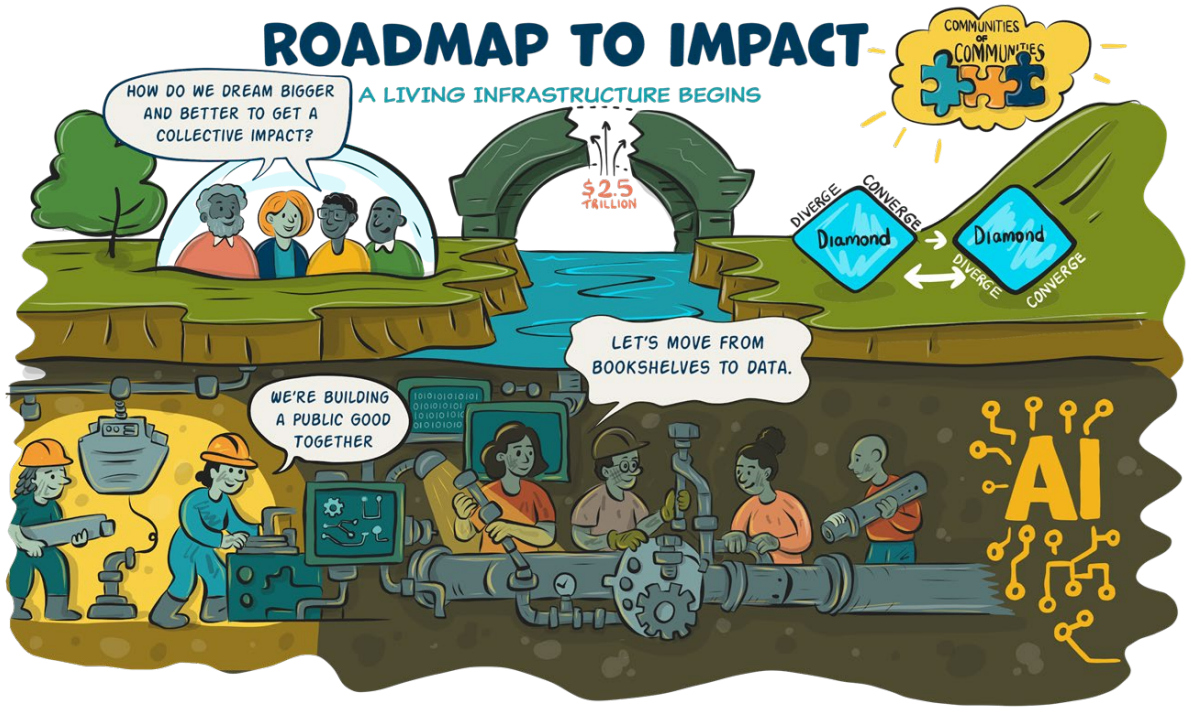
The Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative Roadmap:

Faster Learning from the Best Available Evidence for Better Results



Credit: www.thesanscribe.com, June 2025

About this document

This roadmap sets out the work and recommendations of the Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative (ESIC) planning process.

The planning process website is: evidencesynthesis.wiki.

It draws from the work of five working groups (one for each of five infrastructure elements) and the governance planning group. These groups produced a collection of 30 expert reports. The roadmap also draws from: 1) complementary documents like the citizen call to action and reports from the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition; 2) rich costing data prepared by our economic advisors; 3) fast-paced online interactions about the proposed 'vanguard suite of living evidence syntheses' and about the need to plan for an acceleration in the delivery of impact; and 4) engagements with scores of interest holders—ranging from the multilateral development banks to evidence intermediaries to citizen-serving NGOs—who wanted to discuss what ESIC should deliver for them.

The working groups' recommendations are referenced in brackets through the text, so (1.1) refers to Working Group 1, recommendation 1. More detail on any of these recommendations can be found in the groups' reports, particularly report 2 about where challenges currently exist and reports 4a and 4b about proposed solutions and their costs, respectively.

The roadmap uses terms and frameworks from the Global Commission on Evidence to Address Societal Challenges and from the 'SHOW ME the evidence' consensus. Terms are often used broadly so, for example, government policymakers can include politicians and public servants, and citizens include non-documented individuals. A listing of these terms and frameworks is available upon request.

A first draft of this document was discussed and adapted at the Cape Town consensus meeting on 24–26 June 2025, where it was stress tested and refined by participants from all key categories of interest holders. A particular focus in Cape Town was working through implementation considerations. The roadmap also benefited from a parallel open-consultation process happening online before Cape Town and through ongoing interest-holder engagements that will continue after Cape Town. Future updates from people and organizations pursuing this roadmap will be shared via the ESIC website and online channels.

Introduction

The need for ESIC

The world in 2025 continues to be one of significant volatility. We face many societal challenges, including economic uncertainty and growing inequality, intensifying climate and environmental shocks, and violent conflict, among others. In many parts of the world, there is also push back on use of evidence to inform decision-making.

The Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative (ESIC) is a community of communities committed to a collective impact approach to transforming evidence synthesis to improve lives. By collective impact, we refer to five core shared elements: a common agenda; shared measurement; mutually reinforcing activities; continuous communications; and a practical backbone function.

ESIC started with an open planning process funded by the Wellcome Trust that resulted in this roadmap and other outputs which culminated in the Cape Town Consensus meeting in Cape Town in June 2025. How the broader ESIC process, beyond the planning phase, will continue, will depend on the various communities collectively deciding their own next steps. This includes additional funders with an interest in ESIC, as well as current and future interest holders who are collectively committed to delivering on this ESIC Roadmap. Some of these activities may require financial and human resourcing; others can already begin to be implemented through collective action based on existing capacities and positive intent.

ESIC for whom?

Evidence ultimately serves four types of decision-makers: government policymakers (making decisions on their own and through multilateral processes), organization leaders (in NGOs and in business), professionals (and other types of practitioners and service providers) and citizens.

Some look for evidence themselves. Most rely on people around them, who we call evidence intermediaries. Government policymakers may turn to multilateral organizations within the United Nations or the World Bank, to science advisors, and to groups providing timely, demand-driven evidence support (which we call evidence-support units). Citizens may rely on citizen-serving and citizen-led NGOs. Others may rely on groups working with different forms of evidence, such as behavioural/implementation researchers and guidance developers.

Too often the way these decision makers engage with evidence is fragmented, inefficient, and susceptible to bias:

- Policy makers may rely on inaccurate evidence summaries from artificial intelligence (AI)
- Science advisors may turn to panels of eminent experts in domains one or more steps removed from the question at hand
- Citizens may turn to internet searches and social media for life-changing decisions

The world's best evidence is not consistently or efficiently reaching those who need it. That leaves us all spending more and achieving less than we should.

At the same time, we also need to better understand the often highly political nature of decision making and how this influences the ways in which evidence is used (or misused) within political (or indeed commercial) areas, including through spread of misinformation or disinformation. We need to understand incentives (or lack of) for engaging with evidence synthesis and better communicate its added value in terms of objectivity, rigour, trustworthiness, reconciliation of sometimes contradictory findings, and absence of bias amongst other factors.

Policymaking often involves trade-offs between competing social values where there is rarely a definitive right or wrong solution to a problem. Issues are often highly contested. Evidence synthesis needs to make its case alongside many other subjective or pragmatic considerations such as morals, values, budgets, timelines, and risk appetites. We must find ways to enhance its use by making it radically more timely, relevant and affordable.

What we mean by evidence

In this roadmap, evidence is considered to be an output of empirical research that was conducted systematically and reported transparently. Evidence typically exists in the following forms: data analytics, modelling, evaluations, behavioural implementation research, qualitative insights, technology assessment/ cost-effectiveness analyses, guidance or guidelines, and evidence synthesis, which can be conducted on any of the other forms of evidence. Actionable insights moves from synthesis to application, by translating complex findings into clear, pragmatic answers for decision-makers.

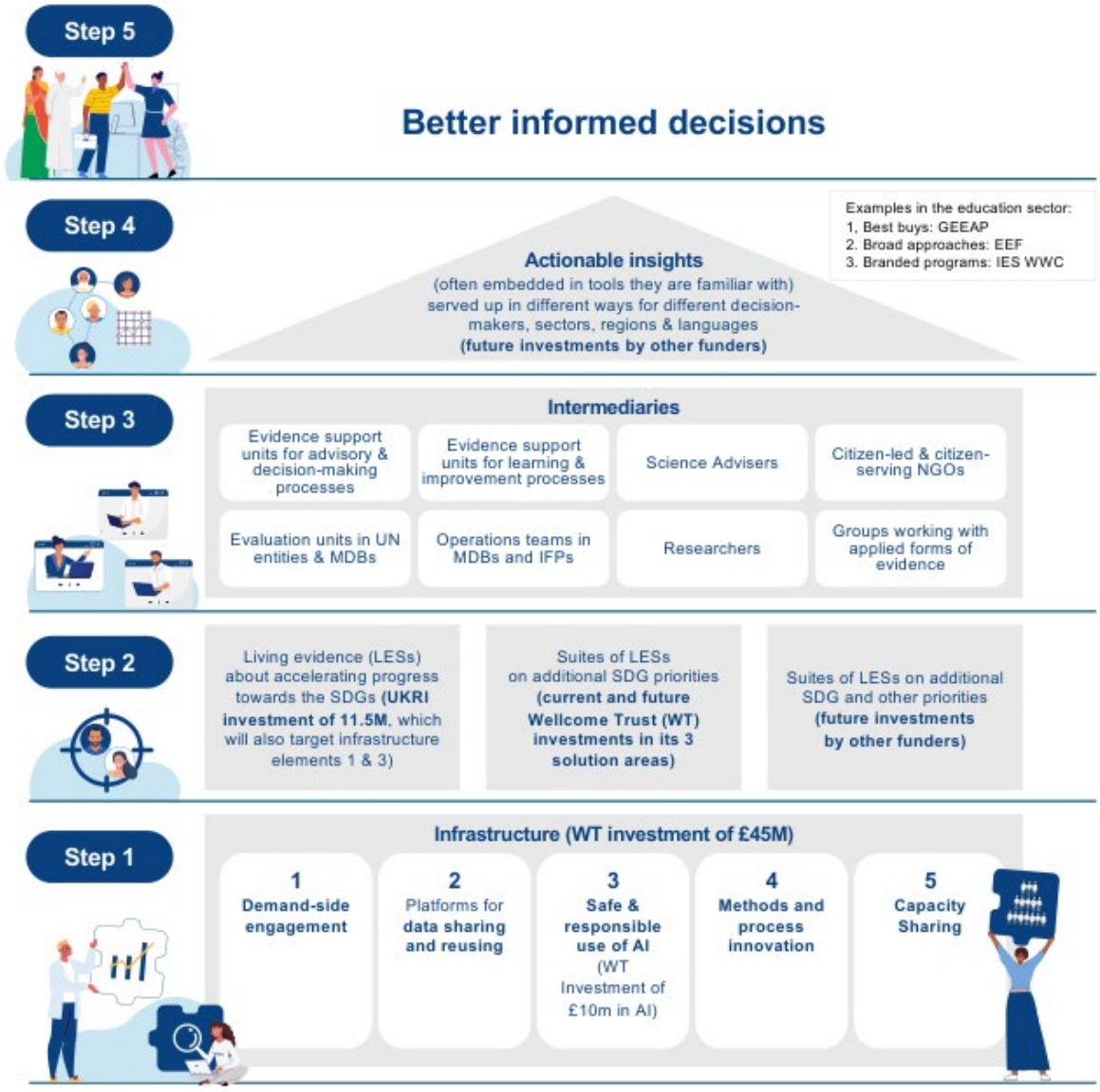
Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative: 'Intel Inside' for informed decisions

ESIC will deliver **actionable insights** served up in different ways for different decision makers, sectors, regions, contexts and languages. Decision makers will see these actionable insights in the tools they are familiar with and via the evidence intermediaries they work with.

These actionable insights will be made possible by **suites of living evidence synthesis** covering key global priorities or widely shared local priorities. They will offer trustworthy, reproducible, continuously updated learnings from the global evidence base and how these learnings vary by groups and contexts, including both stable and fragile contexts. They will provide evidence intermediaries with open reusable data on tap that can be rapidly contextualized, reanalyzed and repackaged to meet user needs alongside the many required forms of local evidence.

A new user-centred and equitably-distributed **evidence synthesis infrastructure** will make it possible and cost-effective to deliver comprehensive evidence synthesis across all major societal questions in response to identified problems and opportunities, looking holistically across environmental, social, economic, and other domains. It will cover demand side engagement, data sharing and reusing, safe and responsible use of AI, methods and process innovation, and capacity sharing. This infrastructure forms the 'base' in the figure

below. Suites of living evidence syntheses—the columns in the figure below—can then be launched and continually improved when windows of opportunity open or new challenges emerge. And actionable insights from these living evidence syntheses—the pediment in the figure below—can then be served up in different ways for different groups.



Each of these elements was proven during the pandemic when the urgency of the moment prompted radically better ways of working including increased collaboration and speedier, tailored outputs in order to influence decision-making. Unfortunately, many decision-makers, evidence intermediaries and evidence producers have now started to fall back into fragmented and inefficient ways of working.

ESIC represents the choice to extend our best ways of working to tackle all the world's most important problems, recognizing there is no time to waste.

The ESIC difference for users

- Government policymakers would be able to call up contextualized evidence synthesis on short notice to meet political needs and windows of opportunity for decisions
- Organizational leaders would be able to make smarter more productive strategic choices by exploiting continually updated evidence
- Professionals would be able to learn faster and more by quickly spreading best practices and discovering and adapting best practices from other places and contexts
- Citizens would be using evidence synthesis to inform life choices, finding it as convenient as product and price comparison websites.

An equity-centred global infrastructure

Equity is central to ESIC and critical to the infrastructure, its implementation, its future governance and decision-making, and its impacts. ESIC is committed to supporting the existing leadership and execution in evidence synthesis in the Global South and to ensuring that having such leadership and execution more fulsomely in the Global South becomes the 'new normal.' At least one co-chair and half of the members of each group working on ESIC were from the Global South, and we prioritized diversity across seven criteria including region, sector, language, gender, and career stage as well as different kinds of expertise and experience. The planning process alone has demonstrated that a more equitable approach to infrastructure planning will also be transformatively more effective at meeting user needs.

This strategic shift of power to the Global South acknowledges the immense wealth of knowledge and expertise residing in these regions, guaranteeing that the infrastructure responds to its diverse needs, and ensures that ESIC is built on a foundation of truly global representation and relevance. This ensures that the infrastructure serves the needs of all, not just a privileged few.

An efficient high impact investment

ESIC will be a distributed infrastructure governed and delivered through a collective impact framework, with leadership from the Global South, leveraging existing networks and expertise while, at the same time, sharing capacities so that new interest holders and countries can play a meaningful part in achieving the desired impact.

The budget for this work is $278 million over five years, which is half the estimated cost of merely measuring the Sustainable Development Goals; and roughly one dollar in every hundred thousand dollars spent on delivering them. 37% of the budget is already secured and further commitments are needed of $35m per year.

ESIC is a significant investment and it will come with significant accountability. We will deliver value from year one through minimal viable products rapidly iterated into optimized and scaled solutions. Clear metrics will track value for money and justify future investments. But the real payoff will come from getting dramatically better evidence much more quickly into the hands of decision makers when 'windows of opportunity' open.

Billions of people could be better off if only we used the evidence we already have and the budgets we already have more effectively. The ESIC roadmap shows how. It now needs your support.

ROADMAP

Principles and steps to high impact user centred evidence synthesis

The roadmap is grounded in the principles articulated in the 'SHOW ME the evidence' consensus, which has been co-published in six journals and translated into eight languages. The roadmap describes five steps on the road to transformative impacts, which we summarize below and then describe in more detail in the pages that follow.

Principles: the SHOW ME the evidence features

Support systems locally that use many forms of research evidence to help address local priorities

Open-science approaches that make it the norm to build on what others have done

Measured communications that clarify what we know from existing evidence and with what caveats

Harmonized efforts globally that make it easier to learn from others around the world

Waste-reduction efforts that make the most of investments in evidence support and in research

Equity and efficiency in all aspects of this work

Step 1: Build a better evidence synthesis infrastructure to serve everyone

Demand side engagement:
Engaging with users to understand needs and respond to 'windows of opportunity'

Safe and responsible use of AI:
Using AI tools for discrete tasks as performance metrics allow

Capacity sharing:
Building global capacity with leadership from the Global South

Data sharing and reusing:
Enabling everyone to discover, use and add to diverse evidence from around the world

Methods and process innovations:
Making synthesis radically more timely, relevant and affordable

Cross-cutting infrastructure:
Governing, funding and delivering for collective impact

Step 2: Make user centred evidence synthesis the norm

Evidence synthesis products that users really want
• Timely, relevant, and affordable
• Evidence for 'big' decisions and high-stakes challenges
• Co-production, particularly with citizens

Vanguard suite of 100 demand-driven, living evidence syntheses
• From intervention-scale to policy-scale synthesis Living, actionable evidence, tailored to user needs

Create and keep new users
• Equitable global provision
• Support across all societal challenges
• Integration into users' preferred sources of information

Step 3: Work with intermediaries who support decision makers

Evidence-support units

Citizen-led and citizen-serving NGOs

Groups working with applied forms of evidence

Science advisors

Multilateral bodies

Step 4: Ensure more people start using and keep using high quality evidence synthesis

Government policymakers

Professionals

Funders serving these groups

Organizational leaders

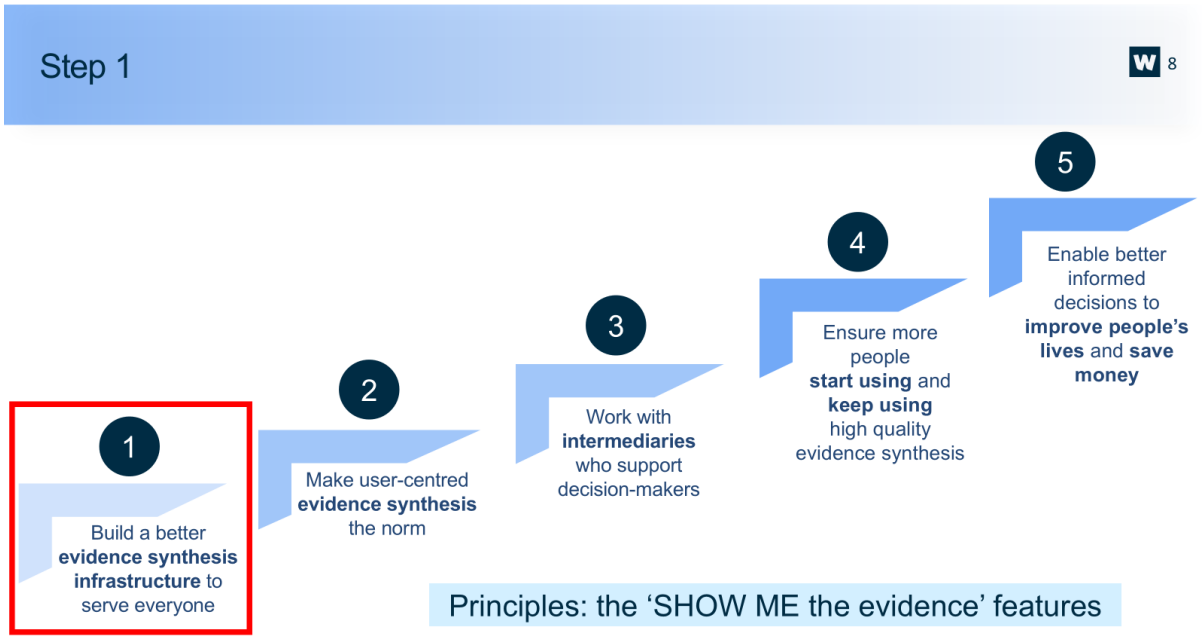
Citizens

Step 5: Enable better informed decisions to improve people's lives and save money

Evidence synthesis helps cut waste, make impact cheaper, speed up learning and action, and makes evidence better for all.

STEP ONE

Build a better evidence synthesis infrastructure to serve everyone



A user centred synthesis infrastructure to serve everyone

Synthesis lacks much of the essential infrastructure that supports mature parts of the global evidence architecture, such as official statistics departments, behavioural-science units, and independent evaluation offices. The infrastructure that does exist is fragile, inadequate, inequitable, and unsustainable.

After decades of underinvestment, most evidence synthesis infrastructure is maintained by volunteers, undertaken as a time-limited project with a narrow remit, or done to fulfill academic imperatives like justifying a grant proposal or writing a doctoral thesis. Vital pieces of infrastructure get built, become widely used, and then are unable to secure sustained funding. Evidence synthesis has become a largely supply-driven process, heavily skewed towards a small subset of high income countries, with under-investment in addressing complex questions to help resolve priority global problems and inform opportunities for global change. In general, there is an urgent need for greater investment in a common, agile and impact-oriented infrastructure which works for both stable and fragile contexts, involves citizens and those with lived experience, and for it to be led and delivered largely in the Global South.

In contrast, mature parts of the evidence support system typically have national, regional, sectoral, and global coordinating groups; institutionalization in government and other decision processes; institutionalized relationships with other interest holders; shared open data infrastructure; standards processes; training and professional development; conferences, publications and other shared platforms; and so on. These are the normal ordinary bits of infrastructure that help a community function, improve, and deliver for its users.

A modern evidence synthesis infrastructure is urgently needed in five areas: demand side engagement, data sharing and reusing, safe and responsible use of AI, methods and process innovations, and capacity sharing.

The return on investment in synthesis infrastructure

- **Maximize the value of existing synthesis effort** by aligning it with user needs, enabling open science through reusable data and tools, and raising standards
- **Bring new effort into high quality synthesis** by sharing capacity and reducing current high levels of research waste
- **Reduce the unit cost of synthesis projects** by reducing waste and duplication
- **Ensure synthesis arrives on time to meet decision making windows**
- **Support continuous improvement in the value of research** by creating a feedback loop to inform the design and funding of research and other forms of evidence like evaluation.

1. Demand side engagement

Engaging with users to understand their needs and respond to 'windows of opportunity'

Open statements of user needs

Groups of users such as government policymakers, organizational leaders, professionals, and citizens will publish statements of their synthesis needs and these questions will be maintained in a repository and available to evidence producers (1.4). Users will identify questions or topics of interest to their group, and explain to partners who could use that evidence and how to ensure it meets those users' needs.

To cite just one example, the UN Independent Evaluation Offices that lead the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition have begun to pioneer this kind of engagement with synthesis producers. They explain what topics, and the decision windows and processes that the evidence could contribute to accelerate delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. These statements are periodically refreshed, and there is a process for identifying and sharing urgent needs. Similar processes exist elsewhere but often not specific to synthesis. Similarly, Citizen NGOs could create a light-touch way to identify priorities for evidence synthesis that are widely shared among citizens.

Grants for synthesis users

Grants (1.5) will enhance the use of evidence synthesis by giving users who might not otherwise have the resources to commission evidence synthesis the power to set the agenda—effectively turning them into 'buyers' in response to demand. Grants will prioritize underserved regions and sectors, particularly where intermediary infrastructure is limited, or where grants could strengthen the evidence ecosystem.

Structures for collaboration

We will then invest in engagement to make it easier for users/buyers to find the evidence they need. Every region should have:

1. Regional and country-based learning and development centres (5.3) with demand side secretariats (1.1), where users including citizens, evidence intermediaries, and synthesis producers work together as partners to meet user needs. These regional entities need to be built up from strong country 'nodes' and recognize the principle of subsidiarity, meaning that decisions and actions should be made at the lowest level of authority that is capable of handling them effectively, which will often be the country level. These entities also need to learn from the mixed experiences of regional issue-based coalitions.
2. Evidence support units embedded with user organizations to ensure that synthesis is available on the quick timeframes they need (4.1).
3. Practical co-production labs where producers and users work together on synthesis projects ensuring greater ownership from the start (1.3)
4. Citizens as partners in the process, with a citizen panel to operationalize the citizen call to action (4.5). That includes both sharing their needs to ensure that evidence meets all citizens' needs, including from marginalized and under-represented groups, and contributing as co-producers of evidence. This should include participation by

citizen groups such as organizations of persons with disabilities in line with the principle of “nothing about us without us”.

2. Data sharing and reusing

Enabling everyone to discover, use and add to diverse evidence from around the world

Storing and sharing the data identified or generated during any evidence synthesis would dramatically reduce the time and effort needed to produce future evidence synthesis, reducing wasteful duplication and improving the discovery, contextualization, and use of evidence for all users regardless of language, location or resources.

Shared open data infrastructure

A connected system of living evidence data repositories (2.1, 3.3) will enable evidence produced anywhere in the world to be easily discovered and used, reducing inequities in access and use of evidence synthesis. Being able to easily find and quickly use evidence synthesis data would also enable evidence synthesis groups to build on the work of others, stopping the wasteful duplication of effort that is common now, reducing time, costs and improving the return on evidence synthesis investments.

Quality assurance (2.5) will make it possible for users to trust data from the repository system. This includes collaboratively setting standards for the completeness, relevance, reliability, and ethical compliance of shared data, and a tiered risk-based approach to ensuring those standards are met.

Data standards for easy discovery and reuse

The connected system of repositories will depend on interoperable data standards (2.2) that will make the inputs and outputs of the synthesis process reusable across contexts, as well as more easily machine readable. Metadata standards will facilitate data identification and discoverability (2.3), helping connect, combine and use data from studies across different platforms, particularly studies and evidence in languages other than English, which are often overlooked. Networks of citizen-led and citizen-serving NGOs can help to develop novel approaches to data re-use, including for having confidence in quality-assured data.

Open access standards for equitable data sharing and reusing

Working with the open science movement to define and promote open access standards for equitable data sharing and reusing (2.4) will provide a foundation for licensing, governance, and ethical reuse, tackling some of the barriers to equitable access to data. This should include consideration of best practices such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to design interfaces that work for persons with disabilities.

3. Safe and responsible use of AI

Using AI tools for discrete tasks as performance metrics allow

New tech is essential for making the timely, affordable, relevant and inclusive products that users really want.

This requires both the right tools and the right open data infrastructure, built responsibly to serve all potential users.

Tools for synthesis use

Interactive tools for evidence dissemination (4.8) would help end users explore the evidence. Different users have different needs: a policymaker, a professional, and a citizen may all look at the same question in different ways. So these tools would be customizable for different users' needs and interests. They would account for regional variations and support users to make informed and context-sensitive decisions.

AI tools for evidence support (5.2) would help producers and intermediaries to produce useful products for users. These tools would also provide the ability for citizens to view, vote, or comment on a policy-relevant evidence summary, or to test and adapt new AI tools designed to support evidence use by citizens, thereby stimulating citizen engagement to make synthesized evidence actionable. These should include consideration of existing and potential assistive technologies to enable persons with disabilities, such as those who are visually or hearing impaired, to engage with evidence in an accessible and inclusive manner.

Tools for synthesis production

From a synthesis producer's point of view, this infrastructure will provide the tools that they use when they are doing synthesis. It will be easy to use, it will adapt to their workflow, and it will use AI to improve the speed and quality of their work (3.1).

Behind the scenes, the different software modules would draw upon and connect to the rest of the tech infrastructure described below as it supports users through their synthesis production workflow.

Quality assurance

AI infrastructure would need to include implementation of best practices and governance of synthesis technologies (3.6) such as ethical guidelines and other such guidelines to enable full accessibility and inclusion.

Assurance specific to synthesis would include creating a framework for validation of technology performance (3.5) that would make it possible to maintain an inventory of quality-assured AI tools (3.2) that synthesis producers could responsibly rely on.

A programme of research into error assessment and reliability of AI-assisted synthesis (3.7) would help define the standards in the validation process.

These three recommendations taken together will be enough to give users of the tools—and of the end products—confidence that the tools are robust enough to use and so increase the take up of the tools and therefore the production of high quality evidence synthesis.

4. Methods and process innovation

Making synthesis radically more timely, relevant and affordable

New methods and processes are essential for making the timely, affordable, relevant and inclusive products that users really want. They are the bits that users do not see, but which have to be designed so that users can see the results. The proposed new infrastructure would fill important gaps that stop synthesis meeting user needs now.

New methods to meet user needs

Methods to improve synthesis to meet policy makers' needs (4.9) would include finding ways to meet the demand for evidence that supports policy scale decisions, helping to answer broad, complex questions like how to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. This would also include greater efforts to produce mixed methods syntheses (qualitative as well as quantitative sources of primary evidence, as well as diverse forms of evaluation in addition to primary research sources), as well as approaches to support the timely and context-specific use of synthesis.

Living evidence syntheses are ongoing updated products instead of one-off reviews. The work would include methods and tools for translating findings to a variety of local contexts (4.10) and to different interest holders and for two-way communication of findings to support policy making and practice. This could include new methods looking to more effectively engage a diverse range of citizens (e.g. young people, persons with disabilities, people with lived experience etc.) in the production and application of synthesis findings to local contexts and interest holders.

Methods for synthesis of evidence not controlled by commercial publishers ('grey literature') including how to find, use, and report on it, and integrate it into mixed-methods synthesis (4.6) would broaden the range of valuable sources considered. This includes process and performance evaluations and not just impact evaluations, implementation research and government reports, enabling more comprehensive responses to diverse practitioner and policy-relevant questions while also reducing the risk of publication bias.

Methods for assessing the certainty of evidence to better support decision making on uncertain evidence (4.7) will make synthesis more applicable to real world decisions.

Innovation and process improvements

More efficient processes would be developed by coordination of ongoing synthesis projects to avoid duplication, using a database (4.4) and harmonization of quality standards for different types of synthesis (4.2).

Innovation grants for synthesis production and knowledge translation (5.8) would reward Global South led and collaborative innovation, and could also be used to integrate and scale innovations that work.

In all of these innovations, it will be essential to instigate a feedback loop to production of quality primary research which includes diverse forms of evidence, methodological rigour and documentation and a range of voices, in order to in turn ensure that quality synthesis is

possible. It will also be necessary for funders to explore innovative financing mechanisms when seeking to partner with emerging entities in the Global South, acknowledging that traditional payment by arrears is challenging for many such organizations.

5. Capacity sharing

Building global capacity with leadership from the Global South

New skills are essential for making the timely, affordable, relevant and inclusive products that users really want, and different skills are essential for getting them used.

Learning needs to be multidisciplinary, multisectoral and multidirectional. ESIC stems from the conviction that every part of the world and every sector needs to do evidence synthesis. Existing and emerging best practices need to be shared between peers around the world so that everyone can do better, including sharing South to South, South to North, North to South, and North to North.

The ambition is to see synthesis producers with well developed user engagement and communication or evidence support skills, including for co-production with citizens, as well as continuously developing technical synthesis skills.

The capacity sharing infrastructure would support user engagement and the evidence synthesis and support skills that are needed, not just among synthesis producers but also among partners in the global evidence architecture and local evidence-support systems. This should include dedicated interventions with potential users such as government officials or professional bodies to help set agendas for priority synthesis products, to enhance awareness of the value of evidence synthesis and to stimulate demand; not just to support engagement.with existing products of synthesis providers and intermediaries.

Access to resources

An ESIC knowledge hub would aim to overcome a key barrier to equitable synthesis contributions, which is access to synthesis and knowledge translation tools and resources (5.1). It would offer streamlined access to multiple ESIC partner databases for evidence producers and intermediaries from diverse disciplines. This should also follow best practices such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure full accessibility for and inclusivity of persons with disabilities and users of assistive technologies.

Setting standards

Training standards would build on existing mechanisms to strengthen the quality and rigour of evidence synthesis, including providing core funding to key organisations (4.11a). This work would be strengthened by developing an academy for evidence synthesis as a central hub for building capacity globally (4.11b). A global team would develop competency frameworks for synthesis and knowledge translation skills (5.6) that would be designed to be applicable wherever you are in the world.

The academy would work with partners to promote learning that strengthens collective impact approaches. For example, supporting the development of a curriculum for UN and national training institutions that would integrate evidence synthesis into formal career paths among evaluators and national schools of government (5.7), and in turn assuring that understanding of evaluation is part of the synthesis competency framework (5.6). It is expected that training providers would start to align their offers with the competency frameworks, something that funders could encourage to harmonize efforts in this area (5.5).

Delivery

Delivery would be locally led through a network of regional and country-based cross-sector learning and development centers, recognizing the necessity of South-South collaboration (5.3). The range of delivery models would include continuous professional development modules (5.5) and mentorship and train the trainer programs (5.4) providing support to synthesis producers and evidence intermediaries (1.2), recognizing the vital role intermediaries play in getting synthesis used. There would also be an online training platform to support synthesis producers to use AI models (3.4).

Cross-cutting infrastructure

Governing, funding and delivering for collective impact

ESIC needs three interconnected communities and ways of working: 1) regional activity including demand side engagement and capacity building; 2) sector based activity including maintaining connected repositories; and 3) academic based activity. These ways of working need to be supported by a lean global layer with three independent parts: 1) a coordination group supporting continuing alignment on collective impact; 2) a monitoring, evaluation and learning function; and 3) a funders forum to coordinate their collective impact approach.

ESIC would apply the principle of subsidiarity, so decentralized governance would be preferred unless there are clear advantages to centralisation for particular functions. An equity-focused approach would ensure global co-ownership of the infrastructure and shared decision-making in governance arrangements. Networks of citizen-led and citizen-serving NGOs should also be consulted alongside other interest holders to design a new approach to governing, funding and delivering for collective impact.

1. Shared support body

A coordinating group (G.1) would take on coordinating functions that are essential, but which are not already embedded in solutions developed by other working groups. These might include administrative and organizational functions as well as external facing functions such as advocacy, communications and partnership development. The ESIC planning process has done important work building relationships between synthesis and its many necessary partners and this work needs to be sustained and built on.

There is shared recognition of the need for a collective impact approach. The urgent step change in synthesis needed to achieve the ‘SHOW ME the evidence’ features requires coordinated action but not central control. The coordinating group would support the five core ingredients of collective impact: common agenda; shared measurement; mutually reinforcing activities; continuous communications; and a practical backbone function.

2. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

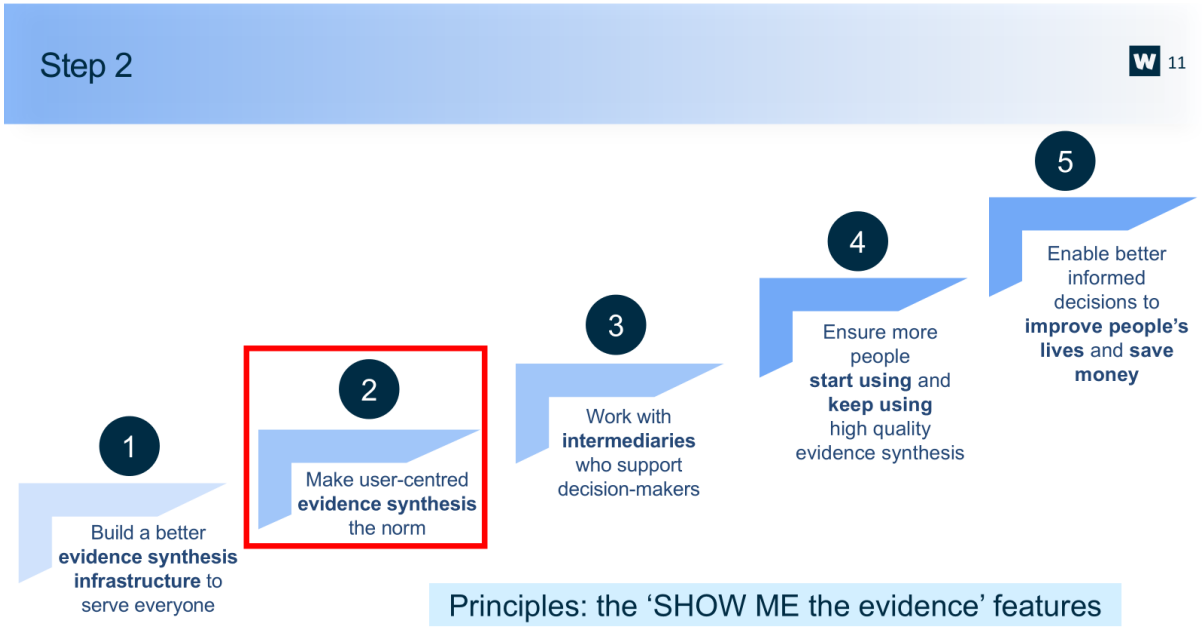
Capacity sharing specifically would benefit from a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system (5.10), and MEL is featured in many other recommended solutions. For example, there is an expectation that learning from innovation grants for end users will be synthesized and shared (1.5). In addition, we have budgeted 5% on top of the total budget to support an independent MEL function for ESIC as a whole. This includes capturing ongoing knowledge management and organizational learning throughout the process. A theory of change is currently under development as an accompaniment to the ESIC Roadmap.

3. Funder leadership to support an equitable user centred synthesis ecosystem

The synthesis community is looking for leadership from funders to continue to promote collective impact both through funding itself and through convening, standards setting, incentive setting, and other capabilities. A collective impact approach on the part of funders can set the rules of the game for other actors in the global evidence architecture to counteract natural pressures for different actors to pursue their own priorities in a way that does not harmonize efforts globally. A Funders Forum is recommended as a coordination platform for funders to align both funding and non-funding efforts in evidence synthesis investments to achieve ESIC goals and maximize impact (5.9). Funders should collaborate on cross-sector funding calls to build communities of practice (4.3).

STEP TWO

Make user centred evidence synthesis the norm



Evidence products that users really want

The promise of evidence synthesis—everything the world knows from the available evidence in one place—is compelling.

But in practice high quality evidence synthesis too often loses out to guessing, bluffing, late night internet searches, familiar experts, individual studies, and now AI tools that are not designed to reliably use rigorous evidence.

Synthesis needs to change to meet user needs

User feedback consistently stresses the need for change to deliver:

- **Timely, relevant and affordable synthesis**
    - **Faster** synthesis that anticipate or are rapidly initiated when windows of opportunity open in decision making processes
    - **More relevant** synthesis that extracts value from all forms of evidence (such as evaluation, qualitative research, and more), identifies what has been learned from contexts and about groups like those where the evidence will be applied, and can be easily placed alongside evidence from the local context
    - **Lower costs** because of economies of scale and the types of data sharing and reusing and safe and responsible use of AI called for in this roadmap

- **Evidence for 'big decisions,'** such as how to mitigate climate or broader environmental change, reduce inequality, tackle pandemics, ensure peace and security and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals if you are a policymaker. Similarly, which preventive services or approaches to community wellbeing to advocate for if you are a citizen, practitioner or community leader.
- **High stakes challenges demand fast and trustworthy evidence**, ESIC positions evidence for 'big decisions' as central to overcoming the fragmented and inefficient status quo.
- **Co-production, particularly with citizens**, as well as with representatives of the decision-makers and evidence intermediaries who will use the learnings.

Many synthesis producers recognize these needs and have committed to meeting them. Those commitments cannot be fulfilled without a user centred, demand-focused evidence synthesis infrastructure.

We envisage shifting from synthesis as a static, expert-driven product, to dynamic, user-driven systems that are co-produced and accessible. It means policymakers, professionals and citizens can all engage with living, actionable evidence that is tailored to their needs and applied to specific challenges or opportunities, including seeking viable solutions to a specific problem.

Evidence synthesis needs to support decisions at different scales

Decision scale	Use of synthesis	Users	Example
Policy area	Resource allocation and strategy	Senior political, policy and public service leaders	Reduce crime and deliver fair and efficient justice
Goal	What approach to take	Senior managers of public services and political leaders	Reduce harm from violent extremism
Options	What specific interventions to use	Managers of public service	Prevent violent radicalization
Intervention	How to do a specific intervention most (cost) effectively	Staff of public services	Counter-narratives for the prevention of violent radicalisation

Think of synthesis not as a standalone report, but as a living layer of dynamic and accessible intelligence that is continually updated and easy to plug into decision tools, dashboards, or citizen apps. In this way, we are building the backbone for a connected, scalable ecosystem, integrating across interventions and geographies. Large scale synthesis projects will make it faster and cheaper to do intervention scale synthesis within their scope because relevant research will already have been identified and turned into reusable quality assured data.

In support of this objective, ESIC will help to mobilize a vanguard suite of 100 demand-driven living evidence syntheses in response to major societal challenges of our time.

Delivering for users: suites of living evidence synthesis

One of ESIC's first major initiatives will be to deliver suites of living evidence synthesis that will provide users with actionable insights varied by group and context.

This will catalyze work on every aspect of the ESIC infrastructure.

Following the act now, start small, think big approach, it will start by rapidly delivering minimum viable products and then progressively improve them with user feedback until both the methods and the products are as good as they can be.

These suites will respond to growing demand for evidence synthesis to answer large-scale questions about entire policy areas and not just individual policy interventions.

There is now a body of experience on different ways to approach such large scale synthesis

Different models, shared aspirations

Model	Sector	Synthesis Format	What It Enables
COVID-NMA	Health	Unified, living evidence synthesis	Real-time view of COVID-19 treatment and vaccine effectiveness
Teaching & Learning Toolkit	Education	Linked, user-facing toolkit	Compare interventions by impact, cost & evidence strength
Global SDG Synthesis Coalition	Multi-sector (SDGs)	Modular syntheses by thematic buckets	Actionable insights across SDG themes using mixed methods

Create and keep new users

Equitable global and inclusive provision

There are 8 billion people in the world. Only 1.4 billion of them live in high income countries. More people live without regular access to the internet than live in high income countries. Yet this group dominates decision making, spending, and use of evidence synthesis.

This highlights the importance of principle E of the SHOW ME the evidence features that underpin ESIC: ‘Equity and efficiency in all aspects of this work.’ We need to leverage existing Global South leadership and support South-South partnerships to strengthen it further. Learning is also multi-directional and there is a need to recognize that countries in the Global North have as much to learn from the Global South as vice versa. We need to better learn from each other, systematically, with respect, rigour and humility. Similarly, synthesis questions need to unpack how learnings vary by groups and contexts.

This also represents an opportunity for evidence synthesis to serve billions of people it currently does not serve well or often at all. For example, the 1.3 billion persons across the world currently living with disabilities (or one in six of us) or other groups who are often marginalized or excluded such as women, youth, indigenous populations etc. Building out a globally distributed and inclusive infrastructure and working with partners to build and institutionalize relationships with decision makers all around the world, will enable everyone to benefit from everything the world can learn from research and evaluation evidence and, over time, will multiply the benefits of the infrastructure we need to build now.

Support across all societal challenges

Evidence synthesis is also lacking in the most important subject areas. These gaps are recognized but leadership in trying to extend the use of synthesis has often been down to just one or two individual volunteers, or at best to a handful of evidence institutions that understand the value of synthesis alongside their other evidence work. The low levels of

existing capability were assessed by the groups in their Stage 2 reports and reported in the capability maturity assessment summarized in appendix 3.

ESIC would bring together subject-specific infrastructure such as the federated repositories, and regional and global infrastructure, to serve everybody.

At the same time, there is a need for more trans-disciplinary, inter-sectoral and holistic systems thinking across evidence synthesis sectors and disciplines, recognizing the increasingly complex and interconnected challenges the current world of ‘polycrisis’ is facing and a need therefore to grow “evidence synthesis across the bridges” and live within planetary boundaries, integrating economic, social and environmental perspectives into all future synthesis activities wherever possible.

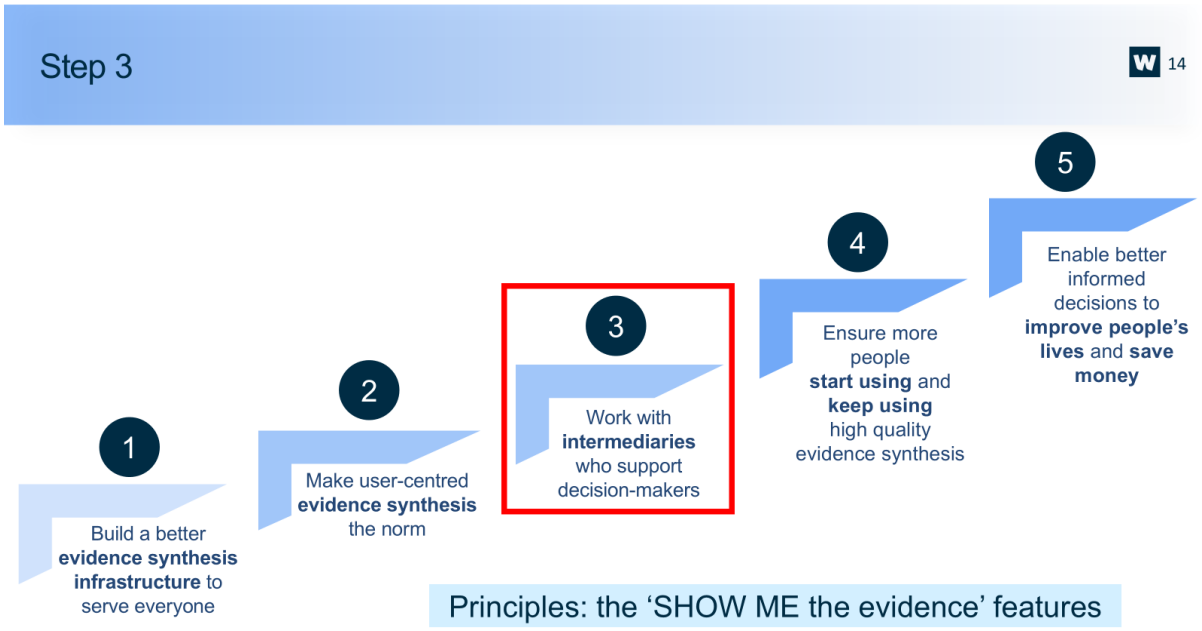
Integration into users’ preferred sources of information

However powerful or important you may be, you search the web. In time, if not now, you will use AI tools too. There are only a few information sources used by more than 1 billion people every month, they are immensely influential, they are almost all online, and none of them recognize the exceptional nature of evidence synthesis.

Some organizations have support tools unique to their workflows. Operations staff in the multilateral development banks, for example, have online tools to support their sectoral or country diagnostics or their project analyses. ESIC can connect relevant evidence into these online tools and hence into regular workflows.

STEP THREE

Work with and support those who support decision makers



ESIC for evidence intermediaries

Supporting evidence intermediaries is the critical step for ESIC. Most users rely on some kind of intermediary to help them access and analyze evidence so user centred evidence synthesis relies on partnerships with and offering value to a wide range of evidence intermediaries.

We recognize that many users, ranging from citizens to users working in political environments, have serious concerns about the quality of the research they are offered, the potential for research biases to affect advice, and the usability of research products.

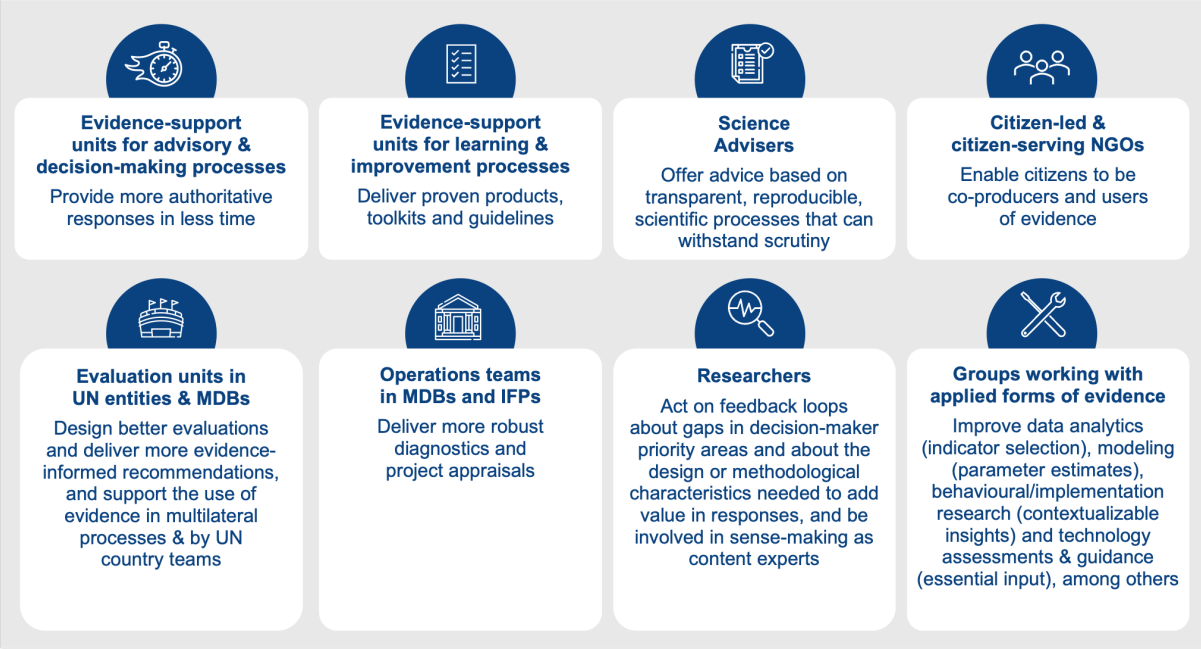
Make use of:

- **Actionable insights** into what has been learned from around the world, and from relevant or comparable settings, to place alongside national and local evidence
- **Open reusable data** on tap that can be rapidly contextualized, reanalyzed and repackaged to meet user needs
- **Quality assurance** work that is core to the synthesis process to reduce the practical and reputational risks from low quality, partial, self-serving, or biased evidence providers

Contribute understanding of user needs:

- Topics of interest to different users
- Decision making processes and windows of opportunity for providing useful evidence
- Context, including understanding what further locally or contextually relevant analysis the data needs to support
- Understanding the political context that evidence must be useful in

The regional demand side secretariats would bring together these different perspectives and skill sets to meet user needs.



Benefits for specific forms of evidence intermediary

Evidence support units

Evidence-support units are a key ‘way in’ to government policymakers with whom they have developed strong relationships, particularly when ‘windows of opportunity’ open in advisory and decision-making processes. They can also be a ‘way in’ to organizational leaders and professionals (e.g., via the learning and improvement platforms supporting such leaders and professionals), and to citizens (via citizen-serving and citizen-led NGOs)—at least where such platforms and NGOs are large enough to have an established relationship with such a unit.

Such units can take many forms, such as: 1) a parliamentary research service that responds to questions from elected members of parliament; 2) an ‘embedded evidence’ lab that generates new evidence to address questions being asked by the government department in which it is based; 3) a ‘rapid evidence synthesis and support’ unit in an NGO or a university that responds—in several business days or a few weeks—to a window of opportunity in an advisory or decision-making process by summarizing existing evidence about what has been learned locally and what has been learned from around the world and how those learnings vary by groups and contexts; 4) a ‘what works’ centre that acts as a ‘learning and improvement’ platform for the professionals, practitioners and other service providers, as well as the service ‘users,’ in its sector 5) a guideline development and implementation platform that supports evidence-based clinical practice; and 6) a ‘think tank’ that undertakes analyses—often drawing on existing evidence and creating new evidence—to address a pressing policy issue.

ESIC will enable Evidence support units in advisory and decision-making processes to deliver:

- **More authoritative responses in less time** by drawing down actionable insights and reusable open data and from the ESIC infrastructure

ESIC will enable Evidence support units for learning and improvement platforms by:

- M**aking it easier to deliver proven products** such as toolkits and guidelines which draw on synthesized evidence to provide actionable insights for professionals, as well as other practitioners and service providers

Science advisors

As with Evidence support units, Science advisors are a key ‘way in’ to government policymakers with whom they have long-standing, trusting relationships, particularly when ‘windows of opportunity’ open in advisory and decision-making processes related to science and technology policy. Some science advisors also support advisory and decision-making processes in other areas of government policy (e.g., climate; or health, housing and

community amenities). They can also be a ‘way in’ to organizational leaders and professionals (e.g., via the learning and improvement platforms supporting such leaders and professionals), and to citizens (via citizen-serving and citizen-led NGOs)—at least where such platforms and NGOs are large enough to support one or more science advisors.

ESIC would support them to offer advice based on transparent, reproducible, scientific processes which can withstand even hostile scrutiny. ESIC can also support science advisors in putting actionable insights from AI-enabled living evidence synthesis alongside the many needed forms of local evidence and other inputs to policymaking and other types of decision-making and to develop the capacity to rapidly contextualize synthesis data to their local context.

Citizen-led and citizen-serving NGOs

Citizens include all of us as members of society. We use the term ‘citizen’ to keep the focus on the individual, and not to imply formal citizenship status as determined by a government. For example, we include undocumented individuals and we recognize that Indigenous peoples were sometimes forced to decline their Indigenous status to achieve citizenship of a country that now includes their traditional lands.

Citizen-led NGOs and citizen-serving NGOs that act as evidence intermediaries can take many forms, such as: 1) NGOs that make evidence their principal value proposition; 2) NGOs that rely on evidence to deliver on their principal value proposition (e.g., fact-checking organizations and counter-misinformation initiatives); 3) NGOs that use evidence to inform what they do to support citizens, and how they do it.

NGOs can have unique relationships with the people they work, and they often lack the resources to confidently access and make use of the world’s evidence on the issues they deal with. Evidence synthesis can make it easier for them to serve citizens with high quality trustworthy information and can benefit from working with NGOs to get opportunities to discover the questions that are important to citizens.

The citizen call to action emphasizes that citizen-led and citizen-serving NGOs need to be intermediaries in two directions. It calls for:

1. Producing evidence that meets citizens’ needs
2. Fostering an evidence synthesis ecosystem where citizens can be co-producers of evidence
3. Enabling citizens to be users of evidence.

ESIC can enable such NGOs to **start putting actionable insights from AI-enabled living evidence synthesis alongside the many needed forms of local evidence and other inputs** to their work. It can also support the larger NGOs with their own science advisors and evidence-support units to **develop the capacity to rapidly contextualize synthesis data to their local context.** This might mean re-examining synthesis data from studies conducted in contexts similar to their own or from studies that examined the few interventions relevant to their context.

ESIC can also enable citizen-led and citizen-serving NGOs to **actively support citizen partners to become involved in co-producing AI-enabled evidence syntheses** (as core members of synthesis teams) and to **integrate insights from these syntheses into their sources of information that citizens already rely on.**

The ambitions can only be achieved in partnership with citizen NGOs and the trusting relationships they have with their audiences, alongside working with citizens directly wherever possible.

Multilateral bodies

Multilateral bodies comprise the United Nations (including UN agencies like UNDP and UNICEF), multilateral development banks (including regional MDBs like the African Development Bank), and international financing initiatives (including sector-focused IFIs like the Green Climate Fund and The Global Fund). The Global SDG Synthesis Coalition brings together evaluation offices in such multilaterals. Multilateral bodies play a powerful role in supporting multilateral processes, in providing support to member states, and to investing in major projects. They are often powerful evidence intermediaries, as well as being important evidence producers and evidence users in their own right.

In their role as evidence intermediaries, ESIC would support multilaterals to use evidence synthesis to design better evaluations and delivery of more evidence informed recommendations. It could also support the use of evidence in multilateral processes and by UN country teams and in the diagnostics and project appraisals undertaken by the MBDs and IFIs.

The Global SDG Synthesis Coalition has developed a number of key reports to show how multilaterals can support each step in the ESIC roadmap and how ESIC partners can work with these multilateral bodies to set priorities for evidence synthesis and to leverage the pathways to impact that they are uniquely well positioned to activate.

Benefits for researchers and for groups working with applied forms of evidence

Evidence synthesis offers a fast and cost-effective way for researchers and for groups working with other forms of evidence to draw from and contribute to the full body of evidence on a question. Such groups, as identified in the table below, support their peers in decisions about next-generation work in producing actionable evidence or conducting primary research.

Terms	Definitions	Focus
Data analytics	Systematic analysis of raw data to make conclusions about that information	What has been learned in the jurisdiction (e.g., community, province/state, country or region)
Modeling	Use of mathematical equations to simulate real-world scenarios (i.e., what is likely to happen if we don't intervene) and options (i.e., what happens if we intervene) in a virtual environment	
Evaluation	Systematic assessment of the implementation (monitoring) and impacts (evaluation) of an initiative for the purposes of decision-making or learning *Note that in the multilaterals, evaluation is often defined as a systematic and impartial assessment of an intervention or policy to determine the achievement of results, understand how and why they occurred, and generate lessons and recommendations to inform decision-making.*	
Behavioural / implementation research	Study of methods to promote the systematic uptake of effective approaches into routine practices at citizen, professional, organization and government levels (implementation research) Systematic examination of what people (citizens and professionals) do, what drives them to do it, and what can sustain or change what they do (behavioural research)	
Qualitative insights	Study of (typically non-numerical) data – obtained from interviews, focus groups, open-ended questionnaires, first-hand observation, participant-observation, recordings made in natural settings, documents, and artifacts – to understand how individuals and groups view and experience problems, options, implementation considerations (barriers, facilitators and strategies), and metrics	
Evidence synthesis	Systematic process of identifying, selecting, appraising and synthesizing the findings from all studies that have addressed the same question in order to arrive at an overall understanding of what is known, including how this may	What has been learned from around the world and how it varies

	vary by groups (e.g., communities often 'left behind') and contexts (e.g., low socio-economic neighbourhoods or Latin American countries) *Note that an evidence synthesis can be conducted on any of the above forms of evidence. A synthesis of evaluations may be called an evaluation synthesis.*	by groups and contexts
Technology assessment/ cost-effectiveness analysis	Assessment of all relevant aspects of a 'technology' (e.g., a product or service), including safety, effectiveness, and economic, social and ethical implications (technology assessment), with an evidence synthesis often contributing to the assessment of effectiveness Comparison of the relative outcomes (effectiveness) and costs of two or more options, again with an evidence synthesis often contributing to the assessment of effectiveness	What insights or recommendations have been offered for the jurisdiction
Guidance	Systematically developed statements that recommend a particular course of action, often for citizens and professional and sometimes for organizations and governments, with one or more evidence syntheses contributing to the assessment of effectiveness, values and preferences, and other factors	

Evidence synthesis offers a pathway for all forms of evidence to be integrated to provide actionable insights for decision makers.

Primary researchers

ESIC would make it easier for primary researchers to fully understand the existing global evidence base, key evidence and knowledge gaps and how to design and conduct research that adds most value to it. Groups conducting primary research (and research funders) can use evidence synthesis in feedback loops about gaps in decision-maker priority areas and about the design or methodological characteristics needed to add value in responses, and be involved in sense-making as content experts.

Groups working with other applied forms of evidence

Data analytics: ESIC would help data analysts understand how their data is used in other evidence work, demonstrate its value, and identify potential opportunities for new data or analysis, or to select or improve the indicators being used in data analytics.

Modeling: ESIC would help modellers access the best continuously updated empirical evidence to ground parameter estimates, assumptions, and causal processes they model.

Evaluation: ESIC would make it easier for evaluators to fully understand the existing global evidence base and how to design and conduct evaluation that adds most value to it. It will also help to develop recommendations that draw on the full evidence base and to signal what next-generation evaluations should look like. ESIC will make it easier for them to build robust theories of change to support their evaluations. ESIC will also seek to integrate evaluative evidence into mixed methods syntheses through diversified methods.

Behavioural/implementation research: ESIC would make it easier to learn from the global evidence base of similar behaviours and experiences in different contexts to reach robust and appropriately contextualized conclusions and identify behaviour-change strategies to be tested in a given context

Qualitative insights: ESIC would develop and mainstream the methods needed to get the full value of qualitative insights into evidence synthesis and provide insights to help design qualitative studies. It will also identify qualitative insights from similar contexts that can be explored in rapid qualitative research in a new context.

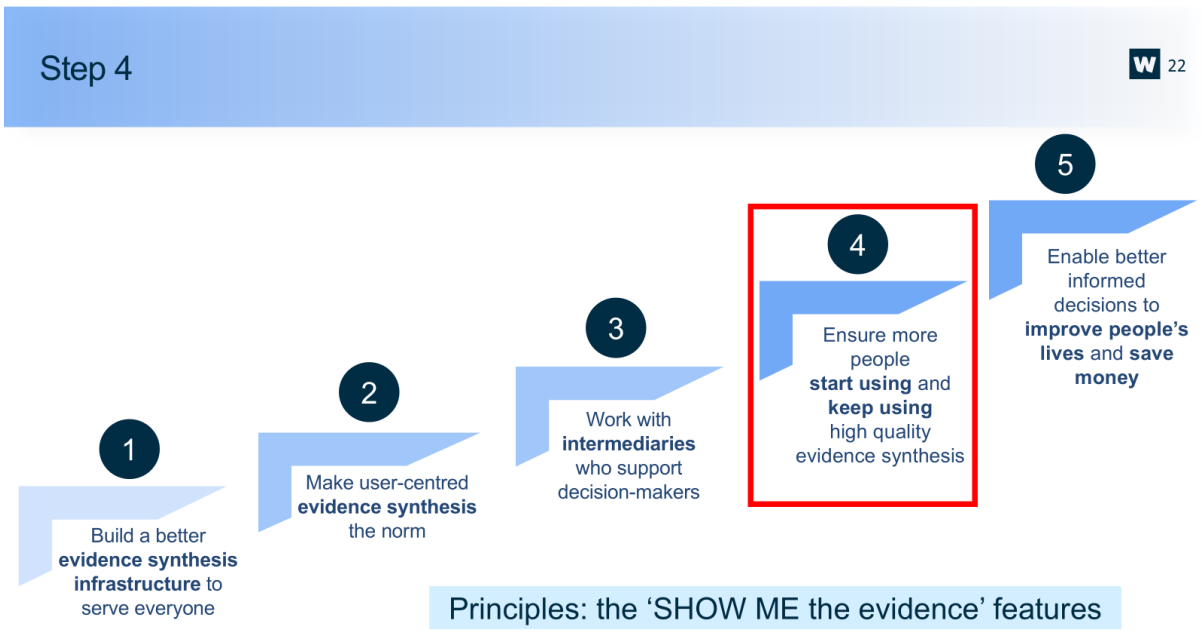
Technology assessment / cost-effectiveness analysis: ESIC would support technology assessment and cost-effectiveness analysis by maintaining continually updated synthesis of rapidly emerging, changing, or contested evidence bases. It will also provide the evidence about benefits and harms, feasibility and acceptability used in a technology assessment or a guideline.

Guidance: ESIC would help extend the synthesis/guidance partnership beyond health, as has started to happen in some sectors, and make the shift to continuously updated guidelines so policymakers, professionals, and practitioners have access to the latest evidence.

Networks of groups working with other forms of evidence (and conducting primary research), just like other networks of evidence intermediaries, will need to rise to the challenge of acting on insights from AI-enabled living evidence synthesis.

STEP FOUR

Ensure more people start using and keep using high quality evidence synthesis



Decision ready information for decisions that matter

ESIC exists to deliver actionable insights served up in different ways for different decision makers, sectors, regions, and languages. Synthesizing the evidence and extracting useful insights is not enough: competing effectively for users' time and attention means delivering those insights in the right format for the right audience through the right channels.

We will embed these actionable insights into a wide range of advisory and decision making processes by working with the full range of users and intermediaries and provide open reusable data to integrate into existing tools and workflows.

Crucially, ESIC will enable dramatically faster delivery of high quality evidence so that it is ready for the often brief windows of opportunity for evidence to inform decision making, whether that is in the policymaking process, organizational decision making, service delivery by professionals, in individuals' lives, or in funding processes.

Government policymakers

Including local and national policymakers, both those working domestically and those engaged in multilateral processes regionally and globally

ESIC would offer **actionable insights** into what has been learned from around the world, and from relevant or comparable settings. Alongside national and local evidence, these insights can cover what works, what gets good value for money, what is not worth spending money on, and should be done to achieve effective implementation to get good results and good value for money.

ESIC would offer **independent evidence**. Many policy makers are critical of research that they are exposed to, recognizing the risk that research can be low quality, can seek to pursue an agenda rather than provide information, can build in unacknowledged political points of view, as well as the reality that research processes are often too slow to support policy processes. Synthesis includes transparent protections against low quality, selective, and biased research and shows patterns in evidence not visible when looking at single studies.

ESIC would help find **bigger wins**. In many areas, there are few interventions which have the potential to result in large scale positive effects. It is hard to improve outcomes a little, let alone a lot. ESIC will help identify these bigger wins.

Organizational leaders in all sectors, including businesses and NGOs

ESIC would support **continuous improvement and innovation**. Synthesized findings would help to identify emerging trends and best practices, ensuring that organizations remain adaptive and ready to take opportunities.

ESIC would help achieve **value for money**, by identifying actionable insights from the specific context, the wider sector, and other sectors and places.

Professionals and other practitioners and service providers

Evidence synthesis is a routine tool for medical professionals around the world. It has had a major impact on policing and crime reduction in many countries, and in some places is used by a majority of teachers. Professionals would often benefit from ESIC via learning and improvement platforms including professional and vocational training and sector bodies.

ESIC would offer support for **rapid adoption of best practices**.

ESIC would support **learning between places and sectors** that might not usually share evidence and learning.

Citizens

ESIC would offer **shortcuts to the world's best evidence**. ESIC would take synthesis out of inaccessible academic journals, present it in new ways, and make it available in the places people naturally look for ideas and information. Evidence comparison can be as convenient as online shopping and price comparison websites.

ESIC would offer a **guarantee of evidence you can trust**. Over time, ESIC would build awareness of the careful steps synthesis takes to look at evidence comprehensively, critically, and build demand for synthesis when people need information they know they can rely on.

Funders including government, philanthropic, development funders, who have a vital role supporting the operationalization of decisions making

- ESIC will transform the work done by in-house or funded evidence intermediaries that support evidence-informed decision-making by government policymakers, organizational leaders (particularly in NGOs), professionals (and other practitioners and service providers), and/or 'citizens' by enabling them quickly and efficiently to put actionable insights from AI-enabled, living evidence syntheses on what has been learned from around the world, particularly for groups and contexts relevant to them alongside the many needed forms of local evidence in program development, science advice, briefing notes, learning and improvement initiatives, etc.
- ESIC will enable funders to rigorously create lists of 'best buys' in a given sector (instead of current more ad hoc approaches to estimating effect sizes)
- ESIC will inform evaluation designs, diagnostics, project analysis, and recommendations and in turn support accountability for and learning about equitably improving people's lives

Research and evidence funders

There is a specific additional use case for supporting funders of research and evidence. ESIC will give research funders an opportunity to rigorous, objective, reproducible evidence to ground their prioritization, funding decisions, and impact assessment.

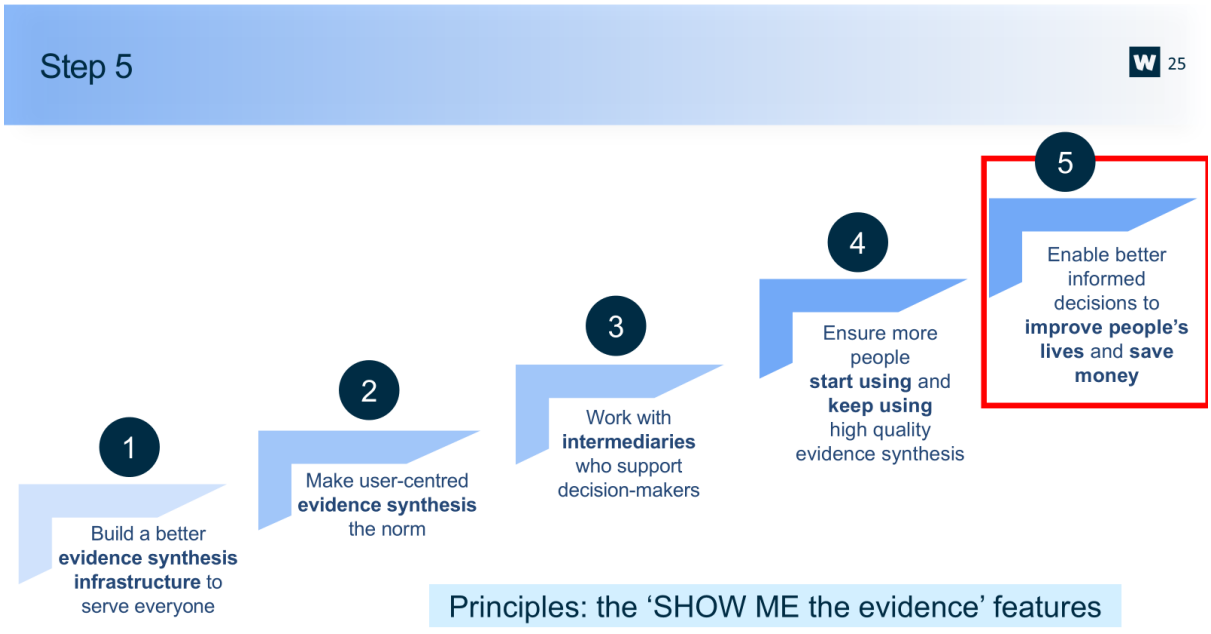
Research and evidence funders have an 'upstream' role to ensure that the high quality evidence base needed to achieve the benefits listed above actually exists. However, too often strategic decisions about where research funding can make the most difference are

based on opinions and beliefs, and individual research and evidence production efforts end up being duplicative, underpowered, or otherwise wasteful.

- ESIC will to direct attention to where **‘solutions’ or applied research** is most needed, to support ‘evidence-based research’ (i.e., using findings from syntheses of previous studies to inform new research, rather than relying on beliefs and opinions), and to reduce research waste
    - Point primary researchers to gaps in decision-maker priority areas, needless duplication of effort, and the design or methodological characteristics needed to add value on top of what is already known
    - Point evidence-synthesis teams to gaps and duplication
    - Point peer-review panels assessing applications for primary research and for evidence synthesis to a way to independently verify assertions about what types of primary research and evidence synthesis are needed
- ESIC will direct attention to promising approaches in **‘discovery’ research** (e.g., finding ‘signals’ in foundation science and early translational studies)
- ESIC will support assessments of **research impact** (e.g., by linking a list of research projects funded by a specific research funder to ESIC data about the primary research studies that ‘tipped the balance’ on questions like what works or how and why something works)
- ESIC will transform the work done by in-house or funded **evidence intermediaries**

STEP FIVE

Enable better informed decisions to improve people's lives and save money



The opportunity for transformative change

ESIC will act urgently to establish a short term strategy for action with input from the interest holders involved in ESIC. With a collective impact approach, transformative gains are possible very quickly:

In 1 year: Early impacts visible while the foundation is being laid:

- Execution of evidence synthesis is led by the Global South in a distributed system with growing leadership capacity across countries in the Global South
- Evidence-savvy decision-makers—government policymakers, organizational leaders, professionals and citizens—have greater confidence in, and increasingly rely on, the evidence being presented to them
- Feedback loops are instigated with the funders and producers of primary research and evaluation evidence to ensure next-generation primary research addresses priority questions and uses appropriate designs, which will in turn inform quality synthesis products
- Actionable insights are available by standing up initial versions of evidence synthesis products that are the first step towards living evidence syntheses on 100 of the biggest societal challenges of our time
- Early adopting evidence intermediaries—evidence-support units, science advisors and citizen-serving NGOs—can increasingly easily put the many needed forms of local evidence alongside what we've learned from around the world and how these learnings vary by groups and contexts
- Five elements of the ESIC infrastructure are transforming evidence synthesis from its fragmented state to a responsive, agile, efficient and decentralized supply chain

In 2 years: Impacts are more widely distributed and the foundation is more developed:

- Leadership for and execution of evidence synthesis accelerates in a distributed system across the Global South
- A growing proportion of decision-makers consider the systematic and transparent use of evidence to be the 'new normal'
- Actionable insights are available from living evidence syntheses on 100 of the biggest societal challenges of our time
- A growing proportion of evidence intermediaries have the capacity and access needed to draw on ESIC in providing high quality, timely, demand-driven evidence support
- Marginal costs continue to drop while the complexity of questions that can be addressed continue to rise as data sharing and reusing accelerate, AI performance metrics improve for different tasks, and new methods and processes are scaled up

In 5 years: A fully transformed evidence synthesis ecosystem able to pivot quickly to emerging priorities as a cornerstone of the global evidence architecture.

Implementing the roadmap

Act now, start small, think big

ESIC gained immediate momentum after the original announcement at the UN General Assembly meeting in September 2024.

The six month ESIC planning process produced the first version of this roadmap, with many hundreds of people from different parts of the world and from different sectors contributing.

The Cape Town Consensus meeting stress tested and refined the roadmap resulting in this new edition and confirmed wide support for the recommendations including from the synthesis community, evidence intermediaries, and producers of other forms of evidence.

Act now

The Cape Town Charter summarizes the commitments from the consensus meeting and is open for any individual or organization to sign.

In the coming months, we anticipate significant announcements from across the ESIC community of communities to start implementing the roadmap. For example:

- Evidence synthesis producers will commit to new ways of working to better meet user needs and implement new technologies
- Multilateral institutions will commit to creating processes to identify and share their evidence needs, and to share the evidence they produce
- Funders will start to share how they will resource further progress

As this shows, significant steps can be taken by existing actors with existing resources. These steps will contribute to a test and learn approach to developing ESIC.

Start small

Many of the solutions in this roadmap will be tested rapidly. The starting point will be to create or identify minimum viable products that can be used to get feedback from users, intermediaries, and other partners.

Testing and learning and applying that feedback will strengthen the thinking behind the solutions as well as how they are implemented.

Some of these minimum viable products will be deliverable within existing resources and funding commitments. Many others can be delivered with affordable targeted investments.

Smaller investments of new resources will enable step changes in aspects of the shared infrastructure or in its application to specific issues, if those resources are deployed within the context of a collective impact framework. This might range from small investments in user engagement in specific contexts to larger investments in entirely new technologies.

This means that sectors and places that have not historically benefited from strong evidence infrastructure will be able to set higher expectations in future as ESIC proceeds, and help to make sure that ESIC is flexible and tailored to different needs and contexts.

Think big

Our ultimate goal is comprehensive evidence synthesis across all major societal issues. The paradigm shift that ESIC represents is a permanent and generational improvement in synthesis capability: faster, cheaper, and most useful.

This requires sustained commitment from across the community and investment at a scale comparable to other significant shifts in evidence capability, such as the investment in measuring the SDG indicators. As previous successful shifts in the evidence ecosystem show, this can be achieved through a combination of existing organizations prioritizing new ways of working, leadership from large scale funders, and a collective impact approach from a wide range of funders. Collaboration will ensure that ESIC does not just take a one size fits all approach but understands and meets the needs of diverse users, sectors and contexts.

ESIC will develop open and equitable coordination functions for the Collaborative which will draw on input from evidence users, intermediaries, and producers as well as funders. We proved during the planning process that this community of communities can come together effectively. A coordination function can build on the lessons of that experience by continuing to engage equitably in the ways that have been successful so far, and extending and adapting that work to better engage neglected audiences.

ESIC will establish a robust and independent Monitoring Evaluation and Learning function to support the collective impact approach.

Independent cost estimates for implementing each solution globally and across all sectors over the next five years show that 37% of the $278m total cost is already funded.

Your next step

This is a roadmap for collective impact. We can transform evidence synthesis to improve lives and it will take all of us working together. Whatever your role and expertise, and whatever part of the ESIC community you come from, we ask you to:

1. **Commit to collective impact.** Review the roadmap and look for where you can harmonize your efforts with others. You might join up your approach to user engagement, share data or technology, co-develop methods and processes, or share capacity with others in the community.

2. **Learn and share.** Join the ESIC mailing list and regular online meetings. Say publicly what you and your organization are doing to pursue this roadmap, seek feedback through open processes, and work with others to strengthen your ideas.

3. **Foreground equity in what you do and how you do it.** Consider how you can work better with a wider range of leaders and participants. Put interdisciplinarity at the core of all you do. Consider what you have to share, and what you can benefit from others sharing.

Over the coming months we will share updates from across the ESIC communities on what we are all doing next.

Implementation Approach

The roadmap outlines the vision and practical steps for a collective impact approach to transforming evidence synthesis to improve lives of people all over the world. Members of the ESIC ‘community of communities’ are encouraged to adopt this strategic approach and develop implementation plans suitable for their respective interest groups, or to develop implementation plans for any of the specific steps in the roadmap.

This roadmap sets out a shared commitment to a long term collective impact approach. Successfully achieving the transformative benefits ESIC can will require that long term commitment to systems change, behavior change, capacity-sharing. We see this work as the beginning of a commitment and a movement that will extend beyond the initial investments and the five year horizon.

Risk identification and management

The vision for ESIC is to serve as the "Intel Inside" for informed decision-making by building a robust and modern infrastructure, producing suites of LESs, and collaborating effectively with established evidence intermediaries, to enable better informed decisions to improve people’s lives. By its very nature, this bold ambition will encounter risks—uncertain conditions that, if they occur, will have an effect on ESIC goals and objectives. We have identified three main areas of potential risks, and have suggested how they may be managed:

Interest holder risks. Some institutions may exhibit inertia related to the change needed to achieve the ESIC transformation. This risk can be managed by setting clear, measurable targets for adoption and change management across sectors; implementing recognition programs for early adopters; and establishing systems that demonstrate how engaged interest holders shape ESIC’s evolution.

Financial risks. The total budget of $278 million over five years is significant, although smaller than or comparable to similarly consequential evidence initiatives. We have noted that historically, essential pieces of evidence synthesis infrastructure have failed to secure sustained funding, resulting in a fragmented and outdated global system. Funding challenges can be mitigated by also adopting a collaborative financing mechanism, for example, a blended contribution fund with contributions from national budgets, funders, and multilateral agencies.

Technological risks. Rapid technological changes, especially in the field of AI, can impact proposed solutions. Similarly, evidence synthesis professionals will need to keep on the cutting edge of methods and process innovation. Conscious efforts to support innovation, particularly by the Global South will ensure no one is left behind regarding technological advancement. Use of the innovation fund will be a particularly strategic vehicle here.

Data protection and privacy, security, safety, human rights, ethics, and environmental concerns are emerging aspects of AI impact assessments. To ensure safety and ethical use of AI, human judgment, oversight, and intervention within functioning systems is needed. ESIC will treat independent evaluation and “human in the loop” as foundational principles upon which synthesis methods and process innovation will be built.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Benefits of high quality user centred evidence synthesis

These examples demonstrate the scale of the benefits that high quality evidence synthesis can bring. Many are in health because evidence synthesis was pioneered in health and is probably more mature in health than any other sector. However, the ESIC Capability Maturity Assessments demonstrated that health stills lack many of the key capabilities of an optimized evidence synthesis infrastructure. It is reasonable to think that better infrastructure could lead to many more gains as significant as these examples, in health and other sectors.

1. Evidence synthesis cuts waste

The wrong approach can make a problem worse, not better.

A popular idea for reducing crime is to give young criminals a shock. It is so popular that they made a TV show out of it. The show, 'Scared Straight', filmed young repeat offenders going through a bootcamp with older prisoners who had committed crimes like murder. It opens with one prisoner challenging a young person: "punch me in my face!". Projects like this were set up in 30 US states and other countries around the world with claims of an 80% to 90% success rate. Evidence synthesis looked at nine controlled studies involving 946 teenagers. They found that this approach was "more harmful than doing nothing". Later, it was found that **$1 spent on these programmes cost more than $200 in negative effects.**

It is not just politically salient topics such as crime that see people enthusiastically doing more harm than good. If you went into hospital with a heart attack in the 1980s, you might well have been given anti-arrhythmia drugs to prevent further problems. You would have wanted them because they were recommended by clinical experts and textbooks. A systematic review of all the evidence looked at 11 trials involving 4,336 patients and showed that this practice was **killing people at a rate 28% higher than doing nothing.** As the review says, these were "lifesaving conclusions that could have been drawn earlier," which is why ESIC emphasizes continually-updated evidence synthesis.

2. Evidence synthesis makes impact cheaper

The difference between a good way of getting a result and the best way of getting a result can be worth billions.

Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is one of the major causes of blindness. Healthcare providers were faced with a choice of two drugs, ranibizumab and bevacizumab, with **one drug costing up to one hundred times more than the other**. Evidence synthesis showed that both were similarly effective. Then drug companies argued that the more expensive drug had fewer side effects. Another evidence synthesis showed that this claim was not justified. Now patients can get the same benefits with the cheaper drug, with the likelihood of experiencing an adverse reaction about the same.

3. Evidence synthesis speeds up learning and action

Evidence synthesis helps spread good practice faster.

With the right communication, evidence synthesis is a tool for everyone. It is so valued by the UK teaching profession that **75% of teachers use evidence synthesis** to help them to help children in their classes.

In 2024, China allocated ¥3 billion ($400 million USD) for early childcare. **Evidence synthesis helped China learn from 53 other countries** by drawing on 184 evaluative studies on the effectiveness of family policies worldwide, carefully tested to understand how that evidence would transfer to China's contexts. Every country benefits when countries learn lessons from each other.

Fast learning is critical during emergencies and times of change. In Australia, continuously-updated Covid treatment guidelines that draw from synthesis to give doctors up to date treatment advice are estimated to have produced **a $140 of benefits for every $1 they cost** by preventing hospitalizations and deaths.

4. Synthesis makes evidence better

Science needs systematic scrutiny to stop waste, mistakes and deceptions. Evidence synthesis can provide that feedback loop.

In 2006, there was hope that a drug known as NXY-059 could protect patients from strokes. By 2007, that hope was over. By 2008 it was known that the hope was never real. Evidence synthesis found **pervasive problems in the quality of science that led to a wasted trial**. The majority of trials that failed to use randomization and gave false hope, while those that did showed much smaller effects. Further work reviewing 4,445 studies of 160 candidate treatments for neurological disorders showed that an estimated one in seven experiments are never reported, leading again to false hope for patients as trials that did not work were quietly hidden. Thanks to this work, research funders and publishers have tightened up their rules and patients are now safer.

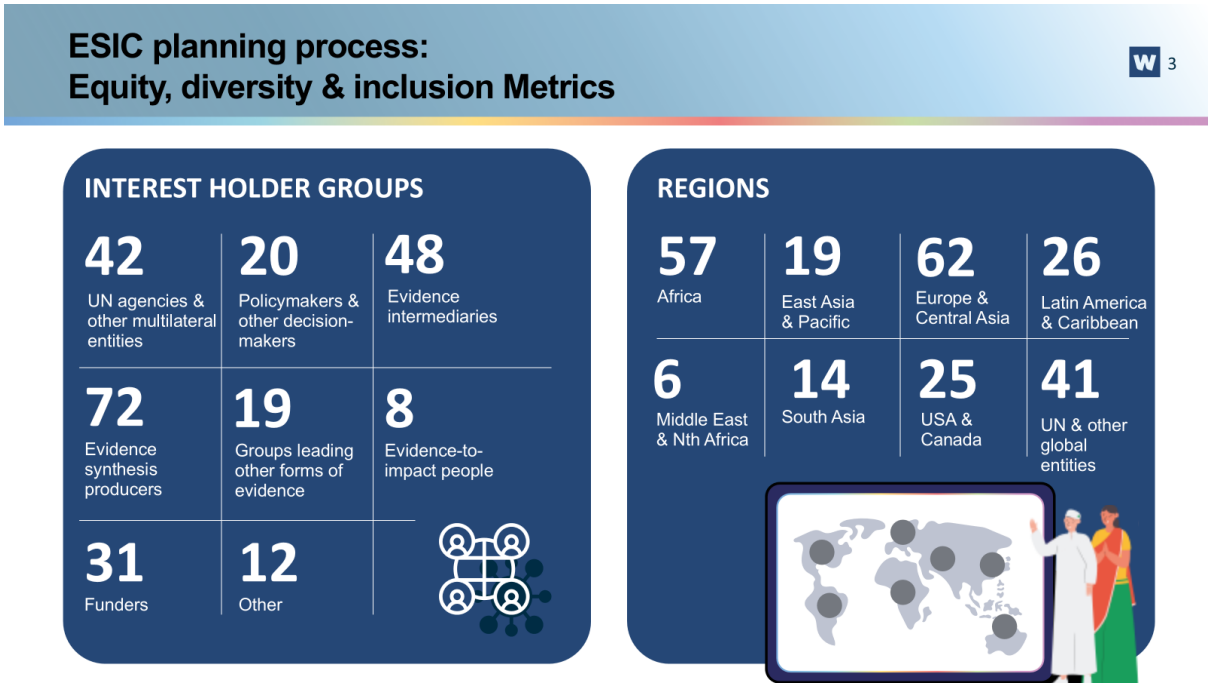
Appendix 2: ESIC Planning Process

This roadmap was developed through a radical open process involving hundreds of experts from a broad range of interest holders, including the multilateral system, government policymakers, citizen-serving NGOs and citizen leaders, science advisors, evidence intermediaries, evidence synthesis producers, groups working with other forms of evidence, and funders.

Starting the process was a joint effort between a trio of synthesis producers, the 'Building a Global Evidence Synthesis Community' group of Campbell, Cochrane, and JBI; the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition, who are working to accelerate delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals; and two evidence intermediaries, the Pan African Collective for Evidence, and the Africa Centre for Rapid Evidence Synthesis. The Wellcome Trust funded the process. It built on the recent work of the Global Commission on Evidence to Address Societal Challenges and the 'SHOW ME the evidence' consensus group. Of course, it built on many decades of efforts to foster collaboration in evidence synthesis and in the wider evidence support system. It has become a much wider effort.

700 people applied to join six working and planning groups covering demand side engagement, AI, data, methods and process innovations, capacity sharing, and governance.

Their backgrounds range from representing and working with citizens to decision making roles in national governments and international institutions. 52% were from the Global South, 46% spoke languages other than English, 69% were from sectors other than health, 52% were female, and 33% were early or mid-career.



The 120+ working and planning group members went through five stages of deliberation and consultation over six months to develop the solutions set out in this roadmap. Many more people shared ideas and evidence and took part in consultations both online and offline.

This followed a “double-diamond process” with deliberate stages in-built to encourage divergent and convergent thinking, before the proposed solutions were stress-tested and refined at the Cape Town Consensus Meeting in June 2025.

See the diagram below for more details.

For all the reports:

At Stage 1, groups reviewed the maturity of existing synthesis capabilities in their area.

At Stage 2, groups assessed the gaps between current capabilities and what we need.

At Stage 3, groups considered 196 possible recommendations.

At Stage 4, groups identified 39 high impact recommendations that they concluded represented the highest impact options given the effort involved.

This roadmap reports on those recommendations.

Complementary reports were also developed by other key interest holders. This includes collectively agreed documents such as on **"***Putting evidence at the centre of everyday life for citizens: A call to action"* produced by citizen partners and referenced above, as well as consultation documents produced by the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition in relation to "*mapping and identifying priorities for synthesis",* on an "*aspirational approach towards a more demand-responsive UN evidence ecosystem"* and on understanding "*what the UN offers"* as a partner to the ESIC process.

All these reports are available in full on the ESIC website.

The Cape Town Consensus meeting enabled discussion and scrutiny among members of the groups and representatives of the full range of interest holders covered by this roadmap. It showed broad support for the five step approach and the recommended solutions set out here.

Conflicts of interest

We sought to foster a fair and equitable environment for collaboration while maintaining transparency in the handling of potential conflicts of interest. All participants were required to openly disclose any existing COIs and outline their relevance to the tasks at hand. The conflict of interest policy, and group members were required to complete disclosure of interest forms. These disclosures were reviewed and risk assessed by a COI consultant and management and mitigation measures were put in place in all high and medium risk situations.

The full Conflict of Interest policy and a report from the secretariat responding to the COI consultant's assessment are published on the ESIC website.

Appendix 3: Capability maturity assessments

Groups identified capabilities needed in their area and assessed their maturity on this scale:

1	Initial	No formal approaches, inconsistent practices, ad-hoc monitoring
2	Developing	Some approaches defined, inconsistent application, limited management
3	Defined	Approaches formalized and consistently applied, some proactive management
4	Managed	Approaches well-managed with metrics for monitoring and priorities for improvement
5	Optimized	Approaches continuously improved, managed with a focus on agility and innovation, and well governed

The contrast between what the highest performing synthesis groups can do and what is supported by the general infrastructure demonstrates the scale of the opportunity for infrastructure investment. Almost the entire evidence synthesis infrastructure is assessed as initial or developing, and nothing is assessed as managed or optimized.

WG1 Demand side engagement

2	Mapping evidence stakeholders
2	Mapping evidence support systems
2	Actively engaging with stakeholders
2	Identifying, formulating, and prioritizing problems
2	Effective collaboration
2	Accessing and interpreting evidence
2	Sharing, communicating, and promoting evidence use
2	Cross-sector collaboration
1	Facilitating feedback and learning
2	Promoting evidence-informed decision-making and processes

WG2 Data

2	Sharing data collected from an existing evidence synthesis
2	Metadata to efficiently curate data enabling easier discovery
2	Data formats enabling interoperability
3	Interoperability of technologies
2	APIs that allow interaction between platforms
2	Repositories of documents, data and indicators
1	Platforms that support learning about data and evidence production and use
2	Processes to ensure that data produced in an evidence synthesis is shared
3	Processes to ensure that shared data is accessible
1	Ensuring data quality, consistency, and applicability
2	Reusing synthesized data and findings from other existing studies
3	Funding mechanisms for sharing
1	Funding mechanisms and economic incentives to reuse data
1	Resources to produce high-quality data to be reused
2	Collaborations to integrate and institutionalize synthesis into decision-making
1	Publisher restrictions (Academic publications)

WG3 AI

1	Standardized validation framework and performance metrics
1	Transparency
1	Domain specificity
2	Security and protection
2	Live inventory of DEST
1	Harmonisation
1	Evidence synthesis task: Question formulation
2	Evidence synthesis task: Search
3	Evidence synthesis task: Title and abstract screening
1	Evidence synthesis task: citation retrieval
1	Evidence synthesis task: Full-text screening
2	Evidence synthesis task: Data extraction
2	Evidence synthesis task: Synthesis (qual)
2	Evidence synthesis task: Synthesis (quant)
1	Evidence synthesis task: Synthesis (RoB)
1	Evidence synthesis task: certainty of evidence (GRADE)
1	Facilitating use of evidence
1	Evidence integration and reporting
1	Sustainability of business model
2	Guidelines for safe and responsible use of AI
2	Ethical compliance and regulatory framework
1	Equity and inclusion
1	Citizen engagement

WG4 Methods and process innovation

2	Synthesis addressing large-scale policy questions
2	Global repository for protocols and synthesis
2	Global and equitable access to all relevant data
2	Systems that allow access to, and re-use of, extracted data, assessments, etc.
2	Shared methods and processes for synthesizing different types of data
2	Shared methods for reporting synthesis
2	Systems for quality assurance and trust of products
2	Adequate and equitable availability and funding for skilled teams globally
2	Cross-sector innovation and adaptation of health and social sciences methods to other sectors

WG5 Capacity sharing

2	Websites, portals or knowledge hubs that curate resources for synthesis production and use
2	Multi-country, cross-sectoral and transdisciplinary partnerships for capacity sharing
2	Training programs for evidence synthesis production, dissemination and use
2	Funding for capacity-sharing initiatives in evidence synthesis
2	Access to databases to support evidence synthesis production

Appendix 4: Indicative costings

Initial estimates

One of the weaknesses of current synthesis infrastructure is the lack of a robust economic understanding of the evidence synthesis ecosystem. This section presents initial costings estimates. These costings come from rapid assessments of the resources needed for each solution that was undertaken by the groups and backed by consultants with expertise in costing research and related work. They are likely to overestimate the true costs for two reasons:

- Synergies between different solutions would reduce costs (e.g. a single regional hub)
- Synergies between evidence synthesis infrastructure and other evidence infrastructure could reduce costs (e.g. the need for user engagement is a shared need).

A full estimate of the financial implications of this new infrastructure would need to take into account the costs of the new infrastructure; the potential for scaling up synthesis aligned to complex, policy-scale questions; the cost reductions it would enable for policy-scale syntheses; the value it could create directly in the synthesis process; and the return on investment.

Anticipated changes over time

Costs will decline as different parts of the infrastructure (tools and capacity):

- Reduce staff unit costs by reducing the time and repetitive work involved in synthesis (through data reusing and AI tools)
- Reduce spending on ‘empty reviews’ which conclude that no high quality research is available by reaching those conclusions much faster
- Enabling the sharing of platforms and tools across sectors, topics and institutions

This infrastructure will increase the value of a typical synthesis project. For example:

- Focus on addressing priority questions
- Shift the focus from narrow-scope syntheses to decision-relevant syntheses that reflect policy-scale questions and real-time needs
- Extract value from a wider range of evidence
- Enable integration of outputs into a wider range of user products and for a wider variety of contexts.

A well-designed synthesis infrastructure, focused on the production of policy-scale syntheses, can yield substantial economic and social returns:

- Cut waste and duplication of effort
- Find cheaper ways to achieve impact
- Speed up learning and action
- Get more value from evidence budgets and reduce research waste.

Estimating costs over time for policy-scale living evidence synthesis costs

As part of its commitment to demonstrating early value, ESIC aims to deliver policy-scale living evidence synthesis products on key global policy challenges within its first year.

Drawing from practical experience across a number of domains, where the possibilities for policy-scale synthesis vary (e.g. in the health sciences, it may be feasible to assess effects and implementation across all known interventions targeting a health outcome; whereas in more complex social policy domains, answering policy-scale questions may require multiple component syntheses to address different dimensions of an SDG), a stylized model for cost decay is proposed:

- **Year 1:** High initial costs due to foundational setup, coordination, and unfamiliarity (e.g. $150,000 per synthesis)
- **Year 2:** Reductions as foundational processes are reused and shared infrastructure is in place (e.g. ~$92,000)
- **Years 3-5:** Significant decline (e.g. ~$15,000 or less), assuming modular synthesis components, improved tech support, and capacity consolidation

This declining cost trajectory reflects the assumption that new infrastructure (e.g. data pipelines, AI tools, classification systems) becomes more embedded and accessible.

Overview

Delivering a vanguard suite of evidence syntheses	$19,200,000
Infrastructure 1: Demand side engagement	$38,300,000*
Infrastructure 2: Data sharing and reusing	$70,500,000
Infrastructure 3: Safe and responsible use of AI	$51,800,000
Infrastructure 4: Methods and process innovation	$39,600,000
Infrastructure 5: Capacity sharing	$36,600,000
Governance for collective impact	$9,100,000
Total	$265,100,000
+5% for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	$278,300,000

* indicates higher cost options available and set out in the relevant group Stage 4 reports.

Initial cost estimates per solution

* indicates higher cost options available and set out in the relevant group Stage 4 reports

WG1 Demand side engagement solutions	**Estimated cost**	**Percent**
1.1 Regional Demand-Side Secretariats	$8,900,000*	23%
1.2 Implementation Support to Intermediaries	$11,400,000*	30%
1.3 Co-production labs where producers and users work together on synthesis products	$5,300,000*	14%
1.4 Users publishing synthesis needs	$3,300,000*	9%
1.5 Innovation Grants for synthesis users	$9,400,000*	25%
Group Total	$38,300,000*	100%
Range	**$36,900,000***	**$39,700,000***

WG2 Data solutions	**Estimated cost**	**Percent**
2.1 Federated Repository of Synthesis Data	$33,500,000	47%
2.2 Interoperable data standards	$6,200,000	9%
2.3 Metadata standards to facilitate data identification and discoverability	$6,200,000	9%
2.4 Open Access Standards for Equitable Data Sharing and Reusing	$13,000,000	18%
2.5 Quality Assurance of data systems	$11,700,000	17%
Group Total	$70,500,000	100%
Range	**$63,800,000**	**$76,700,000**

WG3 AI solutions	**Estimated cost**	**Percent**
3.1 AI assisted software for all stages of the evidence synthesis process	$33,300,000	64%
3.2 Inventory of AI tools for evidence synthesis	$9,800,000	19%
3.3 Centralized database of annotations from synthesis (now incorporated into 2.1)	-	-
3.4 Crowdsourcing training platform to support training and adoption of AI models	$3,600,000	7%
3.5 Framework for validation of technology performance	$1,300,000	2%
3.6 Implementation of best practices and governance of synthesis technologies	$2,500,000	5%
3.7 Research into error assessment and reliability of AI assisted synthesis	$1,400,000	3%
Group Total	$51,800,000	100%
Range	**$50,100,000**	**$53,500,000**

WG4 Method and process innovation solutions	Estimated cost	Percent
4.1 Evidence Support Units for rapid synthesis embedded in user organizations	$3,100,000	8%
4.2 Shared quality standards for different types of synthesis	$1,100,000	3%
4.3 Cross-sector multi-disciplinary funding calls and communities of practice	$1,000,000	3%
4.4 Coordination of ongoing synthesis projects to avoid duplication	$5,100,000	13%
4.5 Panel of citizen partners at global, regional, and sub-regional levels	$7,800,000	20%
4.6 Methods for synthesis of evidence not controlled by commercial publishers (‘grey literature’)	$1,300,000	3%
4.7 Methods for assessing the certainty of evidence	$1,700,000	4%
4.8 Interactive tools for evidence dissemination	$1,400,000	4%
4.9 Methods to improve synthesis to meet policymakers’ needs	$5,600,000	14%
4.10 Methods for translating findings from synthesis to local contexts	$7,800,000	20%
4.11 Academy for Evidence Synthesis and continuous funding to key organizations	$3,800,000	10%
Group Total	$39,600,000	100%
Range	**$36,000,000**	**$43,300,000**

WG5 Capacity sharing solutions	Estimated cost	Percent
5.1 ESIC Knowledge Hub	$9,200,000	25%
5.2 AI tools for Knowledge Translation	$3,400,000	9%
5.3 Regional and country-based learning and development centers	$9,300,000	26%
5.4 Mentorship and Train the Trainer Programmes	$2,000,000	6%
5.5 Continuous Professional Development Modules	$1,200,000	3%
5.6 Competency Frameworks	$1,300,000	4%
5.7 Curriculum for UN and national training agencies	$40,000	0%
5.8 Innovation grants for synthesis production and knowledge translation	$8,300,000	23%
5.9 Funders Forum	$700,000	2%
5.10 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system	$1,100,000	3%
Group Total	$36,600,000	100%
Range	**$33,300,000**	**$39,800,000**

PG1 Governance solutions	Estimated cost	Percent
G.1	$9,100,000	100%
Range	$8,000,000	$10,300,000