

Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on impact evaluation activities in East-Africa

<https://www.3ieimpact.org/blogs/implications-covid-19-pandemic-impact-evaluation-activities-east-africa>

Rapid survey to better understand the effects of COVID-19 on impact evaluators in East Africa. A total of 71 respondents from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Rwanda participated in the survey between April 9 -24:

- The survey shows that evaluation research has been seriously disrupted in East Africa
- The vast majority of evaluation researchers (87%) have stopped all in-person field work, although a slight majority (51%) were still conducting research via the internet
- Most (64%) respondents reported that all meetings were now taking place online
- Two thirds of respondents reported new delays or other issues in their collaborations, and a quarter of respondents have already seen funding delayed
- Most respondents expect fewer funding opportunities in the future

1. Safeguarding and ethical aspect

- <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/blog/adapting-evaluation-designs-times-covid-19-coronavirus-four-questions-guide-decisions>
- https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/ata/Blog-images/Covid_Eval_DecisionTree.pdf
- <https://www.3ieimpact.org/blogs/phone-surveys-developing-countries-need-abundance-caution>

2. The research and methods aspect

- **Share!** Effect estimates are not the only valuable thing! The data you collect can have real value to governments and implementers.
 - National Rural Livelihoods program, India
- **Mitigate!** On the ground collection of data infeasible: carefully monitor the state of program implementation and overall situation to retain the validity of research when you can resume
 - Aquaculture program, Bangladesh
- **Adapt!** Can you work better with your local partners? Can you do virtual fields visits? Can you do the survey by telephone?
 - Sustainable Livelihoods program, Philippines
- **Innovate!** Use alternative sources of data, e.g. big data

The map

Outcomes

Data Sources

| | Economic development and livelihoods | Sustainable agriculture and food security | Health and well-being | Education | Governance and human rights | Water and sanitation | Energy, industry and infrastructure provision | Urban Development | Environment/sustainability | Global partnerships |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Social networks | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| Internet searches | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Mobile data content | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Citizen reporting and crowd sourced data | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | |
| Data produced by public agencies | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Data produced by businesses | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Cellphone call records data (CDR) | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Data from fixed sensors | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Data from mobile sensors (tracking) | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Data from satellites | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

● Impact evaluations ● High confidence ● Medium confidence ● Low confidence ● Measurement Study

Included studies across data sources

| Data Source | Number of Impact Evaluations | Number of Measurement Studies |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Human-Sourced Data | | |
| Social Networks | 0 | 18 |
| Internet Searches | 0 | 11 |
| Mobile Data Content | 2 | 10 |
| Citizen Reporting or Crowdsourced Data | 2 | 10 |
| Process-Mediated Data | | |
| Data Produced by Public Agencies | 1 | 2 |
| Data Produced By Businesses | 2 | 7 |
| Cell Phone Call Record Details | 0 | 65 |
| Machine-Generated Data | | |
| Data from Fixed Sensors | 7 | 32 |
| Data from Mobile Sensors (Tracking) | 0 | 15 |
| Data from Satellites | 39 | 270 |
| Total | 48 | 381 |

Key findings

- Satellite images and mobile call detail records are the most used big data sources.
- The development themes studied the most include:
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Economic development and livelihoods
 - Urban development
 - Health and well-being
 - Energy, industry and infrastructure provision
- While there are a number of studies that have used big data for measuring various development outcomes, there are not many impact evaluations that have used these innovative big data-based outcome measures.
- This indicates the opportunity for incorporating big data measures in impact evaluations to measure the impact at higher frequency and granularity.

3. Better use of existing evidence

- Use existing evidence better and creatively!
- <https://developmentevidence.3ieimpact.org/>
 - 3759 IEs; 730 SRs; 20 EGMs
- #2020Hindsight campaign: e.g. handwashing blog <https://www.3ieimpact.org/blogs/how-get-people-wash-their-hands>
- Explosion of COVID-19 focused research (and duplication of efforts) requires systematic reviews (Campbell, IDCG/3ie)
- Evidence Synthesis Response to the ongoing global crisis: 3ie /Africa Centre for Evidence (ACE) /Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI) <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2DH7QGM>