



# Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative: Making it easier to learn from others around the world

19 December 2024

# SHOW ME the evidence: Features of an approach to reliably deliver research evidence to those who need it

- 1) **S**upport systems nationally (and locally) that use many forms of research evidence to help address local priorities
- 2) **H**armonized efforts globally that make it easier to learn from others around the world
- 3) **O**pen-science approaches that make it the norm to build on what others have done
- 4) **W**aste-reduction efforts that make the most of investments in evidence support and in research
- 5) **M**easured communications that clarify what we know from existing evidence and with what caveats
- 6) **E**quity and efficiency in all aspects of this work

Available in seven languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish)

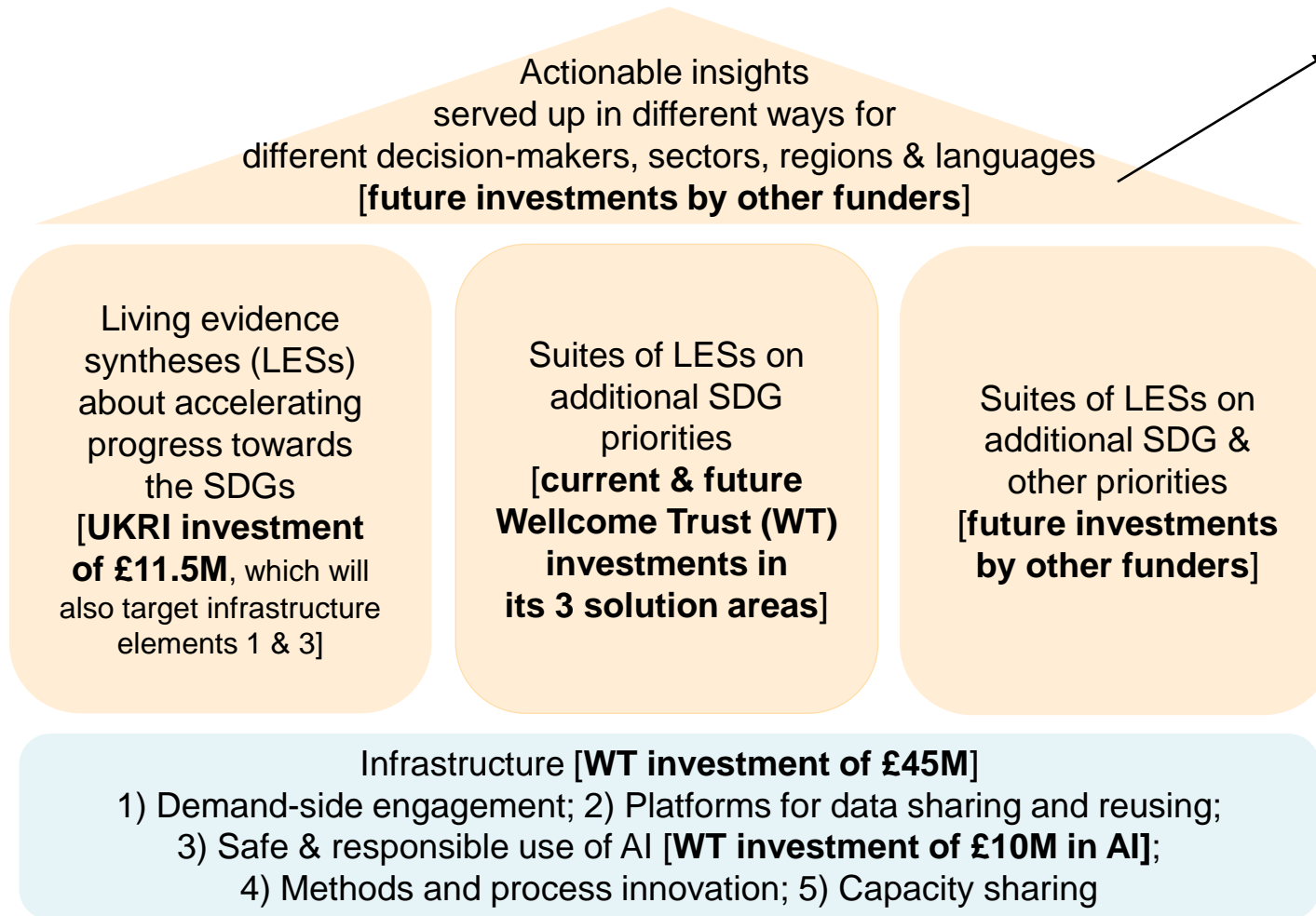
Co-published in **five journals** (Campbell Collaboration, Cochrane, Collaboration for Environmental Evidence, Guidelines International Network, JBI)



# Some relevant links for people who want to know more about the lead up to and follow-up on the UKRI call & WT 'intention-to-fund' announcement

Date	Title	Description
4 Sept 2024	<a href="#">‘SHOW ME the evidence’ consensus</a> (working version posted on the Global Evidence Commission website)	Features of an approach to reliably deliver research evidence to those who need it.
9 Sept 2024	<a href="#">A blueprint for better international collaboration on evidence</a>	NESTA/ U.K. Behavioural Insights Team report (informally the ‘Four country commission’ report) on how countries can collaborate on evidence synthesis and on evaluation
17 Sept 2024	<a href="#">Unearthing ‘hidden’ science would help to tackle the world’s biggest problems</a>	Nature editorial about the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition by Helen Pearson (an editor at Nature)
19 Sept 2024	<a href="#">Transforming global evidence: AI driven evidence-synthesis for policymaking</a>	Open funding call for £11.5 million (US\$15 million) by U.K. Research and Innovation (UKRI) for an infrastructure that will support demand-side engagement and integrate human and AI capabilities to deliver a 'demonstrator case' for radically more relevant, timely and affordable living evidence syntheses
21 Sept 2024	<a href="#">‘Intent to fund’ announcement: Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative</a>	Announcement that the Wellcome Trust will provide £45 million (US\$60 million) in funding over five years for an ‘Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative’ that will support demand-side engagement and the safe and responsible use of AI, as well as data sharing and reusing, methods and process innovation, and capacity sharing
21 Sept 2024	<a href="#">Towards 2030 and beyond: Accelerating the SDGs through access to evidence on what works</a>	Video recording of panel-led discussion about the role of science and digital technologies in accelerating progress towards the SDGs, which includes Wellcome Trust CEO, John-Arne Røttingen, formally announcing the Wellcome Trust investment
21 Sept 2024	<a href="#">Scientists are building giant ‘evidence banks’ to create policies that actually work</a>	Nature article about the two funding announcements by Helen Pearson
21 Sept 2024	<a href="#">US \$74 million new investments in SDG evidence to be announced</a>	Statement from Global SDG Synthesis Coalition about the two funding announcements
22 Sept 2024	<a href="#">X thread about the transforming global evidence funding announcement</a>	X thread about the UKRI investment by Executive Chair of the U.K.’s Economic and Social Research Council, Stian Westlake
2 Oct 2024	<a href="#">‘Evidence banks’ can drive better decisions in public life</a>	News article from the Financial Times about the two funding announcements

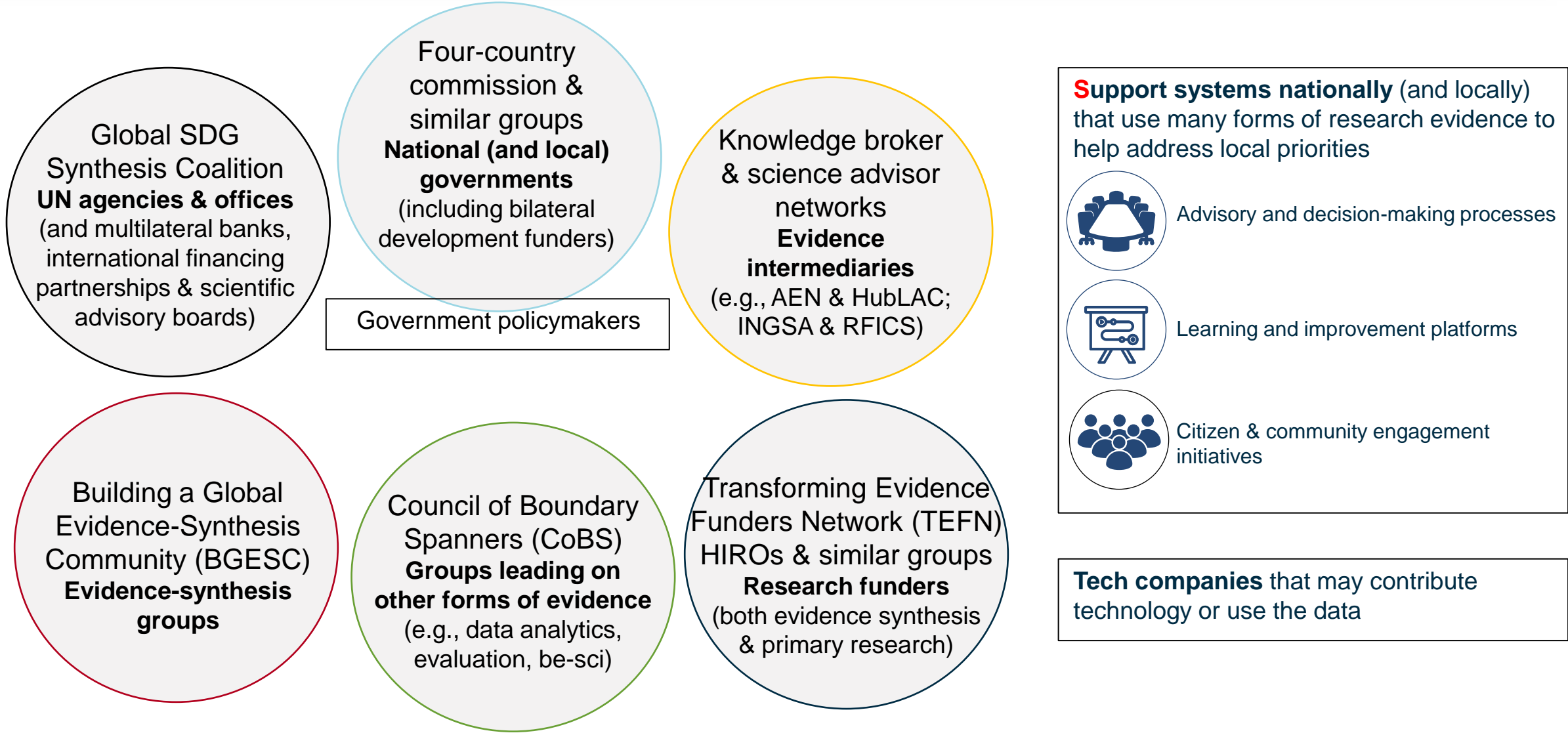
# Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative (ESIC): Where collective action is emerging and still needed



Examples in the education sector:

- 1) Best buys: [GEEAP](#)
- 2) Broad approaches: [EEF](#)
- 3) Branded programs: [IES WWC](#)

# Many categories of 'interest holders' are (or will be) engaged in the planning process, particularly now the two on the left & two on the right

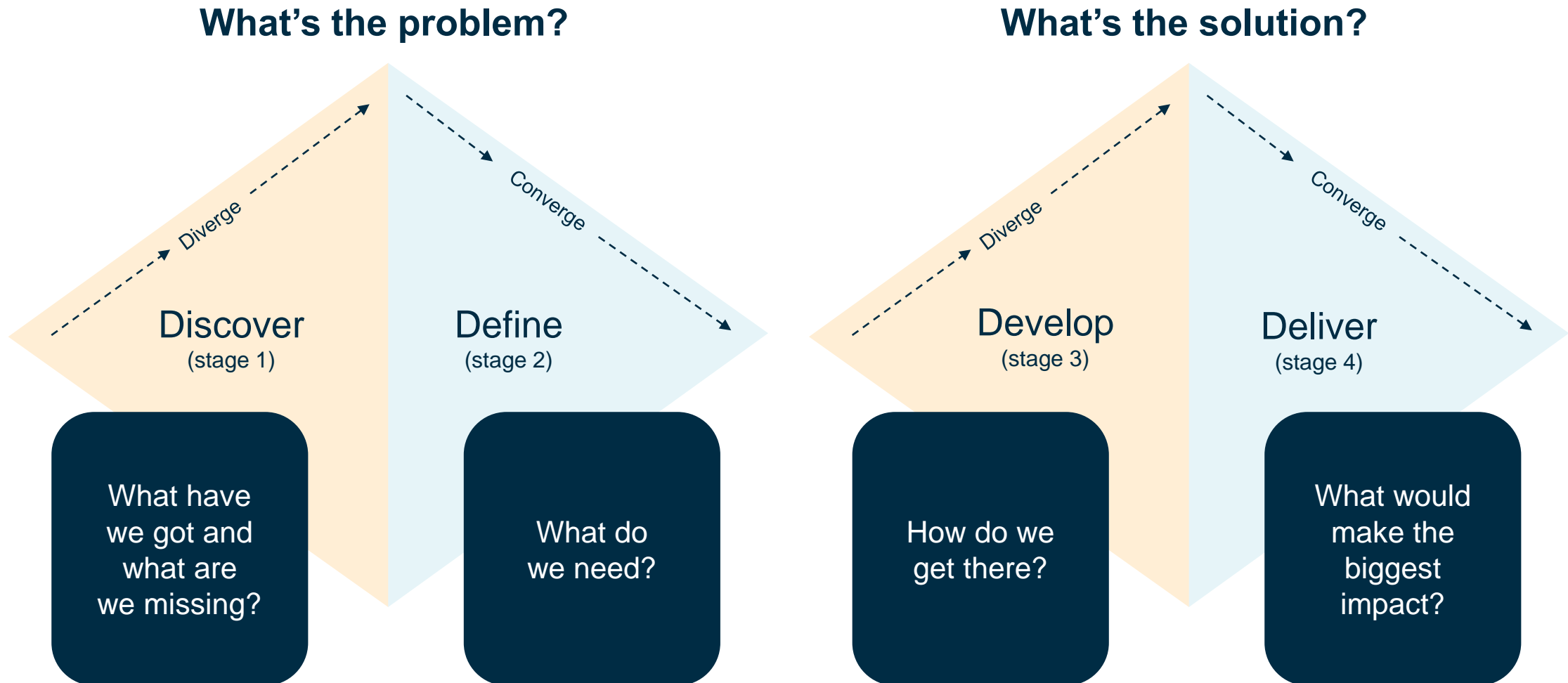


# Groups leading the planning process (our current focus is selecting co-chairs & members of five working groups & governance planning group)

- Six-month planning process (January through June) supported by
  - One facilitation group
  - **Five working groups**
  - **One governance planning group**, with other planning groups to be activated later in the process

Groups	Focus
Facilitation group	Support the working and planning groups to deliver a fully costed description of what is needed
WG1: Demand-side engagement	Get producers and potential users working together to understand and meet user needs
WG2: Data sharing and reusing	Make it normal to study a question once and use the answers many times in many different contexts
WG3: Safe and responsible use of AI	Bring evidence synthesis to the forefront of technology so that we can get the best impact from the people and resources we have
WG4: Methods & process innovation	Devise synthesis methods and processes that enable radically more timely, relevant, and affordable synthesis
WG5: Capacity sharing	Build a global community with the capabilities to deliver and use evidence synthesis across all major societal questions
PG1: Governance	Devise options for how key interest holders can continue to set and achieve shared goals beyond this process
PG2: Partner engagement	Work with other evidence communities to build a stronger global evidence architecture that enables the work of national and local evidence-support systems
PG3: Communications	Ensure there are effective internal communications and external advocacy for this work
PG4: Change management	Identify ways to support the needed behaviour changes among the groups that are part of this collaborative effort
PG5: Monitoring, eval. & learning	Understand and help improve the effectiveness and value for money of this work

Working groups & governance planning group will follow a 'double-diamond' approach, meaning exploring widely (divergent thinking) then focusing action (convergent thinking)



# Where we are in the planning process

(For more details, please see the 10-page description that will soon be posted)

- **December: Nomination process for working/planning group co-chairs and members, where possible supported by ‘peak bodies’ – in each interest-holder category – that can work through ongoing power dynamics**
  - **Dec 10: BGESC nomination process closes; others start or continue as needed**
  - Dec 11-16: Work on ways to present possible nominees and how they are meeting our proposed diversity criteria
  - Dec 16: Virtual call with representatives from GSDGSC pillar co-chair agencies
  - **Dec 16: Virtual call with adjudication panel**
  - **Dec 18 & 19: Virtual call for an initial engagement with short-listed working/planning group co-chairs**
- **Mid-January: Kick-off of the five working groups and the governance planning group**, each of which will then meet every few weeks between January and June, and engage in a five-stage planning process
  - Stage 1: What have we got? → Capability profile for each focus area
  - Stage 2: What do we need → Capability-maturity assessment and gap map for each focus area
  - Stage 3: How do we get there? → Impact effort matrix focused on strategies for strengthening capabilities related to each focus area, including any ‘quick wins’ with ‘no regrets’
  - Stage 4: What would make the biggest impact? → Consolidation and conclusions/recommendations
  - Stage 5: Bringing it all together → Inclusion of costing and additional planning-group considerations
- **March 12-14: Face-to-face meeting in London for the working/planning group co-chairs, facilitation group, adjudication panel, etc.**
- April 7-9 or 28-30: GSDGSC retreat in New York
- April or May: Likely activation of some or all of the additional planning groups
- **June 24-26: Face-to-face consensus meeting in Cape Town** (with simultaneous translation in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Portuguese and Spanish), bracketed by a preparatory meeting on 23 June and a next-steps planning meeting on 27 June
- July through December: Wellcome Trust and other funders plan funding calls, procurement processes, etc.
- May through November: Possible side events at – among other options – the World Health Assembly (19-27 May), AI for Good Global Summit (8-11 July), UN General Assembly (September), and Second World Summit for Social Development (4-6 November)



# Examples of a conversation yesterday: Synergies between ESIC and IDEAL

Infrastructure elements	Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative (ESIC) Primarily one way into all forms of evidence (living evidence synthesis) from perspective of many disciplines and across all sectors	Impact Data and Evidence Aggregation Library (IDEAL) Primarily one form of evidence (impact evaluations) from perspective of one discipline (economics) in one sector (int'l development)
1) Demand-side engagement (through existing intermediaries)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaising with groups that can support question elicitation and prioritization (e.g., GSDGSC, IPCC AR7)</li> <li>• Co-creation of infrastructure with demand-side users</li> <li>• Co-production of living evidence syntheses alongside demand-side requesters</li> </ul>	
2) Data sharing and reusing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract, transform and load (ETL) work</li> <li>• Meta-data standardization and alignment</li> <li>• Data sharing terms and conditions</li> <li>• Enabling re-use through APIs (including for re-usable formats like one-line summaries for Google and structured one-page summaries)</li> </ul>	
3) Safe and responsible use of AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gated incorporation of humans-in-the-loop (HITL) AI tools and other innovations in the workflows of the big evidence-synthesis suppliers and digital-solutions providers (as performance metrics show it can be done safely and responsibly in a given workflow)</li> </ul>	
4) Methods and process innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDI approaches in all aspects of this work</li> <li>• Context-flagging approaches in all aspects of this work</li> <li>• Feedback loops to primary researchers (e.g., common outcome measures)</li> <li>• On-going standards refinement (increasingly made universal)</li> </ul>	
5) Capacity sharing (through existing platforms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building for putting global evidence alongside the many needed forms of local evidence, as well as for early-career researchers and others new to evidence synthesis</li> <li>• Continuing-professional development when new methods and process innovations are developed (e.g., AI tools)</li> <li>• Accreditation of evidence-synthesis producers</li> </ul>	

## 'Ways in' to the process

- Via consultations (open, group and individual)
- Via co-chairs (e.g., Jeremy Grimshaw) and members (e.g., James Thomas) of the five working groups and the governance planning group
- Via the funders group being brought together by WT and UKRI

## Discussion

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Suggestions about how to strengthen the process, ensure alignment with NIHR, etc.?