

New network to fight COVID-19 with evidence

The **COVID-19 Evidence Network** (COVID-END) aims to support a synchronised evidence-informed response to the COVID-19 pandemic while steering clear of duplication of efforts. This collaboration between various organisations – including the **Africa Centre for Evidence**, the **McMaster Health Forum**, the **Ottawa Hospital Research Institute**, and **others** – works to continuously update a **guide** to COVID-19 evidence sources. The Network hopes to support decision-makers in finding the best-available evidence for a particular sector and emphasises the use of high-quality and synthesised evidence for decision-making.



Inform COVID-19 decisions with easy to access evidence

The COVID-19 Evidence Network has compiled a list of evidence resources to support evidence-use in decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photo: McMaster Health Forum

Gilbert Nakweya recently wrote an **article** on collaboration among governments, donors, the private sector, civil society, and higher education institutions in Africa to support the continent's capacity to generate and use evidence to address COVID-19. This initiative promotes evidence-based decision-making on COVID-19 on the continent through timely and accurate data on the pandemic.

Colleagues from the **Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results-Anglophone Africa** (CLEAR-AA) published a **learning note** on strengthening African monitoring and evaluation systems through country-based programmes. They focus on CLEAR - the successes, challenges, and recommendations from their in-country programmes.

The **African Academy of Sciences** (AAS) issued a **report** recently about the research goals for COVID-19 in Africa to contribute to the knowledge essential to inform current pandemic mitigation policies. Using open-source methods and scientific community engagement, AAS recorded the views of experts and specialists on the continent.

Ventures Africa argues that Africa can overcome COVID-19 by striking a **balance** between social and economic needs. They argue that governments should not rely on "one-size-fits-all" policies but rather should base their decisions on evidence and in collaboration with the society.

Putting the spotlight on...

...**a new member!** Loselo Segwe, a socio-economic development theorist and PhD student joined the AEN because he wants to promote the use of evidence in sustainable development.

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

Mark your calendars

26 May: [Going digital: What we have learnt about online capacity development, online.](#)

1-5 June: [gLOCAL Evaluation Week, online.](#)

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

This month's **blog** is actually **three!** We're featuring three blog **posts** by our network POs that form part of a forthcoming blog series focussing on COVID-19.

View all blog posts **online** and use the Network to share your work – submit your AEN blog **here**.

Platform on COVID-19 makes evidence more accessible

The **International Severe Acute Respiratory and Emerging Infections Consortium** (ISARIC) hosts a portfolio of resources to accelerate COVID-19 research and collaborative evidence generation. Case report forms, developed in collaboration with the **World Health Organisation**, are available on the **platform**. These resources enable the standardised collection of data to address critical questions on patient care and public health response. Researchers can enter and export data within a centralised, supported database while retaining ownership and control of their data. High-level aggregate reports of global data are also made publicly available on a weekly basis. Read the **latest report** and contact ncov@isaric.org to participate.



COVID-19 clinical research resources

This is a portfolio of resources developed by ISARIC to accelerate outbreak research and response.

Photo: The International Severe Acute Respiratory and Emerging Infections Consortium | ISARIC

INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

A recent **blog** by **Jonathan Breckon**, the director of the **Alliance for Useful Evidence**, emphasises how the current COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the use and communication of evidence by highlighting seven trends that have emerged as a result of this pandemic. He mentions the need to use evidence for evidence communication when people eventually return to work after the lockdown has been lifted.

A recent **article** in the **Gulf Times** has highlighted the need to rethink and reshape the education sector in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic. In a post-coronavirus world, it will not be possible to go back to "business as usual" when it comes to universal education. As such, the authors argue, everyone is liable for the transformation and thinking process of doing things differently.

Vivian Tseng, the senior vice president at **William T Grant Foundation** writes a **blog** acknowledging the challenges that the current COVID-19 crisis brings but also mentions that the current situation creates an opportunity for change, and a responsibility to support equity-centred and evidence-informed decision-making. She reflects on how the social science research community, funders, and governments can collaborate with each other to learn from COVID-19 and rebuild a better world in the future.

Hot off the press

Buffardi & Njambi-Szapka: 'Questions for future evidence-informed policy initiatives: insights from the evolution and aspirations of National Immunisation Technical Advisory Groups'

Hollingworth et al: 'What do we need to know? Data sources to support evidence-based decisions using health technology assessment in Ghana'

Shaxson & Boaz: 'Understanding policymakers' perspectives on evidence use as a mechanism for improving research-policy relationships'

Opportunities

- Call for **PhD fellowships** applications close 31 May.
- Send in **nominations** by 1 June for experts to participate in a workshop on biodiversity and pandemics.
- Seven **calls for proposals** are open for emergency funding of COVID-19 research!
- The **International Network for Advancing Science and Policy** is recruiting: **apply now**.