

## Community essential to advancing evidence-use in Africa in new story of change

In the latest addition to the Gallery of EIDM Stories, Africa Evidence Network (AEN) chairperson Professor Ruth Stewart shares the importance and benefit of **relationships in advancing evidence-use in Africa**. The story describes how Ruth was approached by a funder in October 2020 to nominate anyone working in West Africa with experience in and capacity for work tackling misinformation. One of the four nominations shared by the chairperson was successfully funded, and the nominee went on to gain even further benefit from being known within the Network. "This is what makes me proud to be part of this community," Stewart comments, "We actively support each other in advancing evidence-use in Africa."



**Ruth, Rose and Diana attending EVIDENCE 2018** One of the strengths of the AEN is that those within the membership are always keen to promote and recommend one another when opportunities arise

Photo: Africa Evidence Network

A multi-disciplinary and multi-country team have carried out **surveys** of the Ghana population, considering the topic of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy and **reflect on the study** means for vaccine uptake in that country. The team includes researchers from the Ghana-based PACKS Africa, Cognate Systems, CROP Africa (Togo), and the University of Southampton in the UK.

Read about an exciting partnership venture by the African ICT Foundation and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) which aims to **advance evidence-based policy-making of internet governance in Africa**. The partnership also hopes to foster digital collaboration in line with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals roadmap of digital cooperation.

The Utafiti Sera House is a newly formed coalition of two Kenya-based international higher education think tanks. The research policy house aims to generate **evidence that can inform higher education policies**, like protecting equitable access to quality higher education in a pandemic environment.

**Africa Evidence Week 2021 is happening from 13-17 September**. We will spend the week celebrating the use of evidence across Africa by showcasing participants' content across all our digital platforms. Do not miss out on the biggest evidence-informed decision-making even this year: follow [#AfricaEvidenceWeek2021](#).

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

Welcome to **Ibikunle Jegede** who works as a monitoring and evaluation specialist from Nigeria with a keen interest in data demand and its effect on decision-making.

Want to spotlight you or your organisation? **Let us know** and you could be featured.

## Mark your calendars

13 – 17 September 2021: Africa Evidence Week 2021, [online](#).

14 – 16 September 2021: The Great Reset: The Africa Debate 2021, [online](#).

15 September 2021: High-level policy dialogue on gender equality in Southern Africa, [online](#).

20 September 2021: From policy talking to industry actions: zero pollution for soil, [online](#).

eBASE Africa was recently awarded funding support from the IDRC to assess the impact of mis/disinformation on research use in policy in west and central Africa. Read all about it in this month's [AEN blog post](#).

View all blog posts [online](#) and use the Network to share your AEN blog [here](#).

## Community engagement to mitigate vaccine hesitancy at university campuses

An [insightful article in The Conversation](#) highlights concerns about mandatory vaccination, particularly in institutions of higher learning. Article authors [Peter Newman](#) and [Adrian Guta](#) use scenarios to build understanding of how universities can alternate from mandating vaccines to promoting vaccines. With two university vaccination sites as case studies, the authors emphasise the importance of dialogue and community engagement as a way to promote vaccine uptake at universities. The authors who have been researching COVID-19 impacts on social systems caution policy-makers and tertiary educationists that “mandating vaccination can risk turning a highly effective and routine public health intervention into a contentious battleground.”



**Evidence suggests community engagement at institutions of higher learning** as a way forward to help reduce vaccine hesitancy among students and staff alike.

Photo: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

## INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

The recent release of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report presented bleak findings on the deteriorating effects of climate change on the environment globally. Authors of the report have highlighted the damaging and irrevocable changes caused by global warming and are now calling for indigenous people to act as key stakeholders in mitigating the adverse climate change effects. Read the [evidence supporting this call to action](#) by lead IPCC scientists.

Should public interest be considered when countries are deciding whether to enter into pricing-related confidentiality agreements with pharmaceutical companies? [Find out what the current evidence says from the Health Evidence Network synthesis report](#) series authored by researchers from Medicines Law and Policy, based on a scoping review of 50 publications.

Liberia and Guatemala are [beneficiaries of the \\$30 million investment](#) by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) directed towards creating research and innovation centers over the next five years. Read more about how USAID is working to invest in strengthening research systems in partner countries.

## Hot off the press

[Fears et al:](#) ‘Evidence-informed policy for tackling adverse climate change effects on health: Linking regional and global assessments of science to catalyse action’

[Houessou et al:](#) ‘The use of evidence for better decision-making by local governments’

[Kapiriri et al:](#) ‘A framework to support the integration of priority setting in the preparedness, alert, control and evaluation stages of a disease pandemic’

[Thow et al:](#) ‘Study design: policy landscape analysis for sugar-sweetened beverage taxation in seven sub-Saharan African countries’

## Opportunities

- [Call for Africa-UniNet Research Cooperation Projects.](#) Applications due 30 September 2021. Only active members of Africa-UniNet are eligible to participate.
- [Call for proposals:](#) The Campbell Collaboration seeks a host institution. [Click here](#) to download the request for proposals document. Applications due 31 August 2021.