

Africa Evidence Network

NEWSLETTER || May 2015

SAMEA's Evaluation Management book launch

This month the South Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) launched a valuable evaluation resource, [Evaluation Management in South Africa and Africa](#). The book is a first of its kind to emerge and written within the African context. It covers the best M&E practices for purposes of systematic policy, programme and project evaluation. It is suitable for both professional M&E institutionalization and capacity building projects. As well as for evaluation information dissemination and education at different levels in the public, private and voluntary sectors in society, especially in a developmental context.



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An evaluation report on nutrition interventions for children under 5 is available [here](#) from the Department of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (DPME). This evaluation examined 18 nutrition interventions being implemented by various government departments. Dr Ian Goldman from DPME shares key findings that came out of the evaluation in his [interview](#) on POWER FM and in the Business Day [article](#).

A [new study](#) commissioned by the African Union and supported by the Malawian government reveals a devastating challenge that restricts Malawi's future development, which is child undernutrition. Malawi is estimated to have lost \$66.7m in 2012 alone, because of the reduced productivity of those who were stunted as children.

Caroline Heider's [blog post](#) featured on the [Independent Evaluation Group \(EIG\)](#) about her experiences on the process of evidence-based change, suggests that evaluation findings take time to stimulate change. She argues that evaluators can contribute to the debate by demonstrating patterns and trends but not to make change happen.

South Africa's [20 Year Review synthesis report](#) reflects the country's progress since democracy in 1994 and this report is informed by the [21 thematic background papers](#). These papers are written by the officials in the Presidency and other government departments. Research and other evidence were used to inform the progress that the country has made.

Evidence events

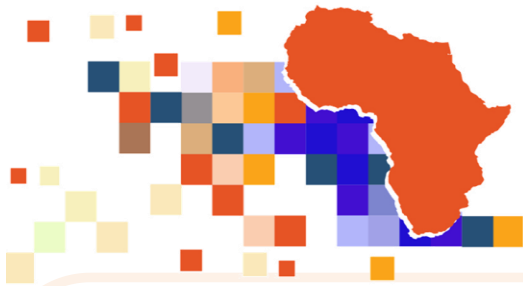
04 June: [Systematic review training in Egypt](#)

12-16 October: [South African Monitoring & Evaluation Association meeting](#)

Announcements

- UJ-BCURE will be hosting an EIDM workshop for our South African government partners on the 1st and 2nd of June at the Protea Manor Hotel in Pretoria. Dr Phil Davies from 3ie will be facilitating.
- DFID call for proposals & market engagement event: ['Improving Communication of Research and Evidence for Development \(ICRED\)'](#)

The INASP-led BCURE Vaka Yiko project is featured on the latest [AEN blog post](#). The blog looks at the effectiveness of the evidence-informed policy making (EIPM) training course piloted in Ghana. VakaYiko's approach in Ghana focuses on embedding EIPM training within existing internal structures in government. AEN blog submission are welcome on our [website](#).



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DEFRA's ten years of experience with evidence strategies pays off

The United Kingdom (UK)'s department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has documented their ten years' experience in their working paper titled: ['Investing in Evidence: Lessons from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs'](#). This is ground-breaking knowledge about investing evidence in policymaking. Key themes that come out of the paper is firstly the adoption of a systematic approach to improving how the institution sources and uses evidence to inform policymaking. Secondly, the implementation of two five-year processes ensured that the resources DEFRA invested were better directed towards both long and short-term policy goals. These strategies also helped to improve the transparency of the debates around evidence for environmental policy making. Louise Shaxson a research fellow from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is the author of the paper and she is featured on the [Knowledge Sector Indonesia \(KSI\) Podcast Series](#) where she explains how DEFRA has been implementing the evidence based approach.



INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

INASP's Sue Corbett shares the need for ['Bridging the research knowledge divide'](#) by equipping researchers from developing countries with writing skills. This is achieved through their evidence-informed policymaking activities, e.g. training and mentorship. The reason for investing in these countries is that economies are growing at a fast pace. Therefore, research use and knowledge in decision-making are critical parts of development.

Data revolution is a new phenomenon that statisticians need to be mindful of. According to an [Oxfam blog](#), this phenomenon is manifested by the increasing availability of non-official sources of statistics in addition to the common official sources. If properly managed, non-official sources of statistics may serve as supplement to the official sources. Data revolution's success, therefore, depends on merging the two sources of statistics.

3ie experts have published a paper titled ['The growth of impact evaluation for international development: how much have we learned?'](#). This paper examines content that covers three decades of published impact evaluations of international development interventions from 3ie's Impact Evaluation Repository (IER). The methods used to collect data were a systematic search and screening process. This assisted in analyzing trends of 2259 impact evaluations including publication rates over time, by sector, region and publication type.

Evidence from academia

[Angelucci et al](#): 'Programme evaluation and spillover effects'

[Cameron et al](#): 'The growth of impact evaluation for international development: how much have we learned?'

[L. Langer](#): 'Sport for development – a systematic map of evidence from Africa'

[Legovini et al](#): 'Impact evaluation helps deliver development projects'

A useful tool for evaluators by Elissa Schloesser: How to use [infographics](#) to make your evaluation results go viral.

