1. **INTRODUCTIONS**

   a. Welcoming working group members (*bold* = members present for meeting)
      i. **David Gough**, EPPI-Centre, UK (co-chair)
      ii. **Elie Akl**, Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI), Lebanon (co-chair)
      iii. **Amena El-Harakeh**, SPARK, AUB
      iv. **Denis Roy**, Institut national d’excellence en santé et en services sociaux, Canada
      v. **Ian Graham**, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, uOttawa, Canada
      vi. Kim Sutherland, Agency for Clinical Innovation, New South Wales (ACI-NSW), Australia
      vii. **Sylvia de Haan**, Cochrane Central, Netherlands
      viii. **Secretariat**: Heather Bullock and Safa Al-Kbateh, McMaster Health Forum | RISE, Canada, and Jeremy Grimshaw Ottawa Hospital Research Institute | RISE, Canada

2. **FOLLOW-UP ON ACTION ITEMS**

   a. Not applicable for this first meeting

3. **DISCUSSION ON SCOPE OF GROUP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

   Broad discussion about scope/remit:
   - What are we sustaining?
   - Work will occur at two complementary levels that are simultaneously addressed:
     1) Looking critically at what COVID-END is doing in order to ensure it is adding value to the COVID-19 response globally
     2) Creating evidence for how the global evidence ecosystem can be organized and create a business case for more collaborative working that could be continued beyond covid-19 and tackle other pressing health and social system issues (i.e., using this opportunity to demonstrate how we can work in a more coordinated way to better respond to future needs)
   - Need to connect the knowledge production and management infrastructure pieces with the goal of helping to modernize and transform health and social systems
   - COVID-19 is a “stress test” of our evidence ecosystem and shows where we are well-positioned and where we have weaknesses/cracks
   - How can we use this opportunity of heightened public awareness to build a better culture around evidence-informed policy making and how can we profit/respond to this opportunity?
- This group has a research role and COVID-END is the “case”

a. Retrospectively studying which mechanisms the evidence synthesis community had in place to respond efficiently and which needed to be developed, strengthened or better coordinated
   - “Mechanisms” too narrow; evidence structures, processes and mechanisms more inclusive
   - 2 elements: 1) descriptive (how many reviews, maps, etc.) and 2) analytic/explanatory (why)
   - Consider both demand and supply sides
   - Need to include how things have evolved (i.e. to capture how organizations have pivoted to respond)
   - Sample frame: partners in COVID-END but with reference to broader evidence systems

b. Prospectively studying how the evidence synthesis community’s newly developed mechanisms are being put in place to optimize sustainability
   - What are the most important questions that we can study and track over time to identify how things evolve, and COVID-END’s role in that (e.g. if/how searching becomes better coordinated over time, mega-registry, etc.)
   - Social Network Analysis of how groups used to work together and collaborations prior to COVID-END and how COVID-END has brought groups together (how interactions change over time and what outcomes came out of them)
   - Suggest remove “optimize sustainability”

c. Proposing ways to ‘mainstream’ emergent mechanisms within existing institutions and processes, including in the work of a broader array of groups (e.g., data analytics, modelling, implementation science, and monitoring and evaluation) that need to have access to the best evidence sources for their work
   - This element builds on a. and b.
   - Identify “key components” from a. and b. and look at if/how we want to sustain over time to better address future work and challenges

d. Developing a theory of change to capture demand- and supply-side interventions and how they are expected to lead to impact
   - Tackle this early on and evolve/iterate over time
   - Example: enhancing social network leads to better collaboration, leads to better evidence supply, leads to better impacts on health and social systems
   - Ultimately trying to support health and social system transformation
   - ToC starts with COVID-END but captures broader ecosystem
   - Need to be explicit about what we think the potential impact of COVID-END is and measure them
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<td>e.</td>
<td>Liaise with donors about the importance of investing in existing institutions and processes</td>
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<td><strong>ACTION:</strong></td>
<td>Heather to draft a purpose statement to accompany TOR</td>
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<td><strong>ACTION:</strong></td>
<td>next meeting group will review scope and confirm it</td>
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<td><strong>MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING GROUP</strong></td>
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<td>a. Ideas for engagement of additional members and organizations with reminder of principles around geographic, linguistic diversity as well as diversity in target audiences</td>
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<td><strong>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</strong></td>
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<td>a. Setting a concrete date/time and frequency for future meetings</td>
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<td><strong>ACTION:</strong> members to complete doodle poll</td>
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