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**Can ICT4D improve governance in low- and middle-income countries? A rapid review of impact evaluations**

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**Objectives/aims**

The promise of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to expand access, inclusion, voice, and information for a low cost makes ICTs obvious mechanisms for improving political and economic governance, especially in low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs). In this rapid evidence review, we present and synthesize the evidence from impact evaluations of a wide variety of ICT interventions with governance objectives in L&MICs.

**Methods**

To conduct a rapid review, we begin with an existing evidence map of 254 impact evaluations covering 11 intervention categories across nine sectors. We include studies coded in the e-governance, digital identity, digital inclusion, data systems, and digital information services intervention categories if they measure outcomes for political or economic governance. We identify and describe the relevant political and economic theories of change for the evaluated interventions. We conduct critical appraisal using a tool developed for practitioners. Focusing on effects measured with few or some limitations, we group the interventions by theory of change and synthesize the evidence.

**Main findings**

We include 24 impact evaluations. After critical appraisal, we find that the majority of the studies have few or some limitations, the rest having many limitations. The largest clusters of evidence speak to digital information services and e-governance effects on political outcomes, however, the interventions within these clusters are still very heterogeneous. Only six of the interventions target equity. The evidence suggests that ICTs are more effective for economic as opposed to political governance. The majority of the evidence on political outcomes is based on evaluations of pilot interventions, limiting the ability to draw conclusions about sustainability.