank and United Nations, have worked with civil society organizations to strengthen multi-stakeholder engagement (World Bank, 2014; United Nations, n.d.). In subsequent decades, formal relationships between the civil society, governments, and other international development actors have created spaces for joint efforts, including addressing global issues, mutual consultations, policy-making discussions, and conferences. More recently, international funding has shifted priorities, specifically to address immediate crises, such as the global pandemic. Some governments have moved towards implementing tax relief to boost individual donations (CAF, 2020).

OECD-DAC civil society funding of OECD-DAC has decreased from 12% in 2014 to 10% in 2016 (FORUS, 2019). Many civil society organizations have seen entire income streams dry up at the same time that demand for their services has increased, and as a result, they have adapted to entirely different ways of working (CAF, 2020, p 1). Sharp reductions in aid are often experienced by countries that have recently improved their economic status, especially if they have achieved middle-income status because donors focus on areas where the need is highest (Appel and Pallas, 2018). Due to these funding shortfalls, civil society needs improved infrastructure to promote self-sustainability and new mechanisms to access financial resources, like crowdsourcing.

Donors are increasingly requiring civil society actors to demonstrate an evidence informed theory of change and adopt a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system. A theory of change can demonstrate to donors and other stakeholders what civil society actors intend to do and how their interventions contribute to anticipated outcomes and broader impact (NORAD, 2012). Insufficient theories of change and M&E systems can reduce the effectiveness of programming and evaluation efforts (INTRAC, 2013). However, the absence of skills, expertise, and long-term funding to allow efficient research and monitoring present a constraint to satisfy specific donor requirements (INTRAC, 2013). In some instances, the donors provide the support that civil society needs in this area. For example, in an Embassy-based project of Danish support to civil society, the Embassy provided a range of capacity building, from leadership to monitoring and evaluation, and used a unique "strategic partnership" approach in which it provided ongoing advice to grantees beyond just supporting discrete capacity building activities (McDonough and Rodríguez, 2020).

### **1.1.2 Why is important to do this EGM**

The severe funding restrictions faced by civil society makes the efficient use of limited resources of paramount importance. Proven interventions should be implemented, unproven ones should be evaluated, and disproven ones should be discontinued. Although there is qualitative and observational evidence available on a wide range of civil society

interventions and outcomes, much of the evidence does not establish impact. Further, there is no comprehensive systematic map to piece these findings together and make sense of them. There remains little agreement on how to effectively and systematically assess the relationship between civil society and development outcomes in LMICs (Viterna et al., 2015).

The purpose of this map is to determine the distribution of the evidence regarding interventions to strengthen civil society in low- and middle-income countries and provide easy access to this literature. By describing the evidence base, we hope to highlight areas for future research and facilitate critical thinking about the methods of evaluation used in the field. By cataloging the evidence base, we hope to provide stakeholders with the information that they need to make evidence informed decisions. Through both approaches, the EGM can inform the future allocation of resources and transition towards more evidence-informed civil society programs.

## 1.2 Study objectives and questions

This project aims to improve access to evidence on the effects of interventions to strengthen civil society in LMICs among policymakers, researchers, and the development community. It will do this by identifying, describing, and summarizing the available evidence in a clear and structured way. In turn, it is expected the project will facilitate the use of evidence to inform policy decisions.

To meet this aim, the specific objectives of this EGM are twofold:

- Identify and describe the evidence on the effects of interventions to strengthen civil society in LMICs;
- Identify potential primary evidence and synthesis gaps.

To meet these objectives, we will address the research questions shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: EGM research questions**

No.	Research Question	Type
RQ1	What is the extent and what are the characteristics of empirical evidence on the effects of interventions to strengthen civil society in LMICs?	Coverage
RQ2	What are the major primary and synthesis evidence gaps in the literature?	Gaps
RQ3	What could intervention/outcome areas be prioritised for primary research and/or evidence synthesis?	Research needs



## 2. Scope

This map will consider the impacts of interventions to strengthen civil society. It does not consider (1) the development of new sectors of civil society or (2) the effectiveness of civil society actors in achieving their goals. Specifically, we will not consider interventions to improve the quality of services provided by civil society actors (ex. the provision of health or education services by civil society). For the purpose of the civil society EGM framework we will not include the media and journalists, given that we are developing a separate EGM for independent media.

### 2.1 Conceptual framework

#### 2.1.1 Definitions

There is no single agreed definition for civil society. We will not add our own definition to the rather long list of proposed definitions. Rather, we recognize the essential contributions to the conceptualization made by academics and practitioners in the field. We have identified several widely used definitions and combine them to develop an operationalizable working definition.

In classical social theory, civil society is the realm of social life in which moral sentiments, norms, practices, and hegemonic ideologies are cultivated through institutions that mediate between the family and the state: the church, educational institutions, social movements, etc. (Gramsci 1971; deTocqueville 2012). Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around a shared interest, purposes, and values, where citizens can organise themselves to pursue goals not directly related to personal or financial gain, which concern a wider group of people and are not necessarily taken care of by the government, outside of the family, the state and the market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complicated, blurred and negotiated (Heinrich, 2004: 13; CCS, 2006; CIVICUS, 2019; MFAN, 2019). The formal definition we are adapting is the following:

In recent times, the different typologies of civil society are: Civil society organizations (CSOs) comprising NGOs, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations that have an organized structure and mission and are typically registered entities and groups; Online groups and activities, including social media communities that can be "organized" but do not necessarily have physical, legal, or financial structures; Social movements of collective action and/or identity, which can be online or physical; Labor unions and labor organizations representing workers; and Social entrepreneurs employing innovative and/or market-oriented approaches for social and environmental outcomes. — Vandyck, 2017

The definition highlights the relevance of all actors that form part of civil society. Consistent with CIVICUS's definition from its 2011 State of Civil Society report, civil society, therefore, encompasses civil society organizations and less formalized groups and individuals' actions. The term 'organized civil society' refers to independent, non-state and non-private sector associations and organizations with some form of structure and formal rules of operating,

together with the networks, infrastructure, and resources they utilize. Civil society encompasses formal and informal organizations engaged in development work, such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, trade association, self-help groups, business associations, community-based organizations (CBOs), indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs), academia, journalist associations, coalitions, advocacy groups, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), civic clubs, social and sports clubs, environmental groups, professional associations, policy institutions, consumer organizations, and the media (UNDP, 2006; LSE, 2006; Essia and Yearoo, 2009; USAID, 2018; USAID 2012; MFAN, 2019). We use a broad definition of civil society as donors tend to focus on civil society organisations making it easy to lose sight of all the other informal civil society which make up civil societies. This is especially true in non-Western societies, where civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors, and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy, and power (CCS, 2006; MFAN, 2019).

### **2.1.2 The theory behind these interventions**

Support civil society as an effective arena that empowers citizens to advance democratic values of citizen participation and governmental accountability. This includes supporting an enabling legal environment that protects and promotes civil society and civic action; providing capacity development assistance to CSOs; supporting civic participation; bolstering government oversight and accountability activities; strengthening a democratic political culture that values civic engagement, tolerance, and respect for human rights; and strengthening independent and democratic trade/labor unions. — USAID (2018) in the civil society program area definition under the Standardized Program Structure and Definitions.

A strong civil society is thought to lead to more effective development and improve the quality of democracy. This can be achieved by a) civil society and government having a good working relationship that enables them to solve problems that the broader society cares about, and b) civil society having sufficient independence and influence on government and broader society to appropriately define and analyze problems, and then hold the powerful accountable for solving them. In severely restricted civic spaces, development partners strengthen civil society in order to deliver services that the government cannot deliver and channel information from the population to the state so that the state can better meet the needs of the population. In more democratic societies, a strong civil society can be a partner to the government in analyzing problems, crafting policy and implementing solutions, as well as watchdogs and advocates for individual and collective rights, and for governmental and corporate transparency, accountability, and social inclusion.

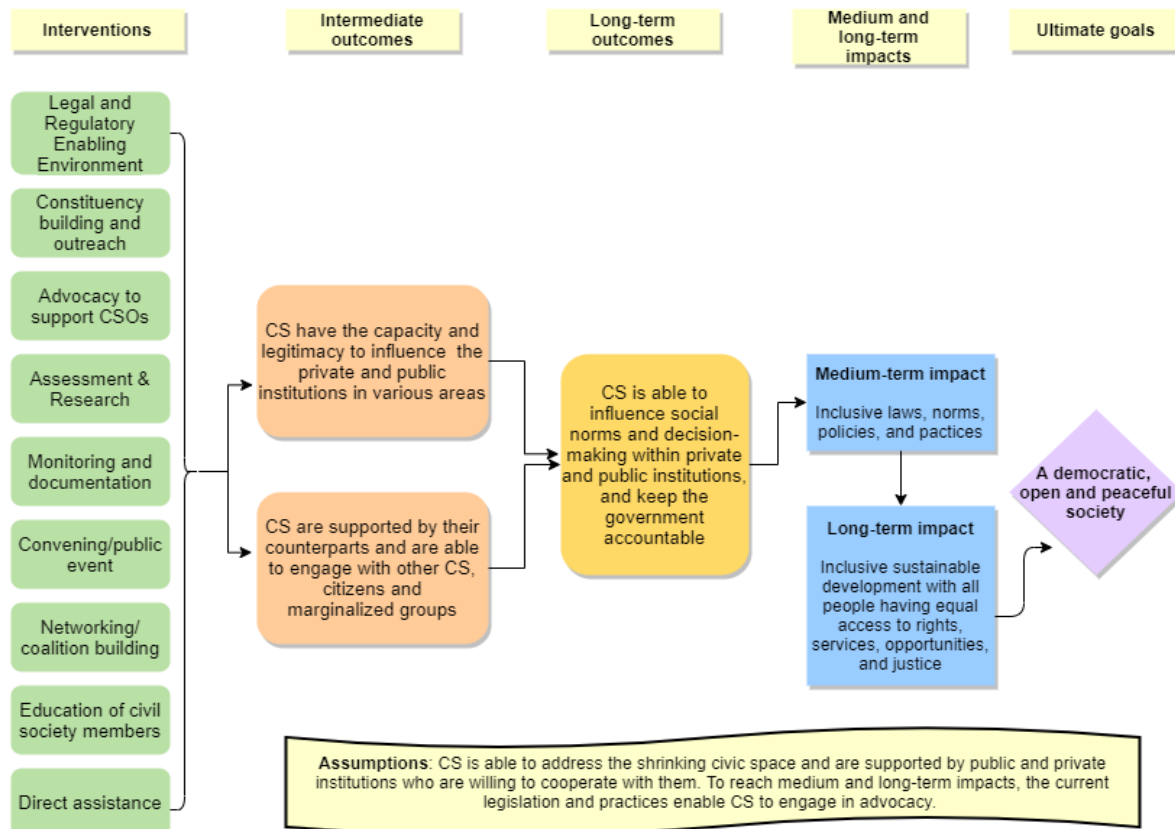
The dominant theory of change for civil society work in international development is a “sandwich approach” where both governments and civil society are the target of interventions. The top-down approaches involve legislation to improve the enabling environment for civil society activity and work with the executive branch to improve the

government's capacity to receive and act on input from civil society. On the bottom-up side, interventions target civil society with material support and training to improve their capacity to do a variety of advocacy, watchdog and social change activities, as well as materially supporting their implementation of those activities.

We adapted a version of a Theory of Change (Figure 1) from a policy document of the Ministry Affairs of the Netherlands (MFAN 2019). We organised the interventions in broad categories, with several sub-categories explained in section 2.2.1. The interventions include projects to strengthen the regulatory environment to allow civil society to operate safely, projects to develop institutional capacities and technical skills as well as direct financial or technical support, and the creations of coalitions and collaborations between civil society and the government, or other public and private institutions.

These interventions are expected to lead to medium and long-term outcomes, and medium and long-term impacts. The map framework includes the outcomes likely to be measured through evaluation studies. In the medium term, civil society is expected to gain the capacity and legitimacy to increase their influence on public and private institutions' decisions, advocating, for instance, for human rights and inclusion of marginalised groups in policies and reforms (MFAN 2019; Bahmani et al. 2016, INTRAC 2013). Private and public institutions may increase their support of civil society, and civil society's ability to engage citizens, including marginalised groups, giving voice and power to them may increase. In the long-term, interventions may result in an actual influence on policy and decision-making within private and public institutions, holding the government accountable and making pressure for laws and policies that benefit the poor and the marginalised groups (MFAN 2019; INTRAC 2013; USAID 2018). The medium and long-term impacts will be the existence of laws, policies and practices that take into consideration the whole population including the marginalised groups, allowing everyone to have equal access to services, rights, opportunities, and justice, assuming that the current legislation allows civil society to engage in advocacy activities. The final overall goal is to reach and maintain a democratic, open and peaceful society. The main assumptions to reach these outcomes is the ability of civil society to function within the allocated civic space and the willingness of public and private institutions to collaborate with civil society.

**Figure 1: Theory of change**



## 2.2 Criteria for including or excluding studies

### 2.2.1 Population

We will include studies that target any population from low- and middle-income countries (L&MIC), as defined by the World Bank for the first year of implementation. For studies that target populations in both an L&MIC as well as a high-income country (HIC), we will include them if the results for the L&MIC population are analysed and reported separately, i.e., with unique intervention and comparison groups from the L&MIC(s). Studies that compare the effects of an intervention group from an L&MIC to a comparison group in an HIC will be excluded. We will exclude studies if they do not evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention delivered in a real-world setting.

### 2.2.2 Interventions

For a study to be eligible, at least one of these interventions should be evaluated.

**Table 2: Interventions included**

<b>EGM intervention group</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>EGM categories names</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Legal and Regulatory Enabling Environment	Establishment of legal and regulatory frameworks that protect the freedom of association and assembly and that promote an enabling environment that protects and promotes civil society and citizen participation.	Policies, laws, reforms	The establishment of policies, laws, reforms that guarantee freedom of assembly, association and expression as well as favorable laws governing civil society and the uniform implementation of the laws.	
		Awareness-raising/advocacy related to civil society enabling environment	Monitor, assess, track and raise awareness for the current legal and regulatory environment regarding freedom of assembly, association and expression and a favorable enabling environment for civil society.	
Constituency building and outreach	Membership drives and recruitment activities to encourage attendance at or participation in organizations or future events. These interventions recruit for larger events, but are not the events themselves.			
Advocacy to support civil society	Efforts to support civil society that directly influence the political,	Public campaigns	Coordinated set of activities meant to promote cause to general public in target countries.	Example of campaigns could focus on encouraging volunteering

<b>EGM intervention group</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>EGM categories names</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
	economic, or social practices and policies of other institutions, often the government. This is limited to advocacy to support civil society and does not include advocacy conducted by civil society for other purposes.			in civil society, or to support them by donations.
		Campaign targeting policymakers	Coordinated set of activities meant to promote cause directly to key policymakers in target countries without engaging the public.	
		Other campaigns		
		Other advocacy activities		
Assessment & Research	Analytic efforts to understand the environment and inform subsequent actions. Research is performed with the purpose of wide dissemination for awareness and informative purposes.	Legal	Analysis of the legal environment relative to the project's topic, typically done prior to any interventions.	
		Communications	Analysis of the communication networks available and the current flows of communication	
		Needs/strategy	Analysis of the situation on ground, relative to an organization or cause, such as a Organizational Needs Assessment or a Political Economy Assessment.	
		Partners/network	Analysis of strength and breadth of potential partners and their social and professional connections.	

<b>EGM intervention group</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>EGM categories names</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
		Public awareness	Analysis of the public's awareness of a given topic, typically done through polling.	
		Other		
Monitoring/documentation	The act of monitoring and documenting compliance with agreed upon rules, regulations, and norms as they pertain to civil society.	Monitoring/documentation		
Convening/public event	Gathering stakeholders with the expressed purpose of promoting or protecting civil society	Education oriented	Bringing together stakeholders and disseminating information, includes civic education.	
		Strategy oriented	Bringing together stakeholders for them to develop a strategy to be implemented in a later project. Stakeholders are gathered to develop strategy to implement activities later in the project.	
		Consensus building	Bringing together stakeholders for them to come to an agreement on a given topic.	

<b>EGM intervention group</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>EGM categories names</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
		Other	Bringing together stakeholder in ways which do not fall under other categories, often in reference to gatherings to promote a given cause through cultural means, such as a concert.	
Networking/ coalition building	The development of continuous acting networks or coalitions with the expressed purpose of promoting or protecting civil society	Advocacy	The development of a coalition or group of stakeholders that advocates jointly for a specific cause.	
		Awareness	The development of a coalition or group of stakeholders that jointly promotes public awareness of a specific cause.	
		Education	The development of a coalition or group that jointly supports peer learning and shares experiences.	
		Communications	The development of a coalition or group that use their joint platform to reach a wider audience in communications activities.	Project example: <a href="http://www.careevaluation.org/wp-content/uploads/EU-SCPAE-Final-Evaluation.pdf">http://www.careevaluation.org/wp-content/uploads/EU-SCPAE-Final-Evaluation.pdf</a>
		Decision-making	The development of a coalition or group to take part in decision-making processes	
		Coordinating activities	The development of a coalition or group that coordinates activities across members	



EGM intervention group	Description	EGM categories names	Description	Examples
		Other		
Education of civil society members	Any transfer of knowledge to strengthen the capacity to manage the civil society and increase their influence	On advocacy	Capacity building to strengthen attendees' ability to perform advocacy.	
		On communications	Capacity building to strengthen attendees' ability to perform strategic communication to public of specific topic. Not with members of media as attendees.	
		On documentation	Capacity building to strengthen attendees' ability to conduct monitoring and documentation activities.	
		On Physical and digital security	Capacity building to strengthen attendees' security, both physical and digital.	
		On Service provision	Capacity building to strengthen attendees' ability to administer a service, such as legal protection.	
		On general education	Direct assistance is provided to an individual, or where a fellowship is provided to an individual.	Project example: <a href="https://www.worldlearning.org/program/strengthening-tomorrows-cso-leaders/">https://www.worldlearning.org/program/strengthening-tomorrows-cso-leaders/</a>

<b>EGM intervention group</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>EGM categories names</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
		On organizational management	Capacity or develop a business plan, be financial sustainable, organise staff etc. Consistent and continuous support, in the form of capacity and expertise, to implementing partners, though not through formal events or products.	Project example: <a href="http://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/EU-SCPAE-Final-Evaluation.pdf">http://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/EU-SCPAE-Final-Evaluation.pdf</a>  Co-creating Organizational Development Interventions with CSOs for Systemic Change <a href="https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/co-creating_organizational_development_interventions_with_csos_for_systemic_change.pdf">https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/co-creating_organizational_development_interventions_with_csos_for_systemic_change.pdf</a>
		Other		
Direct assistance	Direct technical or financial support	Core organizational support	Direct support provided to organization via performance of administrative or essential function duties.	Examples are an accountant or a security guard.

EGM intervention group	Description	EGM categories names	Description	Examples
		Emergency assistance	Often EA and Rapid Response programming. Funding comes in direct response to urgent needs.	
		Sustained financial assistance to an organization		

### 2.2.3 Outcomes of interest

For a study to be included, at least one of the following outcomes should be measured in the evaluation.

**Table 3: Outcomes included**

<b>EGM outcomes category</b>	<b>Description</b>
A conducive, open legal and regulatory environment for civil society and labor unions	Measures of the openness, fairness, and transparency of the legal and regulatory environment regarding civil society and labour unions. Includes access to the legal system; freedoms of expression, assembly, and association; and the favourability of laws and regulations governing civil society.
An enabling financial environment	Measures of the financial environment (i.e. tax system) and philanthropic system affecting civil society, including local contributions to civil society (in-kind, volunteer).
Civil society organizational resilience and sustainability	Measures of financial sustainability and organizational resilience. Includes measures of internal governance, administration, and management practiced; human resources; financial/program management; and access to resources.
Civil society oversight of private institutions	Measures of civil society's ability to monitor private institutions.
Civil society oversight of public institutions	Measures of civil society's ability to monitor governments institutions. Includes the ability of civil society to conduct monitoring and oversight activities, respond to authoritarian influence, promote digital security, combat disinformation, for instance, by using 'report cards'.
Civil society input to public institutions	Measures of the involvement of civil society in decision-making with government Includes measures of civil society's involvement in policy reform; the development of mechanisms for cooperation; and interactions between civil society and the government (such as town halls)

EGM outcomes category	Description
Civil society input to private institutions	Measures of the involvement of civil society in decision -making within private institutions Includes measures related to the influence of civil society on private institutional decisions or business models, including the number of interactions between civil society and private institutions (joint meetings)
Citizens participate in civic life	Measures of the political and social involvement of citizens. Includes measures of the intensity of participation by various groups, such as counts of people attending meetings and events and the development of new CSO.
Marginalized groups participate in civic life	Marginalized groups participate in civic life – focus on the participation of marginalized groups Includes women and youth participation as well as measures of steps civil society are taking to be more inclusive.
Dense and diverse civic networks	Measurement of representation and civil society organization engagement with coalitions and networks outside their inner circle of funding and action partners. Includes measures of coalition and consensus building, with a focus on bringing together diverse groups.
Resilience to closing space	Measures of civil society resilience. Includes measures of CSO’s abilities to maintain physical and digital security and resist other types of attacks, often within restrictive political environments.
Awareness and trust of civil society organizations	Measures of citizens’ awareness and trust. Includes citizen awareness, dialogue, civic education, trust in civil society, and perception of the legitimacy of civil society.
Partnerships	Measures of the extent to civil society partnerships and coalitions with the for-profit and public sectors function.

EGM outcomes category	Description
Civil society actors engage with public information and media	Measures of transparency, monitoring, and access to public information. Includes the extent to which civil society engages with media actors and access to public information.
Citizens aware of rights and responsibilities	Measures of knowledge, attitude, values, skills, and behaviour of citizens with regard to civic engagement. Includes awareness and understanding of laws, regulations and political participation.
Democratic labor and trade unions functionality and rights	Measures of workers organizational rights and abilities. Includes the timely and effective resolution of labour disputes; collective bargaining; the ability of union/worker organizations to represent workers; the protection of vulnerable workers.

### **2.2.4 Types of studies**

We will include impact evaluations and systematic reviews that measure the effects of a relevant intervention on outcomes of interest, including both selected quantitative and qualitative study designs.

The selected quantitative study designs are the following, chosen because they are widely used to evaluate intervention effectiveness (Reeves et al. 2017; Aloe et al. 2017).

#### **Included study designs:**

##### *Impact evaluations (IEs)*

1. Randomised controlled trials (RCTs) with assignment at the individual, household, community or other cluster level, and quasi-RCTs using prospective methods of assignment such as alternation.
2. Non-randomised designs with either a known assignment variable(s) or a seemingly random assignment process:
  - a. Regression discontinuity designs, where assignment is based on a threshold measured before intervention, and the study uses prospective or retrospective approaches of analysis to control for unobservable confounding.
  - b. Natural experiments with clearly defined intervention and comparison groups which exploit apparently random natural variation in assignment (such as a lottery) or random errors in implementation, etc.
3. Non-randomised studies with pre-intervention and post-intervention outcome data for both intervention and comparison groups, where data are individual level panel or pseudo-panels (repeated cross-sections), which use the following methods to control for confounding:
  - a. Studies controlling for time-invariant unobservable confounding, including difference-in-differences, fixed-effects models, or models with an interaction term between time and intervention for pre-intervention and post-intervention observations.
  - b. Studies assessing changes in trends in outcomes over a series of time points with a contemporaneous comparison (controlled interrupted time series, ITS), and with sufficient observations to establish a trend and control for effects on outcomes due to factors other than the intervention (such as seasonality).
4. Non-randomised studies with a similar comparison group that control for observable confounding, including statistical matching, covariate matching, coarsened-exact matching, propensity score matching, and multiple regression analysis.
5. Non-randomised studies that control for confounding using instrumental variable (IV) approaches such as two-stage least squares procedures.

##### *Systematic reviews (SRs):*

We will include systematic effectiveness reviews that describe the search, inclusion criteria, data collection and synthesis methods used (Snilstveit et al. 2016). Any evidence reviews, such as literature reviews, that do not adopt these methods will be excluded. We will exclude systematic reviews that are not effectiveness reviews (i.e. that do not aim to synthesise the evidence of the effects of a relevant intervention on priority outcomes of

interest), such as systematic reviews of the barriers and facilitators to implementation of a media development intervention. For reviews that include multiple research methods, we will include them if over 50 percent of the primary studies include at least one impact evaluation design specified above, or where the effectiveness component of the review was empty (i.e. no eligible studies were identified) and thus no findings on effectiveness are reported.

We will exclude before-after studies or cross-sectional studies that do not attempt to control for selection bias or confounding in any way. Studies that only examine willingness-to-pay for goods, services, process and business models will be excluded.

Experiments conducted in tightly-controlled settings, like those of a laboratory, and studies that measure immediate reactions to a short-term exposure, i.e. studies where implementation and data collection is started and completed within a single day, will be excluded.

### **Qualitative study designs**

We recognize that quantitative impact evaluations can be difficult to perform for some of the interventions we have included in the framework. Therefore, we will include a limited number of qualitative impact evaluation methods that clearly try to identify the causal relationship between the interventions and outcomes. This list is based on White and Phillips 2012 and the Magenta Book on evaluation published by the UK government (HM Treasury 2020). The definitions have been developed by using two additional sources (INTRAC 2017a,b,c,d and Remnand and Avard, 2016). We will only include studies that state, in the title, abstract, or full text, that they used one of the methodologies listed below. We will exclude all those studies where it is not clearly stated which analysis has been used.

#### **Included qualitative study designs:**

##### *Realist evaluation:*

Realist evaluations assume that projects and programmes work under certain conditions and are heavily influenced by the way that different stakeholders respond to them. Authors must clearly state a theory tested through an intervention indicating how and for whom a program would work. They compare contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes within a program (not with a control). There is a strong emphasis on the social and historical context and comparison of those who benefited from the program and those who did not benefit (White and Philip, 2012). A realist evaluation is therefore not just designed to assess whether a development intervention worked or not. It is designed to address questions such as “What works (or doesn’t work)?”; “for whom (and to what extent)?”; “in which circumstances does it work?”; “How and why does it work?” (INTRAC, 2017a).

##### *Process tracing:*

Develop a set of (competing) hypotheses linking an intervention to an outcome including how these hypotheses could be (in)validated. Gather relevant evidence to determine which hypothesis most closely matches observed data. In its pure form, process tracing is based around a set of formal tests. These are designed to assess causation. They are applied to all the different possible explanations for how a particular change might have come about in order to confirm some and/or eliminate others. Within the process tracing these different explanations are known as hypotheses (INTRAC, 2017b).



*Contribution analysis:*

Contribution analysis is a methodology used to identify the contribution a development intervention has made to a change or set of changes. The aim is to produce a credible, evidence-based narrative based on a theory of change that a reasonable person would be likely to agree with, rather than to produce conclusive proof. Contribution analysis can be used during a development intervention, at the end, or afterwards (INTRAC, 2017c).

*Contribution tracing:*

Contribution tracing is a participatory mixed-method (qual-quant) to establish the validity of contribution claims with explicit criteria to guide evaluators in data collection and Bayesian updating to quantify the level of confidence in a claim. Includes a contribution ‘trial’ with all stakeholders to establish what will prove/disprove the claim (HM Treasury 2020).

*The qualitative impact assessment protocol (QulP):*

QulP studies serve to provide an independent reality check of a predetermined theory of change which helps stakeholders to assess, learn from, and demonstrate the social impact of their work. The QulP gathers evidence of a project’s impact through narrative causal statements collected directly from intended project beneficiaries. Respondents are asked to talk about the main changes in their lives over a pre-defined recall period and prompted to share what they perceive to be the main drivers of these changes, and to whom or what they attribute any change - which may well be from multiple sources (Remnand and Avard, 2016).

*General elimination methodology (GEM):*

Scriven’s GEM (2008) builds upon his earlier Modus Operandi Method (1976) to provide an approach specifically geared towards substantiating causal claims. The methodology entails systematically identifying and then ruling out alternative causal explanations of observed results. It is based on the idea that for any event it is possible to draw up *Lists of Possible Causes* (LOPCs) or alternative hypothetical explanations for an outcome of interest. Each putative cause will have its own set of “footprints”, or *Modus Operandi* (MO) – “a sequence of intermediate or concurrent events, a set of conditions or a chain of events that has to be present when the cause is effective (Scriven, 2008)” (White and Phillips, 2012, pp. 38).

*Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA):*

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) is a methodology that enables the analysis of multiple cases in complex situations. It can help explain why change happens in some cases but not others. QCA is designed for use with an intermediate number of cases, typically between 10 and 50. It can be used in situations where there are too few cases to apply conventional statistical analysis (INTRAC, 2017d).

*Outcome harvesting*

Outcome harvesting is designed to collect evidence of change (the ‘outcomes’) and then work backwards to assess whether or how an organization, program or project contributed to that change. Outcomes are defined as changes in the “behaviour writ large” (such as actions, relationships, policies, practices) of one or more social actors influenced by an intervention (Wilson-Grau, 2015)

### **2.2.5 Other inclusion and exclusion criteria**

We will also apply the following criteria when selecting studies for inclusion.

- **Language:** Studies published in any language will be included, although the search terms will be in English only.
- **Publication date:** Studies will be included if their publication date was 1990 or after.
- **Status of studies:** We will include all studies regardless of publication status, i.e. both peer-reviewed and studies published in 'grey literature'. We will include both ongoing and completed impact evaluations and systematic reviews. For on-going studies, we will include prospective study records, protocols and trial registries. Providing an indication of the prevalence and characteristics of on-going evaluation evidence is expected to enrich the analysis of current evidence gaps and support decision making in relation to evidence generation.

## **3. Methods**

### **3.1 Overall methodological approach**

We will follow the standards and methods for EGMs developed by 3ie (Snilstveit et al., 2016; Snilstveit et al., 2017). An evidence gap map aims to establish what we know, and do not know, about the effects of interventions in a thematic area (Snilstveit et al., 2016).

The map is populated by systematically searching and screening all relevant completed, and ongoing, impact evaluations and systematic reviews. The included studies are mapped onto the framework of interventions and outcomes and will be presented on an interactive platform which provides a graphical display of the evidence in a grid-like framework. This provides a visual display of the volume of evidence for intervention-outcome combination, the type of evidence (impact evaluation, systematic reviews, completed or ongoing), and a confidence rating of the quality for systematic reviews. The final map will be published on an online interactive platform that provides additional filters so that users can further explore the available evidence, for example by global regions, income levels, or population.

The interactive map will be accompanied by a report addressing the key research questions, including an analysis of the characteristics of the available evidence, key trends (i.e. number of impact evaluation published over the time, geography, focus on interventions and outcomes, targeted audiences).

Evidence gap maps highlight both absolute gaps, which should be filled with new primary studies, and synthesis gaps, which are ready for new systematic reviews and meta-analyses. They are envisioned as a global public good, and this allows them to be used as a tool which facilitates access to high-quality research.

### **3.2 Conceptual framework development**

We have developed the framework by consulting the relevant literature cited in the paragraphs above. We have received feedback on the proposed framework from stakeholders within USAID and an external Advisory Group (see Appendix D). Laura

Adams, the subject matter expert for this project, provided essential inputs to develop the interventions categories and the theory behind the interventions we will look at.

### 3.3 Search strategy

#### **List of proposed search databases:**

- CAB Abst
- Comms & Mass Media
- ERIC
- Gender Studies database
- Int Political Science Abst
- PsycInfo (Ebsco)
- Web of Science (SSCI/AHCI)
- Africa-Wide (Ebsco - LSHTM)
- Econlit (Ovid)
- Repec
- WB e-library (Ebsco Discovery)
- JSTOR

#### **Specific organisation Websites:**

<i>IREX Civil Society</i>	<a href="https://www.irex.org/programming-area/civil-society">https://www.irex.org/programming-area/civil-society</a>
<i>CSO Sustainability Index Explorer</i>	<a href="https://csosi.org/">https://csosi.org/</a>
<i>INSPIRES project</i>	<a href="https://www.inspiresconsortium.org/">https://www.inspiresconsortium.org/</a>
<i>United Nations/Civil Society</i>	<a href="https://www.un.org/civilsociety/">https://www.un.org/civilsociety/</a>
<i>UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND</i>	<a href="https://www.un.org/democracyfund/content/global">https://www.un.org/democracyfund/content/global</a>
<i>CIVICUS Monitor</i>	<a href="https://monitor.civicus.org/">https://monitor.civicus.org/</a>
<i>Freedom House</i>	<a href="https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/populists-and-autocrats-dual-threat-global-democracy">https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/populists-and-autocrats-dual-threat-global-democracy</a>
<i>ICLN</i>	<a href="https://www.icnl.org/our-work/monitoring-assessment">https://www.icnl.org/our-work/monitoring-assessment</a>
<i>Intrac</i>	<a href="https://www.intrac.org/resources/page/1?terms=">https://www.intrac.org/resources/page/1?terms=</a>
<i>fhi360</i>	<a href="https://www.fhi360.org">https://www.fhi360.org</a>
<i>Carter Center</i>	<a href="https://www.cartercenter.org/news/publications/peace/democracy_reports.html">https://www.cartercenter.org/news/publications/peace/democracy_reports.html</a>
<i>OECD</i>	<a href="https://www.oecd.org/about/civil-society/">https://www.oecd.org/about/civil-society/</a>
<i>State of Civil Society Report 2020</i>	<a href="https://www.civicus.org/index.php/state-of-civil-society-report-2020">https://www.civicus.org/index.php/state-of-civil-society-report-2020</a>
<i>Civil Society Index (CSI)</i>	<a href="https://www.odi.org/publications/5389-mapping-political-context-civil-society-index">https://www.odi.org/publications/5389-mapping-political-context-civil-society-index</a>
<i>Forus</i>	<a href="https://forus-international.org/en">https://forus-international.org/en</a>
<i>USAID Learning Library</i>	<a href="https://usaidlearninglab.org/site-search/CSOs">https://usaidlearninglab.org/site-search/CSOs</a>
<i>The Democracy and Governance Network</i>	<a href="https://www.comminit.com/democracy-governance/content/realist-evaluation-community-">https://www.comminit.com/democracy-governance/content/realist-evaluation-community-</a>

*Citizen participation, empowerment and accountability for improved governance* *centered-radio-initiative-health-and-development-mindanao-p*  
*West Africa Civil Society Institute* <https://wacsi.org/research-reports/>  
<https://wacsi.org/wacseries/>  
CSIS <https://www.csis.org/programs/international-consortium-closing-civic-space-icon>

### **Other organizations Websites**

*Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-Pal)*  
*African Development Bank (AfDB) – Evaluation Reports*  
*Alliance for Peacebuilding – Peacebuilding evaluation*  
*Asian Development Bank (ADB) – Evaluation Resources*  
*British Library of Development Studies (BLDS)*  
*Campbell Library*  
*Centre for Effective Global Action (CEGA)*  
*Department for International Development (DFID)*  
*Experiments in Governance and Politics (EGAP)*  
*German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval)*  
*Google Scholar*  
*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)*  
*Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)*  
*Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)*  
*International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)*  
*International Rescue Committee (IRC)*  
*Mercy Corps*  
*NBER Working Papers*  
*Overseas Development Institute (ODI)*  
*Registry of International Development Impact Evaluations (RIDIE)*  
*Social Science Research Network (SSRN)*  
*USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse*  
*World Bank – Development Impact Evaluation Initiative (DIME)*  
*World Bank – Independent Evaluation Group (IEG)*  
*World Food Programme (WFP)*  
*International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)*  
*Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)*  
*European Commission - EU evaluations*  
*United States Institute of Peace*  
*Sida*

### **3.4 Screening protocol**

The search results will be imported into the systematic review software “EPPI-reviewer4” ([link](#)). This platform will be used to manage references, identify and remove duplicate studies, and screen records for inclusion using the procedures outlined below.

**Title and abstract screening (TAS):** double screening will be combined with EPPI-reviewer's machine learning functionality to speed up the screening process. Initially, a randomly selected set of around 800-1000 studies will be screened to provide training to the team. During the training the results given by the researchers will be compared, and any discrepancy in coding decisions will be discussed, including a clarification of the inclusion criteria as needed. The results of this training will be used as a base for the machine-learning algorithm, specifically the 'classifier' functionality which is used to priorities studies for screening according to their likelihood of inclusion. The entire screening process will continue with a double screening approach where each abstract is screened by two independent researchers and any disagreement is reconciled with the supervision of a senior review team member.

**Full text screening (FTS):** for each study that meets all the TAS inclusion criteria the full text will be retrieved. Two reviewers from the core team will independently examine each full text in detail against the protocol again and will decide to include it or not. The output of this stage will be a set of studies deemed suitable to be included in the EGM. Any disagreements between reviewers will be reconciled with the supervision of a senior review team member.

### **Data extraction and critical appraisal**

We will systematically extract data from all included studies using the data extraction tool available in Appendix B. We plan to convert the Excel tool for use in KoBo Toolbox ([link](#)), which is a useful software for consistent data extraction. The data will cover the following broad areas:

- Basic study and publication information: This coding will focus on capturing the general characteristics of the study including authors, publication date and status, study location, intervention type, outcomes reported, definition of outcome measures, population of interest, study and programme funders, time periods for delivery and analysis;
- Topical cross-cutting issues: We will extract data on a number of cross-cutting issues, including gender, democratic/autocratic context, equity and cost-effectiveness.
- Critical appraisal: All included systematic reviews will be critically appraised following the practices adopted by 3ie systematic review database protocol, which draws on Lewin et al. (2009). This appraisal assesses systematic reviews according to criteria relating to the search, screening, data extraction, and synthesis activities conducted, and covers all the most common areas where biases are introduced. Each systematic review will be rated as low, medium, or high confidence drawing on guidance provided in Snilstveit et al. (2017). We will not critically appraise impact evaluations, as this is typically beyond the scope of EGMs. The tool used for this process is presented in Appendix C.

The following processes will be implemented to collect this information:

- Develop and refine data extraction tools and codebooks: The draft tools developed for this project will be reviewed and potentially refined in light of any feedback received by the EGM advisory group and insights from project implementation.
- Data extraction training and pilot: Coders assigned to each data extraction task will undergo theory- and practice- based training in using the tools provided. Each coding group will all code a 'training set' of studies and assessments of inter-rater reliability will be calculated. Additional group training will be completed as required prior to the main-stage extraction.
- Main-stage extraction: In the case of descriptive and equity-based information, studies will be coded by one coder. In the case of critical appraisal assessments, studies will first be single coded and then reviewed by a systematic review methods expert. Meetings will be held periodically with coders on the project to provide support and resolve queries.
- Quality checks: Since the beginning of the data extraction phase, the project team will check the extracted data. In practice, a member of the core team will check the consistency of data extracted by consultants.

### **3.5 Dealing with multicomponent interventions**

Depending on the number and nature of multi-component interventions included, the project team will adopt one approach to coding these in the map so that we are consistent. This approach may be to determine the main intervention of focus in the study and grouping the study with others that focus on that main component, grouping all multicomponent studies together or a combination of those approaches. The approach adopted and the associated limitations will be clearly stated in the final report.

### **3.6 Analysis and reporting**

We will conduct a range of descriptive analyses to provide an overview of included studies across the following dimensions:

- Publication year
- Publication type
- Geography
- Study participants
- Interventions
- Outcomes
- Study type characteristics
- Results of the systematic review critical appraisal
- Equity and cross cutting themes considerations, e.g. democratic/autocratic context and gender.

Where appropriate, we will consider running cross-tabs to provide a more nuanced overview of the evidence identified. We will produce the following analytical outputs:

- Interactive EGM: An interactive evidence gap map that visually presents the current evidence base that is categorised by coverage with respect to the predetermined

intervention-outcome framework, quality and completeness. Filters may be incorporated into the map to enable more targeted use – for example, by restricting the studies to a specific unit of analysis, by levels of fragility or democracy. This will be stored on the 3ie website and shared as a public good.

- **Presentation:** A Microsoft PowerPoint presentation will provide an overview of the emerging findings of the EGM. This will be presented by the evaluation team and will provide an opportunity for USAID to comment on findings and to collaboratively discuss opportunities for additional analyses, presentation of results and implications. It will be designed such that it can be used by USAID and for internal learning purposes.
- **EGM technical report:** The EGM technical report will include a detailed overview of the method, Theory of Change and the key results of the EGM; it will provide a high level of analytical detail and will be supported by technical annexes. This report will conclude by directly addressing the key research questions stated in Section 2 and provide a set of research and policy implications. This will be published by 3ie and shared as a public good.
- **EGM executive summary:** This report will provide a high-level summary of the results and primarily focus on answering the research questions specified in Section 2 using non-technical language.

### 3.7 Timeline

The approximate date for submission of the EGM report is June 2021. All final analytical outputs will be published on the 3ie Evidence Hub. USAID may also publish relevant materials.

### 3.8 Engagement and communication plan

It is important that the results of the EGM are shared with USAID and its internal audiences, and more broadly to the development sector. The project will complete the following activities to engage with key stakeholders to attempt to ensure the results of the project accurately reflect the policy and research needs of key stakeholders:

- **Develop an EGM advisory group:** The project team, in collaboration with USAID, will engage with key stakeholders with academic and/or practitioner expertise in the field of rule of law and justice. 3ie will set up an advisory group which will have the aim of providing pro-bono support to the project at several key stages of the project. These stages include developing the project protocol, reviewing the search results produced, reviewing and interpreting emerging findings, and developing and optimising the analytical outputs produced to aid evidence uptake and use.
- **Develop a Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan:** A stakeholder engagement and communication plan (SECP) will be drafted. The aim of this plan is to ensure that findings from the EGM are effectively disseminated to the appropriate audiences, in an engaging and accessible format. This plan includes a provisional analysis of key stakeholder groups, focusing on their relevant interests and the extent to which 3ie and/or USAID have access to them, and an

assessment of what the most value-added EGM project outputs might be to aid evidence uptake and use. The SECP is considered to be a 'live document' and will be refined if necessary as additional information needs or dissemination opportunities are identified by the project team, advisory group or USAID.

**Analytical outputs:** Additional analytical outputs will be produced as required depending on the needs of specific audiences, as described in subsection 3.6 above.

## **4. Review information**

### **4.1 Sources of support**

This EGM was commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under its Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Learning, Evaluation, and Research (DRG-LER) II Activity. As a consortium sub-contractor to NORC, 3ie was tasked to produce an evidence gap map (EGM) for each of the six Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) program areas under the US Government Foreign Assistance Framework. These program areas are: 1) rule of law; 2) good governance; 3) political competition and consensus-building (i.e. elections and political processes); 4) civil society; 5) independent media and free flow of information; and 6) human rights.

### **4.2 Declarations of interest**

No conflict of interest to declare.

### **4.3 Plans for updating EGM**

At the time of publication, there were no plans in place for updating the EGM.



## Appendix A: Search strategy

Example of search run in Ebsco Databases: ERIC, International Political Science Abstracts, Gender Studies, APA PsycInfo, CAB Abstracts, Communications & Mass Media – Searched 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021

5 ("civil society" or cso or csos or ((female\* or women\* or politic\* or process or communit\* or civic) adj4 (participat\* or involv\*)) or (social adj2 (capital or cohes\* or pressure\*)) or "horizontal pressure\*" or ((non-government\* or community or community-based or faith or faith-based or "indigenous people\*" or voluntary or consumer\*) adj3 (organisation\* or organization\*)) or NGO\* or ((professional or trade\* or business\* or commercial) adj3 association\*) or CBO or CBOs or IPO or IPOs or PVO or PVOs or ((trade\* or labour or labor) adj3 union\*) or ((self-help or "self help" or environmental\*) adj3 group\*) or "civic club\*").ti,ab,kw,sh. (31082)

6 ((freedom adj3 (assembly or associat\* or express\* or speech)) or policy or policies or law or laws or legal\* or regulat\* or legislat\* or lawmaking or law-making or "law making" or reform\*).ti,ab,kw,sh. (409787)

7 (recruit\* or (membership\* adj3 (driver\* or campaign\* or increas\* or promot\*)) or attendance\* or supporter\* or vote\* or voting or (build\* adj3 constituen\*) or outreach).ti,ab,kw,sh. (23683)

8 (advocacy or campaign\* or policymak\* or "policy mak\*" or volunteer\* or voluntary or ((public\* or social) adj3 (engag\* or activ\*))).ti,ab,kw,sh. (46653)

9 (research or analy\* or "legal environment" or ((organisation\* or organization\* or assess\*) adj3 need\*) or partner\* or (aware\* adj3 (rais\* or public or communit\*)) or (information adj3 (flow\* or disseminat\*)) or network\* or ((organization\* or organisation\* or social) adj3 connect\*).ti,ab,kw,sh. (520939)

10 (monitor\* or document\* or complian\* or record or records or norm or norms).ti,ab,kw,sh. (69047)

11 (stakeholder\* or "civic education" or (concensus adj2 build\*) or consultation or ((convene\* or hold\* or summon\* or organis\* or organiz\*) adj3 (meeting\* or forum\* or event\*))).ti,ab,kw,sh. (10720)

12 (coalition\* or network\* or ((peer or peers) adj3 learn\*) or education or decision-making or (decision\* adj2 (mak\* or made)) or platform\* or dialog\* or (knowledge adj3 (exchang\* or disseminat\*)) or meeting or meetings or consortium or consortia or bilateral\* or trilateral\*).ti,ab,kw,sh. (149131)

13 (train or training or educat\* or (capacity adj2 build\*) or skill or skills or workshop\* or course\* or fellowship\* or mentor\* or ((technical or individual\*) adj3 assist\*).ti,ab,kw,sh. (108216)

14 (fund\* or ((direct or financ\* or emergency or technical or organisational or organizational) adj3 (support or assistance or grant or grants)) or ((physical or digital) adj2 security) or (legal\* adj2 protect\*)).ti,ab,kw,sh. (72954)

S17 TI ( ("process tracing" or (outcome\* N2 harvest\*) or "realist evaluation" or (qualitative N2 ("comparative analysis" or study or assessment or analysis or evaluation)) or QCA or "general elimination method\*" or "impact assessment" or QuIP or (contribution N2 (analysis or trace or tracing))) ) OR AB ( ("process tracing" or (outcome\* N2 harvest\*) or "realist evaluation" or (qualitative N2 ("comparative analysis" or study or assessment or analysis or evaluation)) or QCA or "general elimination method\*" or "impact assessment" or QuIP or (contribution N2 (analysis or trace or tracing))) ) OR SU ( ("process tracing" or (outcome\* N2 harvest\*) or "realist evaluation" or (qualitative N2 ("comparative analysis" or study or assessment or analysis or evaluation)) or QCA or "general elimination method\*" or "impact assessment" or QuIP or (contribution N2 (analysis or trace or tracing))))

S14 TI ( (random\* or experiment\* or (match\* N2 (propensity or coarsened or covariate)) or "propensity score" or ("difference in difference\*" or "difference-in-difference\*" or "differences in difference\*" or "differences-in-difference\*" or "double difference\*") or ("quasi-experimental" or "quasi experimental" or "quasi-experiment" or "quasi experiment") or ((estimator or counterfactual) and evaluation\*) or "instrumental variable\*" or (IV N2 (estimation or approach)) or "regression discontinuity" or "time series" or "segment\* regression" or (non N2 participant\*) or ((control or comparison) N2 (group\* or condition\* or area\* or intervention))) ) OR AB ( (random\* or experiment\* or (match\* N2 (propensity or coarsened or covariate)) or "propensity score" or ("difference in difference\*" or "difference-in-difference\*" or "differences in difference\*" or "differences-in-difference\*" or "double difference\*") or ("quasi-experimental" or "quasi experimental" or "quasi-experiment" or "quasi experiment") or ((estimator or counterfactual) and evaluation\*) or "instrumental variable\*" or (IV N2 (estimation or approach)) or "regression discontinuity" or "time series" or "segment\* regression" or (non N2 participant\*) or ((control or comparison) N2 (group\* or condition\* or area\* or intervention))) ) OR SU ( (random\* or experiment\* or (match\* N2 (propensity or coarsened or covariate)) or "propensity score" or ("difference in difference\*" or "difference-in-difference\*" or "differences in difference\*" or "differences-in-difference\*" or "double difference\*") or ("quasi-experimental" or "quasi experimental" or "quasi-experiment" or "quasi experiment") or ((estimator or counterfactual) and evaluation\*) or "instrumental variable\*" or (IV N2 (estimation or approach)) or "regression discontinuity" or "time series" or "segment\* regression" or (non N2 participant\*) or ((control or comparison) N2 (group\* or condition\* or area\* or intervention))) )

S13 TI ( ("systematic review" or "literature review") ) OR AB ( ("systematic review" or "literature review") ) OR SU ( ("systematic review" or "literature review") ) OR SO (cochrane database of systematic reviews)

S12 TI ( ( afghanistan or albania or algeria or "american samoa" or angola or "antigua and barbuda" or antigua or barbuda or argentina or armenia or armenian or aruba or azerbaijan or bahrain or bangladesh or barbados or belarus or byelarus or belorussia or byelorussian or belize or "british honduras" or benin or dahomey or bhutan or bolivia or "bosnia and herzegovina" or bosnia or herzegovina or botswana or bechuanaland or brazil or brasil or bulgaria or "burkina faso" or "burkina fasso" or "upper volta" or burundi or urundi or "cabo verde" or "cape verde" or cambodia or kampuchea or "khmer republic" or cameroon or cameron or cameroun or "central african republic" or "ubangi shari" or chad or chile or china or colombia or comoros or comoro islands or "iles comores" or mayotte or "democratic republic of the congo" or "democratic republic congo" or congo or zaire or "costa rica" or "cote divoire" or "cote d ivoire" or "cote divoire" or "cote d ivoire" or "ivory coast" or croatia or cuba or cyprus or "czech republic" or czechoslovakia or djibouti or "french somaliland" or dominica or "dominican republic" or ecuador or egypt or "united arab republic" or "el salvador" or "equatorial guinea" or "spanish guinea" or eritrea or estonia or eswatini or swaziland or ethiopia or fiji or gabon or "gabonese republic" or gambia or "georgia (republic) " or georgian or ghana or "gold coast" or gibraltar or greece or grenada or guam or guatemala or guinea or "guinea bissau" or guyana or "british guiana" or haiti or hispaniola or honduras or hungary or india or indonesia or timor or iran or iraq or "isle of man" or jamaica or jordan or kazakhstan or kazakh or kenya or "democratic peoples republic of korea" or "republic of korea" or "north korea" or "south korea" or korea or kosovo or kyrgyzstan or kirghizia or kirgizstan or "kyrgyz republic" or kirghiz or laos or "lao pdr" or "lao people's democratic republic" or latvia or lebanon or "lebanese republic" or lesotho or basutoland or liberia or libya or "libyan arab jamahiriya" or lithuania or macau or macao or "republic of north macedonia" or macedonia or madagascar or "malagasy republic" or malawi or nyasaland or malaysia or "malay federation" or "malaya federation" or maldives or "indian ocean islands" or "indian ocean" or mali or malta or micronesia or "federated states of micronesia" or kiribati or "marshall islands" or nauru or "northern mariana islands" or palau or tuvalu or mauritania or mauritius or mexico or moldova or moldovian or mongolia or montenegro or morocco or ifni or mozambique or "portuguese east africa" or myanmar or burma or namibia or nepal or "netherlands antilles" or nicaragua or niger or nigeria or oman or muscat or pakistan or panama or "papua new guinea" or "new guinea" or paraguay or peru or philippines or philipines or phillipines or phillippines or poland or "polish people's republic" or portugal or "portuguese republic" or "puerto rico" or romania or russia or "russian federation" or ussr or "soviet union or union of soviet socialist republics" or rwanda or ruanda or samoa or "pacific islands" or polynesia or "samoan islands" or "navigator island" or "navigator islands" or "sao tome and principe" or "saudi arabia" or senegal or serbia or seychelles or "sierra leone" or slovakia or "slovak republic" or slovenia or melanesia or "solomon island" or "solomon islands" or "norfolk island" or "norfolk islands" or somalia or "south africa" or "south sudan" or "sri lanka" or ceylon or "saint kitts and nevis" or "st. kitts and nevis" or "saint lucia" or "st. lucia" or "saint vincent and the grenadines" or "saint vincent" or "st. vincent" or grenadines or sudan or suriname or surinam or "dutch guiana" or "netherlands guiana" or syria or "syrian arab republic" or tajikistan or tadjikistan or

tadzhikistan or tadjik or tanzania or tanganyika or thailand or siam or "timor leste" or "east timor" or togo or "togolese republic" or tonga or "trinidad and tobago" 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 "middle east" or "west bank" or gaza or palestine or yemen or yugoslavia or zambia or zimbabwe or "northern rhodesia" or "global south" or "africa south of the sahara" or "sub-saharan africa\*" or "subsaharan africa\*" or "africa, central" or "central africa\*" or "africa, northern" or "north africa\*" or "northern africa\*" or magreb or maghrib or sahara\* or "africa, southern" or "southern africa\*" or "africa, eastern" or "east africa\*" or "eastern africa\*" or "africa, western" or "west africa\*" or "western africa\*" or "west indies" or "indian ocean islands" or caribbean or "central america\*" or "latin america\*" or "south and central america\*" or "south america\*" or "asia, central" or "central asia\*" or "asia, northern" or "north asia\*" or "northern asia\*" or "asia, southeastern" or "southeastern asia\*" or "south eastern asia\*" or "southeast asia\*" or "south east asia\*" or "asia, western" or "western asia\*" or "europe, eastern" or "east europe\*" or "eastern europe\*" or "developing country" or "developing countries" or "developing nation\*" or "developing population\*" or "developing world" or "less developed countr\*" or "less developed nation\*" or "less developed population\*" or "less developed world" or "lesser developed countr\*" or "lesser developed nation\*" or "lesser developed population\*" or "lesser developed world" or "under developed countr\*" or "under developed nation\*" or "under developed population\*" or "under developed world" or "underdeveloped countr\*" or "underdeveloped nation\*" or "underdeveloped population\*" or "underdeveloped world" or "middle income countr\*" or "middle income nation\*" or "middle income population\*" or "low income countr\*" or "low income nation\*" or "low income population\*" or "lower income countr\*" or "lower income nation\*" or "lower income population\*" or "underserved countr\*" or "underserved nation\*" or "underserved population\*" or "underserved world" or "under served countr\*" or "under served nation\*" or "under served population\*" or "under served world" or "deprived countr\*" or "deprived nation\*" or "deprived population\*" or "deprived world" or "poor countr\*" or "poor nation\*" or "poor population\*" or "poor world" or "poorer countr\*" or "poorer nation\*" or "poorer population\*" or "poorer world" or "developing econom\*" or "less developed econom\*" or "lesser developed econom\*" or "under developed econom\*" or "underdeveloped econom\*" or "middle income econom\*" or "low income econom\*" or "lower income econom\*" or "low gdp" or "low gnp" or "low gross domestic" or "low gross national" or "lower gdp" or "lower gnp" or "lower gross domestic" or "lower gross national" or lmic or lmicr or "third world" or "lami countr\*" or "transitional countr\*" or "emerging economies" or "emerging nation\*") ) ) OR AB ( ( (afghanistan or albania or algeria or "american samoa" or angola or "antigua and barbuda" or antigua or barbuda or argentina or armenia or armenian or aruba or azerbaijan or bahrain or bangladesh or barbados or belarus or byelarus or belorussia or byelorussian or belize or "british honduras" or benin or dahomey or bhutan or bolivia or "bosnia and herzegovina" or bosnia or herzegovina or botswana or bechuanaland or brazil or brasil or bulgaria or "burkina faso" or "burkina fasso" or "upper volta" or burundi or urundi or "cabo verde" or "cape verde" or cambodia or kampuhea or "khmer republic" or cameroon or cameron or cameroun or "central african republic" or "ubangi shari" or chad or chile or china or colombia or comoros or comoro islands or "iles comores" or mayotte or "democratic republic of the congo" or "democratic

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people's democratic republic" or latvia or lebanon or "lebanese republic" or lesotho or basutoland or liberia or libya or "libyan arab jamahiriya" or lithuania or macau or macao or "republic of north macedonia" or macedonia or madagascar or "malagasy republic" or malawi or nyasaland or malaysia or "malay federation" or "malaya federation" or maldives or "indian ocean islands" or "indian ocean" or mali or malta or micronesia or "federated states of micronesia" or kiribati or "marshall islands" or nauru or "northern mariana islands" or palau or tuvalu or mauritania or mauritius or mexico or moldova or moldovian or mongolia or montenegro or morocco or ifni or mozambique or "portuguese east africa" or myanmar or burma or namibia or nepal or "netherlands antilles" or nicaragua or niger or nigeria or oman or muscat or pakistan or panama or "papua new guinea" or "new guinea" or paraguay or peru or philippines or philipines or phillipines or phillippines or poland or "polish people's republic" or portugal or "portuguese republic" or "puerto rico" or romania or russia or "russian federation" or ussr or "soviet union or union of soviet socialist republics" or rwanda or ruanda or samoa or "pacific islands" or polynesia or "samoan islands" or "navigator island" or "navigator islands" or "sao tome and principe" or "saudi arabia" or senegal or serbia or seychelles or "sierra leone" or slovakia or "slovak republic" or slovenia or melanesia or "solomon island" or "solomon islands" or "norfolk island" or "norfolk islands" or somalia or "south africa" or "south sudan" or "sri lanka" or ceylon or "saint kitts and nevis" or "st. kitts and nevis" or "saint lucia" or "st. lucia" or "saint vincent and the grenadines" or "saint vincent" or "st. vincent" or grenadines or sudan or suriname or surinam or "dutch guiana" or "netherlands guiana" or syria or "syrian arab republic" or tajikistan or tadjikistan or tadzhikistan or tadzhik or tanzania or tanganyika or thailand or siam or "timor leste" or "east timor" or togo or "togolese republic" or tonga or "trinidad and tobago" 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 "middle east" or "west bank" or gaza or palestine or yemen or yugoslavia or zambia or zimbabwe or "northern rhodesia" or "global south" or "africa south of the sahara" or "sub-saharan africa\*" or "subsaharan africa\*" or "africa, central" or "central africa\*" or "africa, northern" or "north africa\*" or "northern africa\*" or magreb or maghrib or sahara\* or "africa, southern" or "southern africa\*" or "africa, eastern" or "east africa\*" or "eastern africa\*" or "africa, western" or "west africa\*" or "western africa\*" or "west indies" or "indian ocean islands" or caribbean or "central america\*" or "latin america\*" or "south and central america\*" or "south america\*" or "asia, central" or "central asia\*" or "asia, northern" or "north asia\*" or "northern asia\*" or "asia, southeastern" or "southeastern asia\*" or "south eastern asia\*" or "southeast asia\*" or "south east asia\*" or "asia, western" or "western asia\*" or "europe, eastern" or "east europe\*" or "eastern europe\*" or "developing country" or "developing countries" or "developing nation\*" or "developing population\*" or "developing world" or "less developed countr\*" or "less developed nation\*" or "less developed population\*" or "less developed world" or "lesser developed countr\*" or "lesser developed nation\*" or "lesser developed population\*" or "lesser developed world" or "under developed countr\*" or "under developed nation\*" or "under developed population\*" or "underdeveloped countr\*" or "underdeveloped nation\*" or "underdeveloped population\*" or "underdeveloped world" or "middle income countr\*" or "middle income nation\*" or "middle income population\*" or "low income countr\*" or "low income nation\*" or "low income population\*" or "lower

income countr\*" or "lower income nation\*" or "lower income population\*" or "underserved countr\*" or "underserved nation\*" or "underserved population\*" or "underserved world" or "under served countr\*" or "under served nation\*" or "under served population\*" or "under served world" or "deprived countr\*" or "deprived nation\*" or "deprived population\*" or "deprived world" or "poor countr\*" or "poor nation\*" or "poor population\*" or "poor world" or "poorer countr\*" or "poorer nation\*" or "poorer population\*" or "poorer world" or "developing econom\*" or "less developed econom\*" or "lesser developed econom\*" or "under developed econom\*" or "underdeveloped econom\*" or "middle income econom\*" or "low income econom\*" or "lower income econom\*" or "low gdp" or "low gnp" or "low gross domestic" or "low gross national" or "lower gdp" or "lower gnp" or "lower gross domestic" or "lower gross national" or lmic or lmics or "third world" or "lami countr\*" or "transitional countr\*" or "emerging economies" or "emerging nation\*") ) )



## Appendix B: Data extraction template

Code	Subcode
Study Information	Study EPPI internal ID
	Coder name
	Title name
	Foreign Title
	Short title
	Language
Author Information	Authors Name
	Authors Affiliation Institution
	Authors Affiliation Country
Publication Information	Publication Type
	DOI
	Study status
	Abstract
	Keywords
	Journal name
	Other journal name
	Journal volume
	Journal issue
	Pages
	Year of Publication
	URL
	Publisher location
Open access	
Sector Information	Sector name
	Sub-sector name
	DAC rank
	Primary DAC Code
	Secondary DAC Code
	CRS-Voluntary (tertiary) Code
	SDGs
	WB first theme
	WB first sub-theme
	WB second theme
	WB second sub-theme
	WB third theme
	WB third sub-theme
	Other topics
	Equity focus
Equity dimension	
Equity description	
Geographic Information	First year of intervention
	Continent name
	Country name
	Additional country
	Country income level

	<b>Region name</b> <b>State/province name</b> <b>District name</b> <b>City/town name</b> <b>Location name</b>
<b>Target population and cost data</b>	<b>Age</b> <b>Sex</b> <b>Setting</b> <b>Sexual orientation</b> <b>Specific population group</b> <b>Cost data</b> <b>Type of cost data</b>
<b>Methodological information</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b> <b>Evaluation Method</b> <b>Mixed Method</b> <b>Additional quantitative Methods</b> <b>Additional qualitative Methods</b> <b>Unit of Observation</b>
<b>Program, Funding and Implementation Information</b>	<b>Project Name</b> <b>Implementation Agency Category</b> <b>Implementation Agency Name</b> <b>Program Funding Agency Category</b> <b>Program Funding Agency Name</b> <b>Researching Funding Agency Category</b> <b>Researching Funding Agency Name</b>
<b>Intervention Information</b>	<b>Treatment group/Arm 1</b> <b>Treatment group/Arm 1 Description</b> <b>Intervention group/Arm 2</b> <b>Treatment group/Arm 2 Description</b> <b>Create 3 different treatment options in case there is more than one intervention group.</b>
<b>Outcome Information</b>	<b>Outcome</b> <b>Outcome description</b>

## Appendix C: Critical appraisal tool

*Checklist for making judgements about how much confidence to place in a systematic review of effects.*

This checklist has been 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

Question	Criteria
<b>Section A: Methods used to identify, include and critically appraise studies</b>	
<p><b>A.1 Were the criteria used for deciding which studies to include in the review reported?</b></p> <p>Did the authors specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Types of studies</li> <li>▪ Participants/ settings/ population</li> <li>▪ Intervention(s)</li> <li>▪ Outcome(s)</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; partially; no; can't tell</p> <p>Coding guide - check the answers above</p> <p>YES: All four should be yes</p> <p>NO: All four should be no</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Any other</p>
<p><b>A.2 Was the search for evidence reasonably comprehensive?</b></p> <p>Were the following done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Language bias avoided (no restriction of inclusion based on language)</li> <li>▪ No restriction of inclusion based on publication status</li> <li>▪ 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)</li> <li>▪ Reference lists in included articles checked</li> <li>▪ Authors/experts contacted</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; partially; no; can't tell</p> <p>Coding guide - check the answers above:</p> <p>YES: All five should be yes</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Relevant databases and reference lists are both reported</p> <p>NO: Any other</p>

Question	Criteria
<p><b>A.3 Does the review cover an appropriate time period?</b></p> <p>Is the search period comprehensive enough that relevant literature is unlikely to be omitted?</p>	<p>Yes; can't tell (only use if no information about time period for search); no; unsure</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: Generally, this means searching the literature at least back to 1990</p> <p>NO: Generally, if the search does not go back to 1990</p> <p>CAN'T TELL: No information about time period for search</p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>A.4 Was bias in the selection of articles avoided?</b></p> <p>Did the authors specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Independent screening of full text by at least 2 reviewers</li> <li>▪ List of included studies provided</li> <li>▪ List of excluded studies provided</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; partially; no</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Independent screening and list of included studies provided are both reported</p> <p>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.</p>

Question	Criteria
<p><b>A.5 Did the authors use appropriate criteria to assess the quality and risk of bias in analysing the studies that are included?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The criteria used for assessing the quality/ risk of bias were reported</li> <li>▪ A table or summary of the assessment of each included study for each criterion was reported</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; partially; no</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: All three should be yes</p> <p>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.</p> <p>NO: Any other</p>
<p><b>A.6 Overall – how much confidence do you have in the methods used to identify, include and critically appraise studies?</b></p> <p>Summary assessment score A relates to the 5 questions above.</p> <p>High confidence applicable when the answers to the questions in section A are all assessed as ‘yes’</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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’</p>	<p><b>Low confidence</b> (limitations are important enough that the results of the review are not reliable)</p> <p><b>Medium confidence</b> (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><b>High confidence</b> (only minor limitations)</p>

Question	Criteria
<b>Section B: Methods used to analyse the findings</b>	
<p><b>B.1 Were the characteristics and results of the included studies reliably reported?</b></p> <p>Was there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Independent data extraction by at least 2 reviewers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A table or summary of the characteristics of the participants, interventions and outcomes for the included studies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A table or summary of the results of all the included studies</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; no; partially; not applicable (e.g. no included studies)</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: All three should be yes</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Criteria one and three are yes, but some information is lacking on second criteria.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</p>
<p><b>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?</b></p>	<p>Yes; partially; no; not applicable</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: Methods used clearly reported. If it is clear that the authors use narrative synthesis, they don't need to say this explicitly.</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Some reporting on methods but lack of clarity</p> <p>NO: Nothing reported on methods</p> <p>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</p>
<p><b>B.3 Did the review describe the extent of heterogeneity?</b></p> <p>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>Did the review discuss the extent to which there were important differences in the results of the included studies?</p> <p>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>Yes; partially; no; not applicable</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: First two should be yes, and third category should be yes if applicable should be yes</p> <p>PARTIALLY: The first category is yes</p> <p>NO: Any other</p> <p>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</p>

Question	Criteria
<p><b>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?</b></p> <p>How was the data analysis done?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Descriptive only</li> <li>▪ Vote counting based on direction of effect</li> <li>▪ Vote counting based on statistical significance</li> <li>▪ Description of range of effect sizes</li> <li>▪ Meta-analysis</li> <li>▪ Meta-regression</li> <li>▪ Other: specify</li> <li>▪ Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data)</li> </ul> <p>How were the studies weighted in the analysis?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Equal weights (this is what is done when vote counting is used)</li> <li>▪ By quality or study design (this is rarely done)</li> <li>▪ Inverse variance (this is what is typically done in a meta-analysis)</li> <li>▪ Number of participants (sample size)</li> <li>▪ Other: specify</li> <li>▪ Not clear</li> <li>▪ Not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data)</li> </ul> <p>Did the review address unit of analysis errors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes - took clustering into account in the analysis (e.g. used intra-cluster correlation coefficient)</li> <li>▪ No, but acknowledged problem of unit of analysis errors</li> <li>▪ No mention of issue</li> <li>▪ Not applicable - no clustered trials or studies included</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; partially; no; not applicable (e.g. no studies or no data); can't tell.</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: If appropriate table, graph or meta-analysis AND appropriate weights AND unit of analysis errors addressed (if appropriate).</p> <p>PARTIALLY: If appropriate table, graph or meta-analysis AND appropriate weights AND unit of analysis errors not addressed (and should have been).</p> <p>NO: If narrative OR vote counting (where quantitative analyses would have been possible) OR inappropriate reporting of table, graph or meta-analyses.</p> <p>NOT APPLICABLE: if no studies/no data</p> <p>CAN'T TELL: if unsure (note reasons in comments below)</p>

Question	Criteria
<p><b>B.5 Does the review report evidence appropriately?</b></p> <p>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</p> <p>Where studies of differing risk of bias are included, results are reported and analysed separately by risk of bias status</p>	<p>Yes; partially; no; not applicable</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: Both criteria should be fulfilled (where applicable)</p> <p>NO: Criteria not fulfilled</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Only one criterion fulfilled, or when there is limited reporting of quality appraisal (the latter applies only when inclusion criteria for study design are appropriate)</p> <p>NOT APPLICABLE: No included studies</p> <p>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)</p>
<p><b>B.6 Did the review examine the extent to which specific factors might explain differences in the results of the included studies?</b></p> <p>Were factors that the review authors considered as likely explanatory factors clearly described?</p> <p>Was a sensible method used to explore the extent to which key factors explained heterogeneity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Descriptive/textual</li> <li>▪ Graphical</li> <li>▪ Meta-analysis by sub-groups</li> <li>▪ Meta-regression</li> <li>▪ Other</li> </ul>	<p>Yes; partially; no; not applicable</p> <p>Coding guide:</p> <p>YES: Explanatory factors clearly described and appropriate methods used to explore heterogeneity</p> <p>PARTIALLY: Explanatory factors described but for meta-analyses, sub-group analysis or meta-regression not reported (when they should have been)</p> <p>NO: No description or analysis of likely explanatory factors</p> <p>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</p>



Question	Criteria
<p><b>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?</b></p> <p>Summary assessment score B relates to the 5 questions in this section, regarding the analysis.</p> <p>High confidence applicable when all the answers to the questions in section B are assessed as 'yes'.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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'.</p>	<p><b>Low confidence</b> (limitations are important enough that the results of the review are not reliable)</p> <p><b>Medium confidence</b> (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><b>High confidence</b> (only minor limitations)</p>
<p><b>Section C: Overall assessment of the reliability of the review</b></p>	
<p><b>C.1 Are there any other aspects of the review not mentioned before which lead you to question the results?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Additional methodological concerns – only one person reviewing</li> <li>▪ Robustness</li> <li>▪ Interpretation</li> <li>▪ Conflicts of interest (of the review authors or for included studies)</li> <li>▪ Other</li> <li>▪ No other quality issues identified</li> </ul>
<p><b>C.2 Are there any mitigating factors which should be considered in determining the reviews reliability?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limitations acknowledged</li> <li>▪ No strong policy conclusions drawn (including in abstract/ summary)</li> <li>▪ Any other factors</li> </ul>

Question	Criteria
<p><b>C.3 Based on the above assessments of the methods how would you rate the reliability of the review?</b></p> <p><b><u>Low confidence in conclusions about effects:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Medium confidence in conclusions about effects:</u></b></p> <p>The systematic review has the following limitations...</p> <p><b><u>High confidence in conclusions about effects:</u></b></p> <p>If applicable: The review has the following minor limitations... Coding guide:</p>	<p><b>High confidence in conclusions about effects:</b> high confidence noted overall for sections A and B, unless moderated by answer to C1.</p> <p><b>Medium confidence in conclusions about effects:</b> medium confidence noted overall for sections A or B, unless moderated by answer to C1 or C2.</p> <p><b>Low confidence in conclusions about effects:</b> low confidence noted overall for sections A or B, unless moderated by answer to C1 or C2.</p> <p>Limitations should be summarised above, based on what was noted in Sections A, B and C.</p>

## **Appendix D: Details about the EGM advisory group**

The Advisory group members for this EGM are the following:

WACSI - Charles Kojo Vandyck

Aga Khan Foundation - Matt Reeves

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace - Saskia Brechenmacher

World Bank - Jose Antonio Cuesta

Duke University - Jeremy Springman

Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development, Utrecht University - Carole-Anne Sénit

IDB Civil Society Team - Flavia Milano

University of East Anglia - Ben Jones

### **Terms of reference for an EGM advisory group**

EGM advisory groups are a requirement for all 3ie EGMs. They help authors determine the parameters of their proposed map and provide inputs throughout the research process to help ensure that the final product is policy relevant and useful in informing decision-making.

Members of the advisory group should be diverse including policymakers, programme managers, researchers and other key stakeholders (e.g. the funder, if appropriate). Members will be asked to provide inputs on various aspects of the EGM throughout the mapping process.

The details of member inputs will be finalised by the project manager or principal investigator prior to member recruitment. The total time commitment is not likely to exceed two days and may be less depending on members' availability. Indicative inputs are listed here (the examples are not exhaustive):

- Advise on key decisions regarding the EGM scope, including refining the objectives and definitions of key concepts;
- Determine important outcomes;
- Suggest relevant background literature and studies for inclusion;
- Participate in up to 2-3 teleconferences for the duration of the EGM (title/ scoping stage, draft protocol, draft report);
- Provide written comments on the draft protocol and draft report;
- Help the team draw policy implications from the EGM findings. This can involve participating in a brainstorming session or focus group meeting to review the lessons and implications of the EGM in terms of policy and research investments;
- Assist the study team in implementing the communication plan developed for the project. This can involve advising on the project team's plan, identifying key audiences or hosting launch events for the report;
- Identify opportunities for policy influence to increase investments in evidence production and synthesis; and
- Act as a knowledge broker, providing a link between the author team and the end users by facilitating access to, interpretation and translation of the EGM findings for use locally.

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