



Evidence to the rescue?

AEN2014: Rapporteur report



Up for the challenge?



MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF FOUR ACTIVE COMMUNITY CLUBS IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

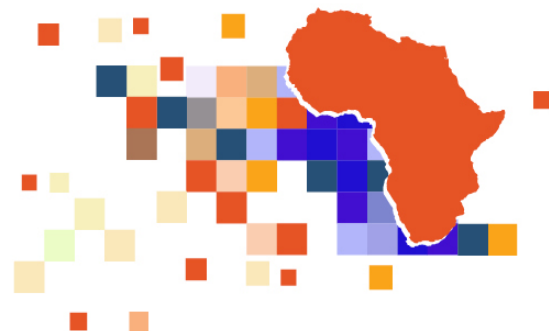
Siyakhula, Winter Rose, Ilitha and Thembaletu

September 2009

REPORT PREPARED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION:

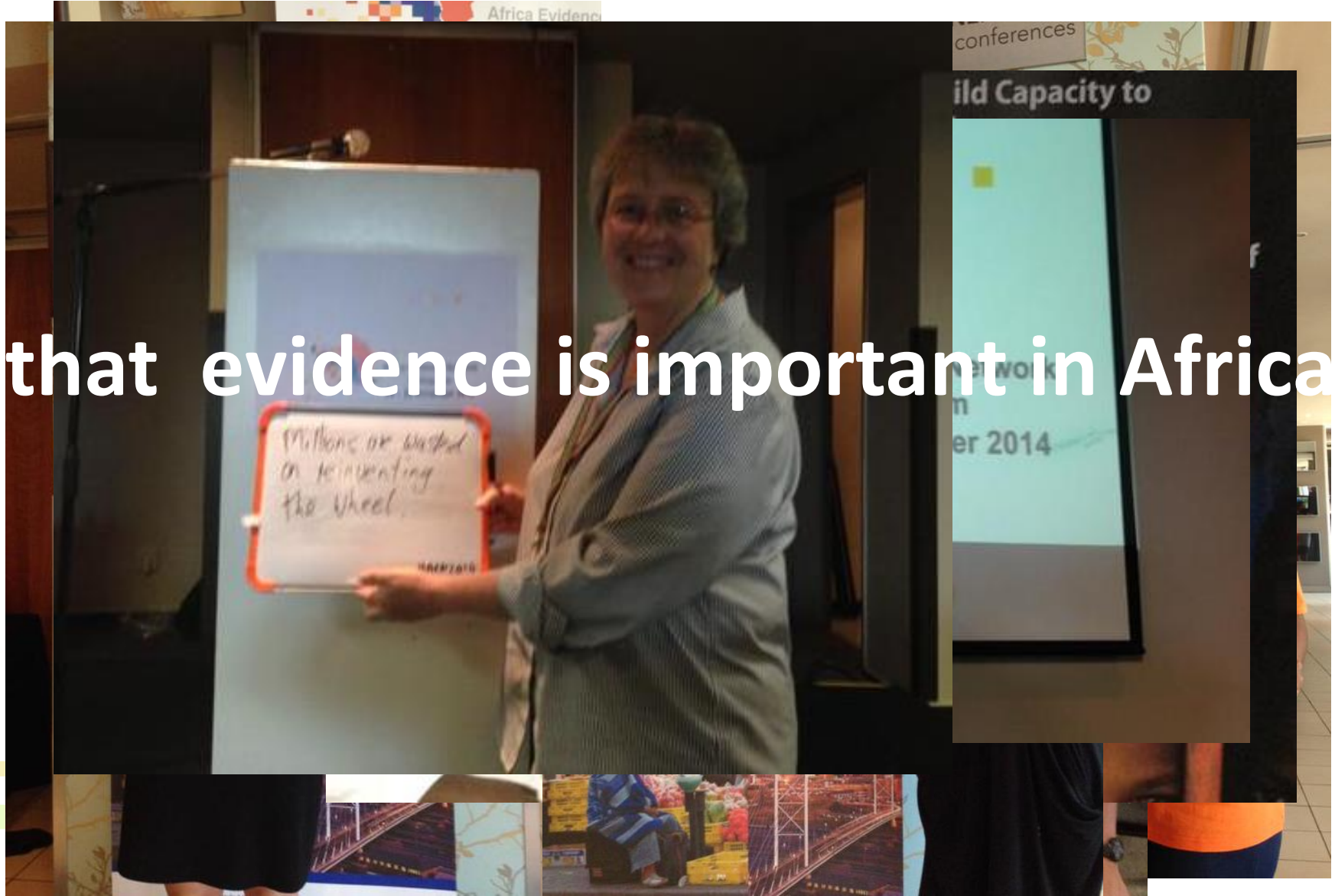
DATA COLLECTED BY IMVOMVO

REPORT PRODUCED BY CORA BURNETT AND WIM HOLLANDER



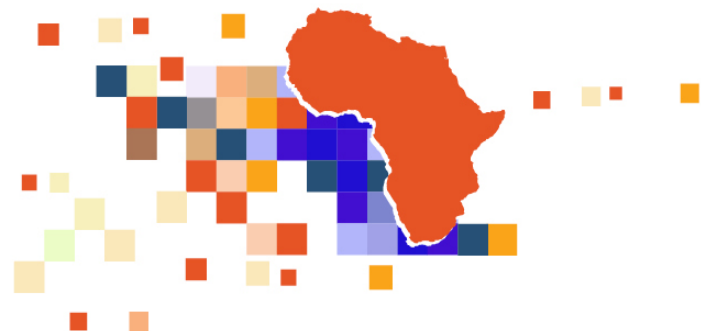
A clear consensus:

that evidence is important in Africa



For the love of numbers

Delegates	Sessions	Social Networks	Food
122	23 presentations	400+ tweets	500+ pieces of chicken
4 continents	7 evidence users	Daily blogs & storify	600+ croissants
10 different African countries	12 evidence producers	10+ films	Lots of cake
16 gov departments	6 training sessions	Tons of PR material	
13 universities	2 dinners		



Vibrant interaction



PAN:Children @children_pan · Nov 25

Evaluation won't work in a country where the government won't face its failures
[@iangoldmansa](#) [#dpme](#) [#AEN2014](#)



4



2



Natalie R. Da Silva @nataliejhbsa · Nov 25

[@iangoldmansa](#) It's ok to make mistakes; it's not ok to not learn from mistakes
[#AEN2014](#)



ka 20smthing @chenaichair · 9h

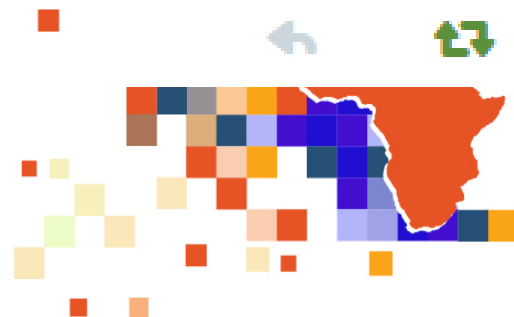
We can use evidence to save lives-when we base policy solutions based on
african based evidence [#AEN2014](#)



2



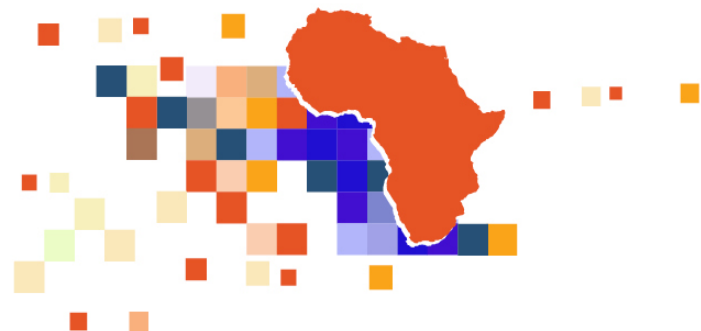
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5 key colloquium themes

- (1) what is evidence?
- (2) why is evidence important?
- (3) institutionalisation of evidence
- (4) homo evidence
- (5) networks, communication, & collaboration



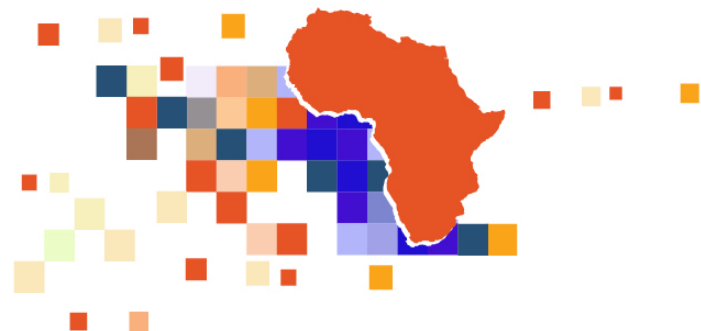
(1) what is evidence?

I love you

The tyranny of evidence?

DO YOU HAVE EVIDENCE
TO SUPPORT YOUR
Statement

- 'Research evidence doesn't have a monopoly on evidence'.
- There are many forms of evidence.
- Impact is not everything. What about contexts?
Generalisability?



(1) what is evidence?

Safeguarding rigour (& relevance)

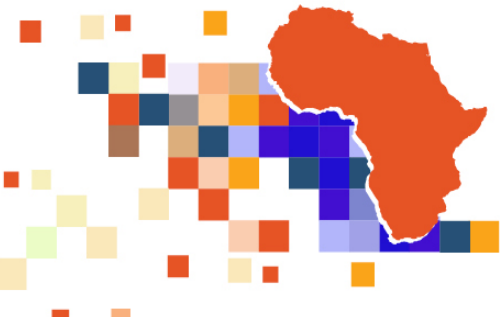
- Research evidence, anecdotes, and intuition
- The synthesised story is more convincing than the real story
- Context is not everything, but it's what we would want to know
- That said, always have a clear understanding of the evidence



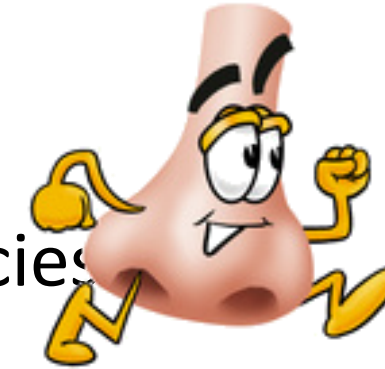
comprehensive

information as to

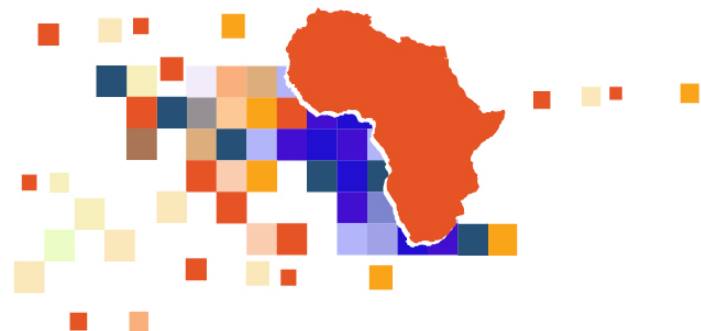
ensure to



(2) why evidence?



- Resources/cost-effectiveness (makes policies **efficient**)
- Ethics (elected to serve) (makes policies **effective & accountable**)
- Some interesting overheard pointers:
 - career/branding opportunity for public servants
 - life cycles of organisations/departments
 - evidence-informed policies more realistic to implement?



(3) institutionalisation of EIDM

- Systemic change not just individual.
- Caveat: isn't there an existing system of evidence use? (special advisors, lobby groups etc?)
 - By design selective in what evidence reaches decision-maker;
 - EIDM community task to highlight that this is an insufficient approach and to offer a different system of evidence use.



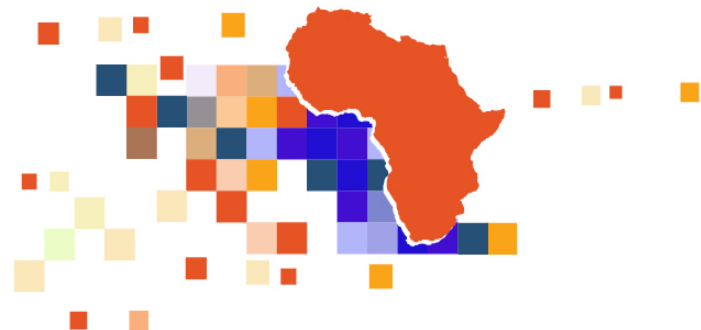
(3) institutionalisation of EIDM

Some hunches on how to incite this shift in mindsets:

- highlight the consequences of implementing policies without evidence
- Identify the 'hot' policy topics
- incentivize the constant use of evidence (built in performance assessments, promotion structures etc.)
- feedback loops mentioned as one tool for quick learning

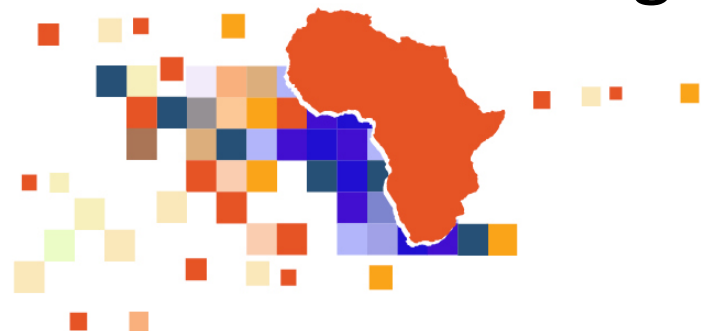
NB: Institutionalisation along the entire policy circle not just in design, also in implementation etc.

Ideally this would translate into a culture of EIDM.



3.5 culture of EIDM

- Internalized process of using evidence not just in institutions but also in individuals.
- Need a culture of learning and ability to admit mistakes in institutions and individuals.
- Use evidence not because we have to (not more rules) but because we want to as it seems 'the right thing to do'.

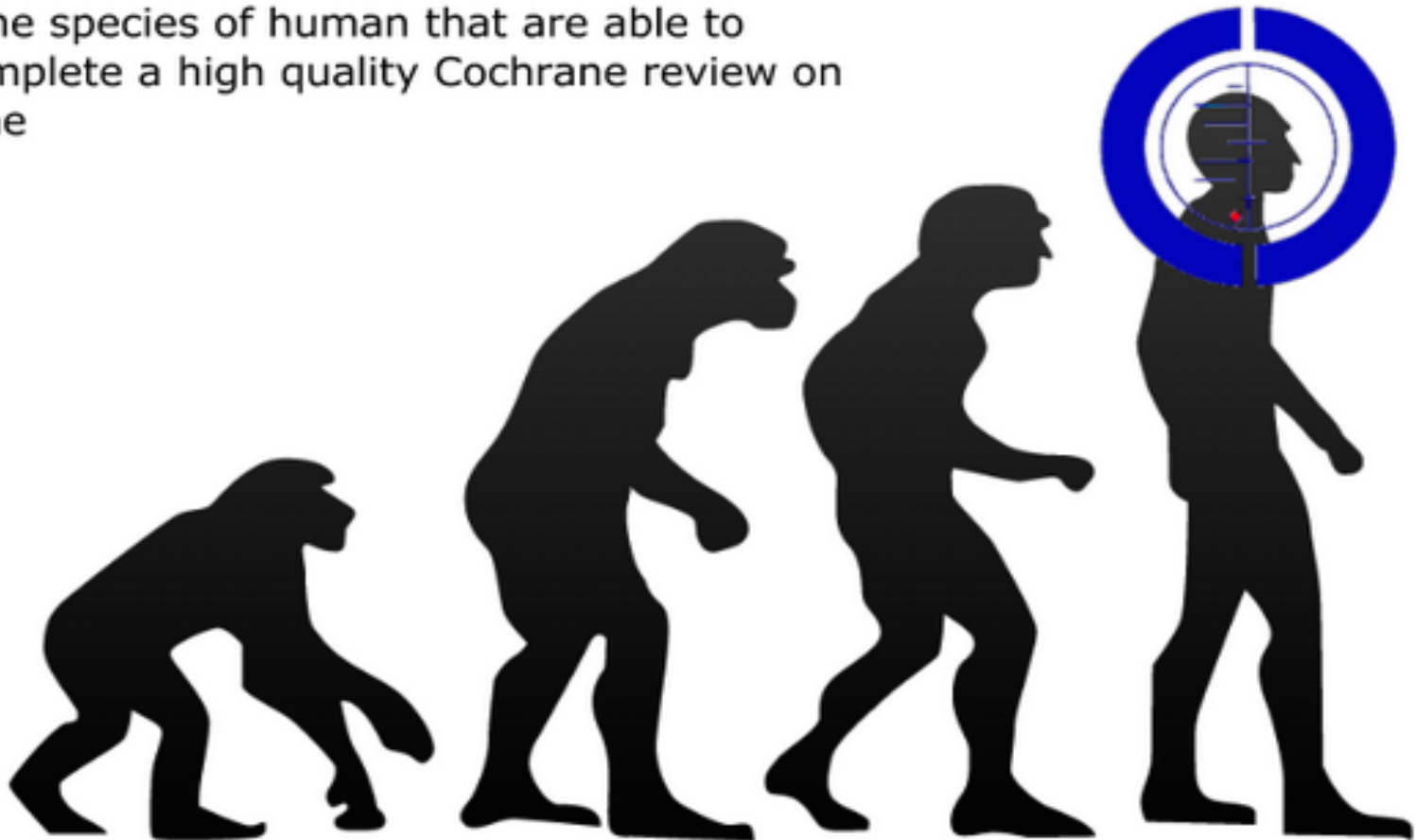


(4) homo evidence

Ho·mo Co·chra·ne

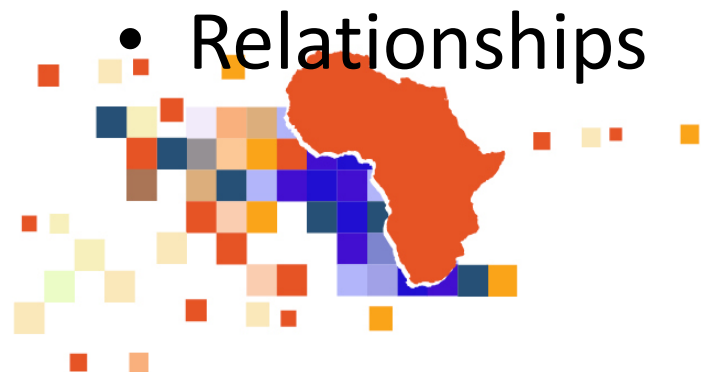
noun \,hō-(,)mō-'cō-krēn, especially British /

: the species of human that are able to complete a high quality Cochrane review on time



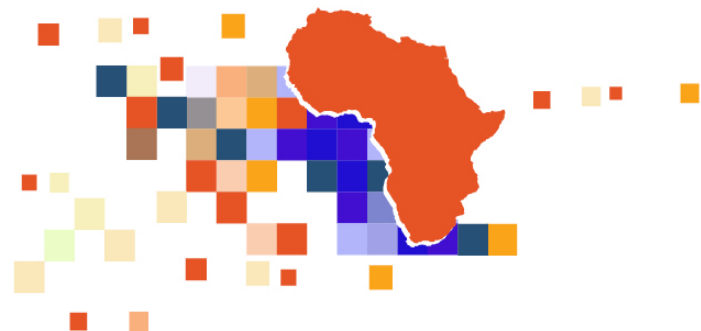
(5) networks, communication & collaboration

- Users and generators of evidence often don't understand each other.
- Requires effort and to leave our ivory towers & comfort zones.
- **Shared vision** and **desire for collaboration** because of **common challenges**.
- Relationships



Caveats

- Duplication of efforts
- On the focus on the individual: what if evidence message and public policies don't mix (e.g. drug policy, prostitution); be careful to not undermine democracy and civil society.
- How to create demand in practice?



Thank you very much!

- Collette Clark: ‘implementing evidence-free policies is as if one jumps out of a plane without a parachute’.

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BMJ 2003 ; 327 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.327.7429.1459> (Published 18 December 2003)

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