



Frequently Asked Questions about 3ie Replication Programme

Version: 22 June 2015

Question: What data does 3ie expect original authors to share with replication researchers?

Answer: Original authors will be requested to supply replication ready data, meaning the raw data that were used to construct the variables involved in the research. In addition, original authors will need to provide code to transform the data from the raw form to the pre-estimation level. Replication researchers are expected to independently transform the data and then verify their transformations through a comparison with the code from the original authors. At this point, the replication researchers should be able to compare summary statistics with the original authors to determine similarities and differences. Original authors are not expected to provide estimation code.

Question: Are there data public release requirements for 3ie-funded replication researchers?

Answer: Original authors own their data. Replication researchers will not publicly release any data without the expressed written consent of the original authors.

Question: Are 3ie-funded replication researchers required to share their code with original authors?

Answer: Yes and no. The policy clearly states that replication researchers must share their pure replications with the original authors. Measurement and Estimation Analysis (MEA) and Theory of Change Analysis (TCA) are beyond the scope of the original work and are thus the replication researcher's intellectual property. If another researcher, including the original author, wishes to replicate the replication study, the initial replication researcher is expected to cooperate. As original authors are not required to share their code beyond transformation from raw to pre-estimation levels, replication researchers are held to similar standards. In addition, the replication plans are published online and therefore made available to the original author before any funding is released to the replication researcher.

New Delhi

202–203, Rectangle One
D-4, Saket District Centre
New Delhi – 110017, India

3ie@3ieimpact.org
Tel: +91 11 4989 4444

London

c/o LIDC, 36 Gordon Square,
London WC1H 0PD
United Kingdom

3ieuk@3ieimpact.org
Tel: +44 207 958 8351/8350

Washington, DC

1625 Massachusetts Ave., NW,
Suite 450, Washington, DC 20036
United States of America

3ieus@3ieimpact.org
Tel: +1 202 629 3939

Question: If original authors refuse to provide log files or the codebook, but the data are available publically, will 3ie still fund the replication?

Answer: 3ie will address these situations on a case-by-case basis, but it will be fairly difficult to conduct a replication without a basic level of cooperation from the original authors.

Question: What does 3ie consider to be “appropriate tone” in regards to the original author and replication researcher communication?

Answer: 3ie is striving to create a productive replication space, where researchers are able to objectively verify evidence that may influence the allocation of limited development funds. The appropriate tone of communication and write up is simply a professional tone that conveys full respect for the other party and assumes that all parties have the same overall objective, which is to produce more credible and relevant evidence for policymaking in low- and middle-income countries.

Question: How will 3ie enforce the publication and presentation clause of the policy?

Answer: It will be the duty of the replication researcher to provide 3ie and the original authors with access to materials one month before any presentations or publications. Replication researchers who fail to provide the required materials within a sufficient time period will violate the terms of their contract with 3ie. 3ie will determine internally if the replication researchers have met that requirement. Any discontinued replications will no longer be eligible for funding from 3ie and will not be published by 3ie.

Question: Will 3ie’s Replication Programme convene an independent arbitration panel as means of recourse if either party disagrees with one of the Programme’s decisions?

Answer: 3ie’s Replication Programme will take all opinions under consideration and will make a concerted effort to satisfy everyone involved in the replication study. Any disagreements over a decision should be made apparent to 3ie’s Replication Programme management. 3ie will not establish a sitting arbitration panel. In cases where a 3ie Replication Programme decision is appealed, 3ie’s executive director will request opinions from up to three independent professionals before making a final decision.

Question: Do these guidelines apply to only pure replication studies?

Answer: No, these guidelines apply to all pure, MEA and/or TCA elements of replication studies undertaken through 3ie’s Replication Programme. 3ie-funded replication researchers are required to share their pure replication code with original authors, as this is the part of the research that speaks directly to the original estimations and demonstrates the replication researchers’ understanding of the original work. 3ie generally encourages greater levels of communication and sharing for all parts of the replication study.

Question (from the original author's perspective): Why don't the original authors have more time to respond after submission of the final replication?

Question (from the replication researcher's perspective): Why must replication researchers wait a month after submission of the final replication to present or publicise their results?

Answer: 3ie is attempting to balance the differing needs of replication researchers and original authors. 3ie is also aiming to provide a space for original authors to discuss their initial opinion pertaining to the replication. The one month waiting period is intended to not hinder the replication researchers in their desire to present their findings. The original author's response period is not intended to allow for a replication of the replication study. In addition, the replication plans are published online and therefore made available to the original author before any funding is released to the replication researcher. 3ie believes one month will allow original authors enough time to read and provide their first reactions to the replication study, while not significantly influencing the replication researcher's potential presentation and publication schedule.