



AFRICA
EVIDENCE
NETWORK

Only together can evidence-
informed decision-making
become reality.

NEWSLETTER || June 2020

New, exciting direction for EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE!

As the **Africa Evidence Network (AEN)** secretariat, we are pleased to let you know that we have updated the **concept note** for our **biennial event**, the most diverse and innovative evidence-use gathering in the world. Remembering that the event will be **fully digital** this year, the event's sessions will dovetail with three special initiatives: a dedicated webpage for EIDM during COVID-19; a special blog series that permits reflections, opinions, and experiences related to the various aspects of COVID-19 on EIDM; and a focused webinar series to capture experiences, nuances, and challenges faced when perusing and appraising evidence to inform COVID-19 decision-making.



EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) has updated its concept note for its biennial event to become fully digital this year.

Photo: Africa Evidence Network secretariat (AEN)

The **Africa Evidence Network** secretariat is currently updating its online database of available resources, tools, guides, and opportunities for capacity building in evidence-informed decision-making in Africa. Kindly send the resources to Charity Chisoro on charityc@uj.ac.za. In sending us this information, you are agreeing that we can share the information within our online database.

Submit your individual, organisational, and community opinions and reflections on COVID-19 and evidence-informed decision-making as part of the **special blog series** recently launched by the **Africa Evidence Network**. We welcome submissions on current topics that are relevant to the continent.

Jessie Mphande, a research assistant at **African Institute for Development Policy**, mentions in her latest **blog** that in order to assess the impact of evidence-informed policy-making, it is essential to establish flexible procedures that can integrate diverse groupings of interventions, products, and the changing situation of the policy-making domain.

Frejus Thoto, the 2020 **Africa Evidence Leadership Award** winner, acknowledges in his **recent article** that the current COVID-19 pandemic has both negative and positive impacts. However, he encourages organisations to strengthen themselves by focusing on the positive aspects of this crisis, such as enhancing their capacities through enrolling in online courses that are relevant to the institution.

Putting the spotlight on...

... **an emerging organisation!** The National Council of People Living With HIV/AIDS (**NACOPHA**) is a nationally recognised organ responsible for coordinating efforts of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) in the national response in Tanzania, founded in 2003.

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

Mark your calendars

21-25 June: [Immersive Learning Research Network International Conference, online](#).

30 June: [Africa Evidence Webinar, online](#).

21-25 September: [EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE, online](#).

Read about how evidence can be used to reduce stigma for better livelihoods for people with disabilities at different levels, in this **month's blog** by Nain Mirabel and Patrick Okwen from **Effective Basic Services (eBASE)** Africa. View all blog posts **online** and use the Network to share your work – submit your AEN blog **here**.

The international development sector needs more “intravists”

Have you ever wondered what the new normal, will look like for the international development sector in the post-COVID-19 era? **Blessing Omakwu**, in a **recent article**, urges people in this sector to become “intravists”. She argues that for change to happen, different players from diverse sectors should collaborate and bring in their proficiency. The author mentions that ‘intravism’ encompasses internal efforts to change organisational structures, encouraging readers to focus their ‘intravism’ journey on policies, power, privilege, pay, and programs.



Equity in the international development sector can be achieved by having more intravists Intravism involves internal efforts to change organisational structures.

Photo: Fauxels from Pexels

INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

Howard White, in his latest **blog post**, argues that the COVID-19 pandemic is a chance to reconsider and restructure the way we have always done things in the past. For instance, there is an opportunity to reorganise schools and the education sector in an effective way by drawing on important lessons from systematic reviews. The author mentions that in the post-COVID-19 period, the world can be a better place if we ensure that our decisions are informed by evidence.

In a recent **blog post**, the **International Network for Advancing Science and Policy** conducted a survey that provides some insights into how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected Southern-based researchers. The data showed that there are several negative effects on researchers such as the potential lack of funding, delays in research, and limited ability to travel. However, it is encouraging to note that there is an increased opportunity for researchers to share their expertise through collaboration.

The **World Economic Forum** has published a **report** on the challenges and opportunities in the post-COVID-19 world. Although no individual or country is invulnerable to the effects of the pandemic, although not everyone is affected the same way, COVID-19 provides possibilities of developing stronger and more viable approaches to globalisation.

Hot off the press

Cash-Gibson et al: ‘A novel conceptual model and heuristic tool to strengthen understanding and capacities for health inequalities research’

Gustafsson et al: ‘Building capacity for the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services: Activities, fellows, outcomes, and neglected capacity building needs’

Pallett: ‘The new evidence-based policy: public participation between ‘hard evidence’ and democracy in practice’

Opportunities

- **Apply** for the African Doctoral Academy **Winter School** by 1 July.
- Applications for the **Aubrey Sheiham EBHC** in Africa Leadership Award open till 31 July.
- **Grant applications** by the **African World Heritage Fund** by 31 July.
- **Open call** to build resilient health systems through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond!