

# Evidence Gap Map: New Frontiers to Inform Research Priorities

## INFORMATION SHEET

### What is an Evidence Gap Map?

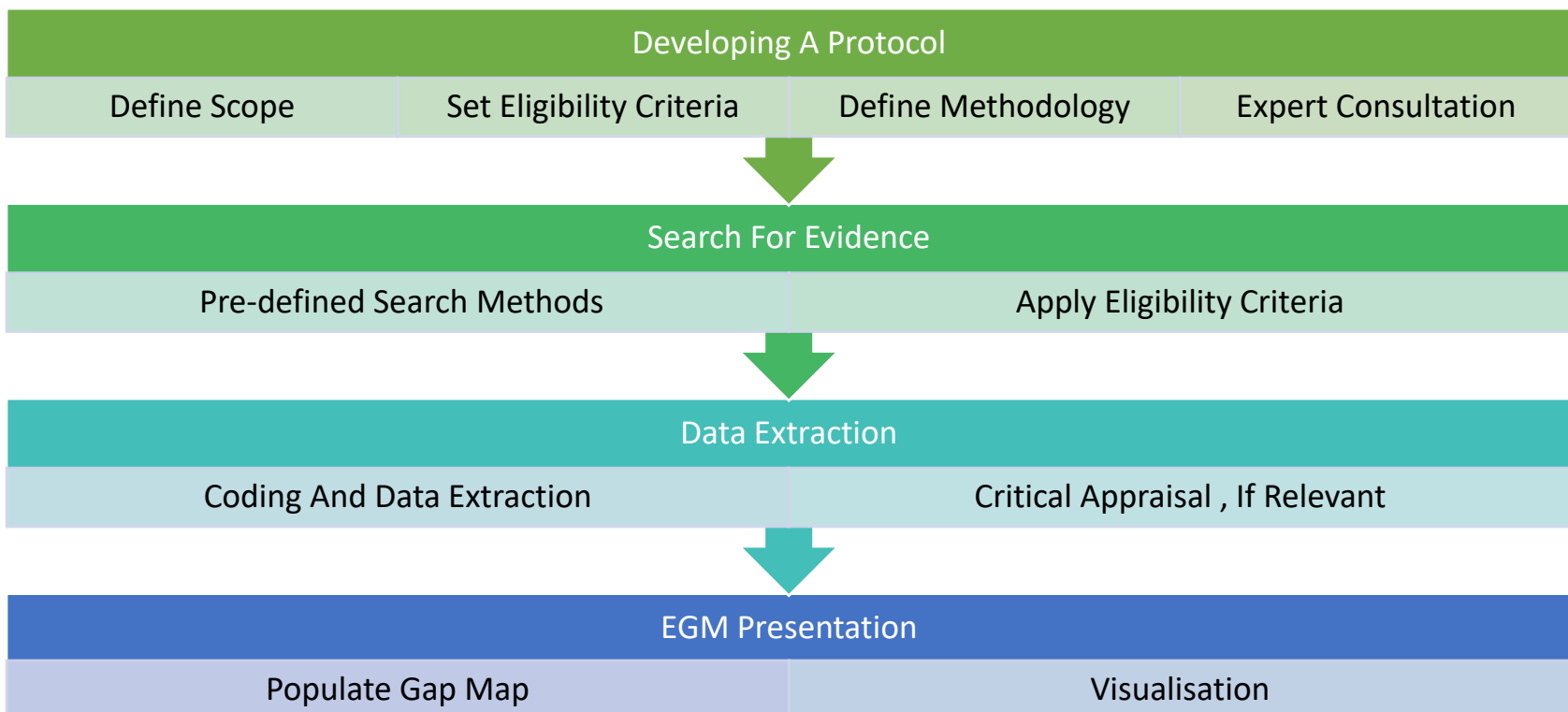
Evidence gap map (EGM) is a systematic presentation of available research on a particular topic in a user-friendly format to identify gaps in current knowledge base. An EGM is a relatively new type of evidence synthesis study design (the science of bringing together available research on a particular issue to inform decision-making), the methodologies around which are still being developed.

### Why do we need Evidence Gap Maps?

EGMs can play a pivotal role in scoping and defining the evidence landscape, both for primary research and evidence synthesis studies. EGMs identify gaps in evidence with the specific intent of informing research needed for policies and programs. They facilitate strategic use of scarce research funding by identifying priority areas for conduct of future research and avoid duplication of existing research. EGMs when used as a decision making tool by researchers, funders and other stakeholders can prevent research waste.

### How are evidence gap maps developed?

Whilst several approaches may be used for developing EGMs, key steps involved are shown below:



EGMs are usually presented in three ways:

- visual representation of data, usually in the form of a matrix (rows and columns) or bubble plot;
- virtual searchable database, housing publications; and
- as a report highlighting gaps without an explicit visual map

Majority of the EGMs focus only on systematic reviews, impact evaluations and randomised clinical trials of interventions. However, the concept of EGM can be applied to a wider context. The George Institute for Global Health, India is involved in developing EGMs that can inform deliberations on national research priorities for particular disease conditions.

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#### References:

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