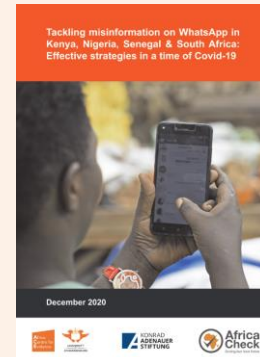




Strategies to tackle COVID-19 misinformation

Empower the public to **identify false information** about COVID-19 is one strategy to fight the scourge of misinformation about the virus. So suggests authors from **Africa Check** and the **Africa Centre for Evidence** in a write up about a research project into effective interventions to tackle COVID-19 misinformation on WhatsApp. One of five strategies to curb the spread of health misinformation on social media, the authors explain how self-efficacy campaigns were found to be a useful tool in empowering members of the public to recognize health misinformation. The authors state how fact-checkers can integrate such campaigns into their editorial and social media messaging.



The dangers of misinformation
The forthcoming report will share nine strategies to mitigate misinformation

Photo: Africa Check

The **African Institute for Development Policy** reached its **tenth year** in December 2020, celebrating with a gala dinner attended by the Vice President of the Republic of Malawi, the Right Honourable Dr Saulos Klaus Chilima. AFIDEP has operated in over 25 African countries to support evidence-informed decision-making.

We're building our gallery of stories of African evidence-informed decision-making. Want to feature your story? **Reach out to us!** We're looking for examples of evidence making difference in policy design, resulting in positive results after implementation, or strengthening a system.

Calling all Kenyan journalists, bloggers, and social media influencers: **AfricaCheck** is offering a **free, online fact-checking course** happening on 21-22 January and 28-29 January. The aim of the workshop is to equip online content users and producers to recognise and counter instances of mis/disinformation.

Read how the South African GRADE Network, co-lead by **Cochrane South Africa** and the **Centre for Evidence-based Health Care**, collaborated with **policy-makers** to ensure decisions to deal with COVID-19 in the country were informed by the best-available health research in a timely way.

Putting the spotlight on...

Dr Salem Shalaweh from Libya!

This young researcher based at the National Cancer Institute says "I am working with different government institutions as [a] multidisciplinary research[er] and I would like to be part of the AEN". Welcome to this community Salem!

Want to spotlight yourself, your organisation, or someone else you know? **Tell us about them** and you could be featured in the next newsletter!

Mark your calendars

20 January: **[CEDIL webinar on innovations in responsive evidence synthesis services during COVID-19, online.](#)**

21-22 January: **[Evidence Synthesis & Meta-Analysis in R Conference, online.](#)**

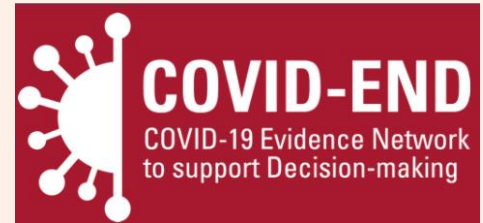
We're resharing our last blog of 2020, written by Siziwe Ngcwabe, the AEN operations manager, which shares the **ideas so far for EVIDENCE 2022.**

View all blog posts **online** and use the Network to share your work – submit your AEN blog **here.**



Million-dollar funding to fight COVID-19 with evidence

Canada's federal government has **invested in evidence-informed decision-making** to combat COVID-19 with a \$1 million grant to the **COVID-19 Evidence Network to support Decision-makers (COVID-END)** hosted at **McMaster University**. The network – led by Professor John Lavis, director of the **McMaster Health Forum** – brings together researchers to rapidly synthesis the best-available evidence on responding to COVID-19. Research evidence on health measures, health systems management as well as the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 are included in the scope of synthesised evidence.



Investing in evidence The funding will allow the COVID-END network to better pool resources and avoid duplication of research on COVID-19.

Photo: McMaster University

INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

The first lesson from the COVID-19 crisis for Amal Amin is that we need more **evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM)**. Writing for the **World Economic Forum**, Amin argues that EIDM is one defense against the world of misinformation, “rumours and myths”. She continues to highlight that decisions deficit of research evidence have far-reaching implications for all aspects of society.

With the COVID-19 vaccine being rolled out across the world, many researchers and implementers are trying to understand how to ensure vaccine uptake. The **Norwegian Institute of Public Health** has shared information briefs based on findings from **Cochrane syntheses about promoting vaccine uptake** among implementers and the public.

Reflecting on how COVID-19 shaped science in 2020, authors at Nature **track the timeline of scientific advancement** in a recent article. Month-by-month, Callaway and colleagues share how speedily research developments moved from international teams sequencing COVID-19's genome in January to November's World Health Organisation announcement of the production of close to 200 vaccines. The authors point out the overall shift in research culture because of COVID-19.

Hot off the press

Agley et al: ‘Misinformation about COVID-19: evidence for differential latent profiles and a strong association with trust in science’

Karimli et al: ‘More assets, more decision-making power? Mediation model in a cluster-randomized controlled trial evaluating the effect of the graduation program on women's empowerment in Burkina Faso’

Yingling et al: ‘Explaining variation in evidence-based policy making in the American states’

Opportunities

- Multiple job opportunities available with the **African Institute for Development Policy**.
- **Development Evaluation Training Africa course:** applications opening soon!
- Apply by 12 February to be the **Chair of the Board of Trustees** at INASP.