



Manifesto captures a different spirit for developing capacity

The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) proudly presents its **Manifesto on Capacity Development for Evidence-Informed Decision-Making (EIDM) in Africa**. The Manifesto is one output from **EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE**, and promises to be an African-led approach to EIDM capacity development. Serving as a resource and inspiration to the evidence ecosystem in Africa, the Manifesto also aims to challenge mainstream views on capacity-building for EIDM in Africa. The AEN secretariat, together with AEN working groups, invite AEN members to expand the Manifesto at the AEN-hosted series of brainstorming workshops, happening every Wednesday from next week until 7 April. All AEN members are invited to join.



Manifesting a better future for capacity development Members of the AEN are invited to engage with the newly launch manifesto

Credit: Africa Evidence Network

A recent **Guardian** editorial asserts that **researchers in Africa have a responsibility to enhance the capacity of government officials** to use data for policy decision-making by providing data literacy courses to policy-makers. In the context of C19 and the triple threat now faced by many African governments, the authors argue that data science courses may provide a multi-tiered solution.

We are delighted to share with you the launch of our **Gallery of African EIDM stories**, live on the **AEN website!** A first-time ever dedicated online space that profiles and celebrates African evidence champions, the work they do in supporting evidence-informed decision-making in Africa, and their roles in the African ecosystem of evidence. We welcome your story to add to this growing gallery!

Member voting for the winner of the 2021 Africa Evidence Leadership Award opened earlier this month and remains open until 26 March 2021. Now in its third year, the award aims to celebrate and showcase African leaders in the evidence ecosystem. Every AEN member can vote using the personalised voting link received on 8 March 2021.

We're updating the AEN membership database! Use this **form** to update your information and stay connected to the amazing community of people passionate about evidence-informed decision-making in Africa.

Putting the spotlight on... ...a new member!

John Khisa is the Monitoring and Evaluations Officer at the **Catholic Medical Bureau of Uganda**. He aims to participate in AEN programmes "that will encourage greater performance" in his role. We welcome you! Reach out to us to feature yourself or your organisation next month!

Mark your calendars

31 March: Event proposal submission date for 2021 gLOCAL Evaluation Week from May 31 and June 4, 2021, [online](#).

24 March: AEN Manifesto brainstorming workshop focussing on people, [online](#).

31 March: AEN Manifesto brainstorming workshop focussing on processes, [online](#).

7 April: AEN Manifesto brainstorming workshop focussing on cross-cutting issues, [online](#).

Chris Chibwana from Malawi writes this month's **blog post** which emphasises the need for collaboration instead of competition in the development sector. View all blog posts [online](#) and share your AEN post [here!](#)



Rating the world’s best COVID-19 pandemic policies

Scientists and decision-makers have worked closer than ever in the last year to develop evidence-informed government responses and policies related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nature, shares an experience at the **Complexity Science Hub (CSH)**, which has a **policy tracking project** with more than 40 volunteers and scientists involved in assigning codes to more than 11,000 measures in 57 countries. The aim of the project is to analyse databases tracking government interventions to curb COVID-19. Curfews, cancellations of small gatherings, and the closures of schools, shops, and restaurants are reportedly among the most effective policy decisions to curb the spread of C19. In future, policy-makers may use policy trackers as an evidence tool to better understand hypothetical scenarios of how interventions may or may not have impacted a certain outcome.



Complexity Science Hub (CSH) Data trackers deduce which C-19 policies have been most effective in curbing the virus spread using policy tracking technology.

Photo Credit: World Bank Images

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In a recent London School of Economics blog post, **UK researchers Kathryn Oliver and Annette Boaz** share their experience of working in the United Kingdom Government Office for Science where they helped produce the government’s new Areas of Research Interest. They highlight the challenges involved in establishing and mobilising networks of researchers and policy-makers to work towards shared goals during the C-19 global pandemic.

Evidence-informed decision-making can play a role in university governance structures to ensure equitable career progression for all faculty members. This is one finding of a **nation-wide survey aimed at understanding the broader health, social, well-being, and research-related effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on tenured and tenure-track faculty in public Canadian universities**. The survey was conducted by **Canadian Assistant Professor Jennifer Davis**.

Social media **disinformation can pose a threat to evidence-based policy-making**. Disinformation has shown its power to amplify armchair voices, invertedly silencing evidence-informed views of content experts. To remedy this, **Gill Savage** posits in an **Australian online survey** that public institutions should rebuild trust with the public.

Hot off the press

Erismann et al: How to bring research evidence into policy? Synthesizing strategies of five research projects in low- and middle-income countries.

Ratten et al: COVID - 19 and entrepreneurship: Future research directions.

Votruba et al: EVITA 2.0, an updated framework for understanding evidence-based mental health policy agenda-setting: tested and informed by key informant interviews in a multilevel comparative case study.

Opportunities

- **Stellenbosch University short course Introduction to Global Health, apply by 31 March.**
- **International Development Research Centre (IDRC) funding for African organizations in artificial intelligence and climate change; apply by 5 April.**
- **International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) learning exchange opportunity for 50 young Francophones. Apply by 9 April.**