Science Advice has a role in policy-making

Last month, the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and the International Network for Government Science Advice, with support from the International Development Research Centre, designed a series of science advice workshops for policy-makers and scientists in Ethiopia in order to comprehend, acknowledge and upskill participants in how to facilitate evidence-informed policy-making. Nasreen Jessani, head of strategy for the Africa Evidence Network at the Africa Centre for Evidence spoke about the political and technical complexities of science advice and its dependence upon relationships and trust.

Dr Mamudu Akudugu, the Deputy Director of the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research and Consultancy Service, recommends the use of evidence-based policies to accomplish inclusive development in the country. The Ghana Inclusive Development Research Network and the United Nations Emergency Fund are working together to promote research on inclusive development in Ghana.

Young women scientists from Africa are keen to be global leaders in science despite obstacles such as male dominance and societal barriers, says a recent article by Ochieng Ogodo. Promoting women to become scientists can assist Africa in dealing with developmental issues, argues Ogodo.

The use of informed decisions is crucial to attain sustainable economic growth, and this prompted the World Bank to introduce two tools in Tanzania to promote this initiative. One of these tools is the Survey of Well-being via Instant and Frequent Tracking (SWIFT), which keeps track of World Bank's mission to end extreme poverty and enhance mutual success.

The Zambian Statistics Agency Interim Statistician General Mulenga Musepa pointed out that it is crucial to strengthen accountability and evidence-based policy-making in development planning, arguing that strengthened accountability would produce high quality development results. Musepa highlights the need for government to enhance its monitoring and evaluation structures.

Putting the spotlight on...

... an emerging organisation!

Priority Cost-Effective Lessons for System Strengthening in South Africa (PRICELESS SA) is a Southern African institution that provides economic evidence to enable prioritisation of health interventions. PRICELESS SA is responsible for research evidence that demonstrates how to enhance health and life expectancy in Africa. Want to spotlight you or your organisation? Let us know and you could be featured!

Mark your calendars

2-6 December: Cochrane Santiago virtual conference, Online.
4-6 December: Science Forum, Pretoria, South Africa.

Members from the African Population and Health Research Center write this month’s blog on confronting the challenges in collecting and using data in Africa. View all blog posts online and use the Network to share your work – submit your AEN blog here.

AEN is supported by the Africa Centre for Evidence at the University of Johannesburg
www.africaevidencenetwork.org
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

It is important for researchers and governments to work together to ensure that policies are always informed by evidence, says Gautam Patel of Abdul Jameel Latif Poverty Action Lab, South Asia in his latest article. He shares four principles of collaboration which include facilitating personalised dialogue and a deep intelligence of local context.

In a recent blog post on From Poverty to Power, Pierre Basimise Ngalishi Kanyegere introduces, and highlights the risks of, the ‘NGO-isation of academic research’. He argues that this shift in the loci of focus from an academic discipline has a few dangers, including the experience of research participants only sharing relevant information when receiving compensation. Kanyegere argues that such practices can compromise the quality of research findings.

In Canada, a new model for healthcare promotes a shared decision-making approach which stimulates patient participation in health decisions. The approach is unique because it promotes indigenous values to ensure that patients receive the best treatment. In this model, there is collaboration amongst the healthcare providers and patients, where they use evidence-based mechanisms and approaches to make evidence-informed decisions about their own healthcare.

Hot off the press

Langlois et al: ‘Embedding implementation research to enhance health policy and systems: a multi-country analysis from ten settings in Latin America and the Caribbean’

Verrecchia et al: ‘Building operational public health capacity through collaborative networks of National Public Health Institutes’

Zomahoun et al: ‘The pitfalls of scaling up evidence-based interventions in health’

Opportunities

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- Call for PhD applications open: apply now
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- Apply: research positions available at Givewell