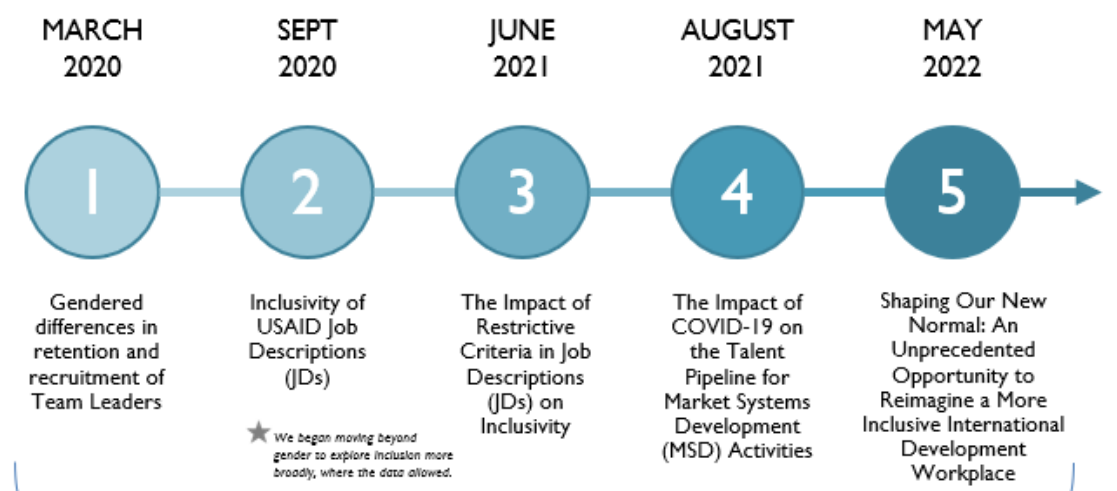


## Entry #02: The Versatility of Timelines

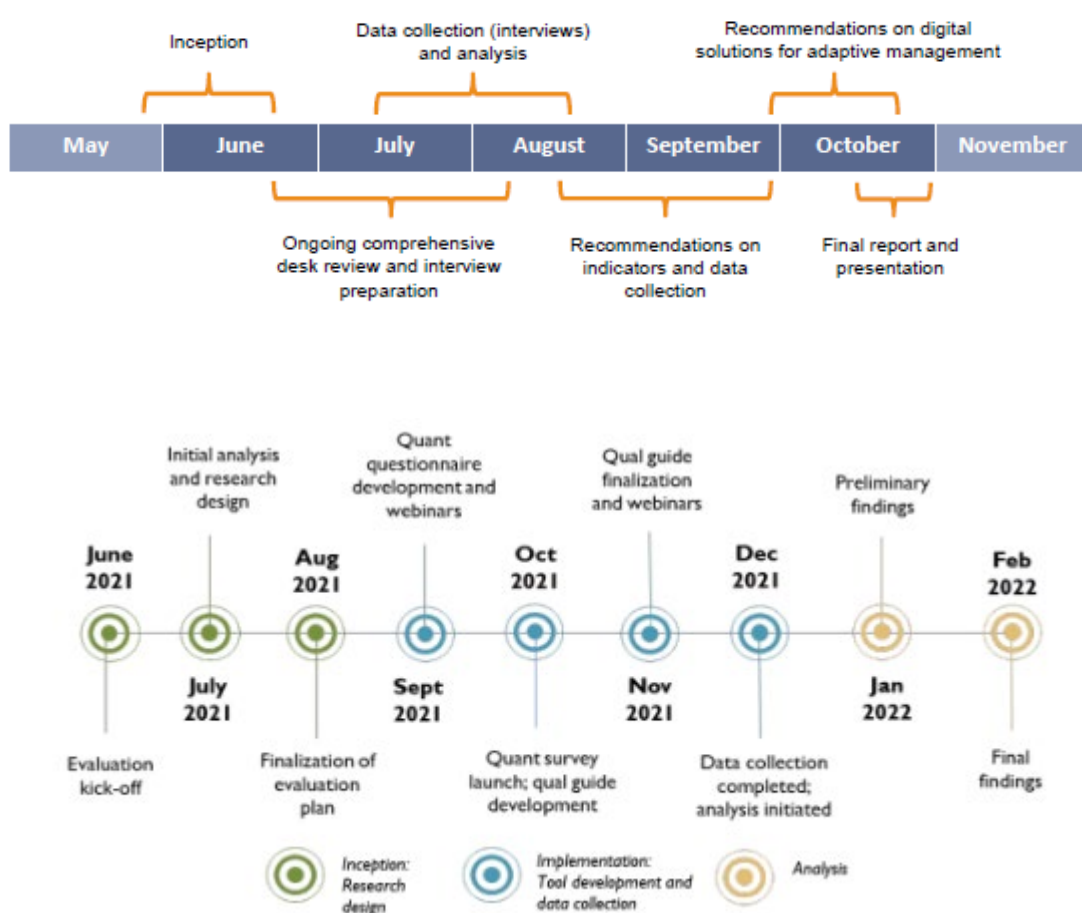
**Background:** A timeline is probably one of the more useful diagrams in a presentation or report. By definition, it is a graphical depiction of important events over time, but in practice, visualizing time can unpack a lot of fascinating information. In this second Lab Notes entry, Senior Consultant, Laura Kim, shares the reasons why she believes the visualization of timelines has become a vital part of our delivery.

### TO SHOW EVENTS IN SEQUENCE

To the right is a straightforward, linear timeline that was developed to show the five studies conducted under Canopy's Inclusion and Leadership series. We wanted to show that while each study was unique, all five contribute to an overarching research question.



**What are the biases, structures, relationships, and rules which influence who is selected for leadership jobs?**



### TO SHOW DURATION AND SCALE

In our deliverables, we increasingly realized that timeline graphics - far more than narratives or Gantt tables - were better suited to communicating the amount of work and planning being undertaken within our assignments.

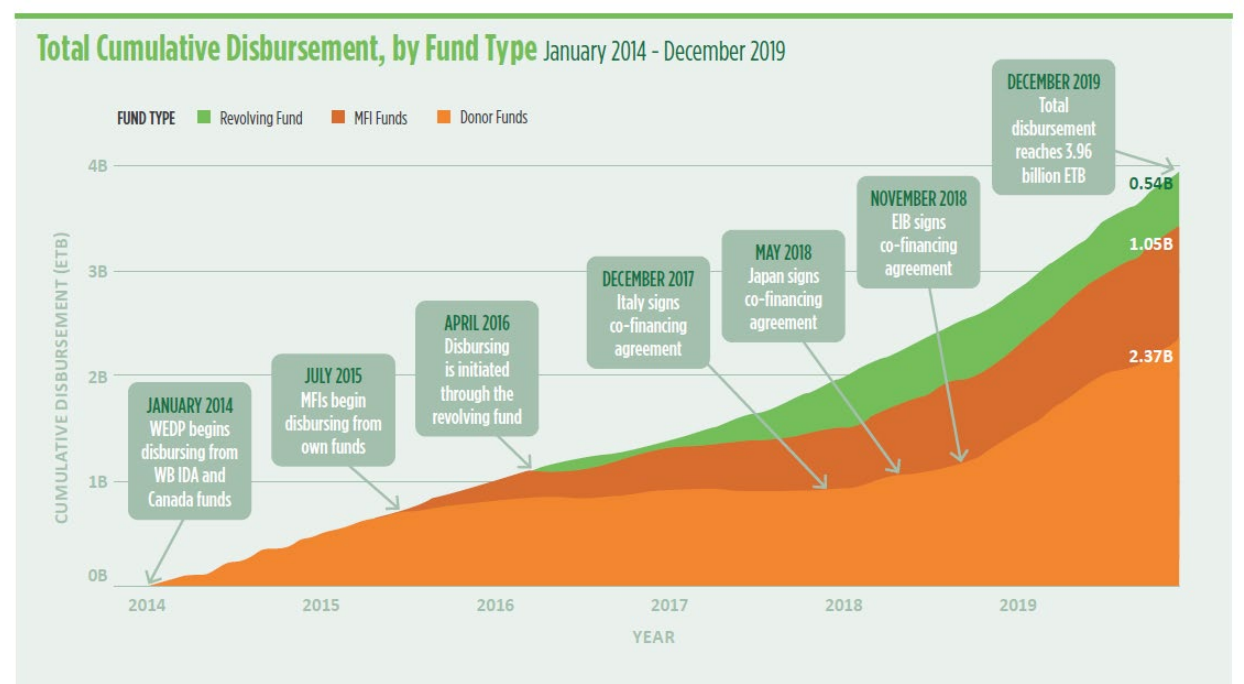
Visually, timelines do a better job - compared to narratives and charts - in depicting the duration and often staggered nature of our work.

To the left are two different timeline visualizations we developed for a review (top) and an evaluation (bottom).

### TO SHOW TIME-BASED ANALYSIS

Timelines are the most fun, however, when one can integrate data analysis into them. The visualization on the right is an area graph that shows important events over time, but simultaneously demonstrates how program funds grew and diversified over time.

I created this graph for an assignment with the Africa Gender Innovation Lab.



Source: Alibhai, Aly Salman; Achew, Mengistu Bessir; Strobbe, Francesco; Coleman, Rachel Dawn. 2020. Designing a Credit Facility for Women Entrepreneurs : Lessons from the Ethiopia Women Entrepreneurship Development Project. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34013> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

This Canopy's Lab Notes series features a behind-the-scenes look into our thinking and our processes, as we help our partners navigate complexity through a systems lens.