

Africa Evidence Webinar 7

*Spotlighting capacity enhancement activities, networks,
and opportunities across EIDM organisations in Africa: an
AEN study*

GoToMeeting Online Platform, 14:00-15:15 (UCT +2), 30 June 2020

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



Africa Evidence Webinar 7

Chair:

Siziwe Ngcwabe, Head of Operations, Africa Evidence Network

Speakers:

Dr Linda Etale, Researcher, Africa Evidence Network, South Africa

Dr Nasreen Jessani, Head of Strategy, Africa Evidence Network, South Africa



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Impetus for the study

- To understand the scope of work on **EIDM** across 90 **organisations in Africa**, their reach, their activities and how scale can be met through engagement with the AEN

GOAL



- To explore the **capacities** and **activities** of African EIDM organisations
- To explore potential **synergies** for collaboration with the AEN
- To speak to **senior members** of the organisations (irrespective of AEN membership status)

AIM



In a nutshell, we wanted to:



Better understand the organisations within the African EIDM ecosystem



Capture information on existing capacities and capacity sharing endeavours across these organisations



Document perceived interest and opportunities in institutional collaborations with the AEN



Learn from other networks



Explore the feasibility of institutional memberships (benefits and challenges)



Utilize data to identify opportunities for the AEN



Document and share results with the wider AEN community

Qualitative Approach

6 Sep-2 Oct 2019 6 Sep-10 Dec 2019 11 Dec -27 May 2020 03 Feb-30 Jun 2020



Respondent selection

Organisation Inclusion Criteria

- Based in **Africa**
- Amongst the 250 orgs identified by a previous ACE study
- Core mandate is **EID/PM**

Organisation Exclusion criteria

Unless there is a specific programme of work around EIDM or supporting the use of evidence in their core mandate



Research councils



Research consultancies and think tanks



Government departments



Research centres and units

Individuals Selection



Purposive & snowball sampling



Inclusion & exclusion criteria

Mid-to- senior level management
Respondent need not be an AEN member if above criteria met

Targets & responses



90

organizations were targeted



32

organizations participated



252

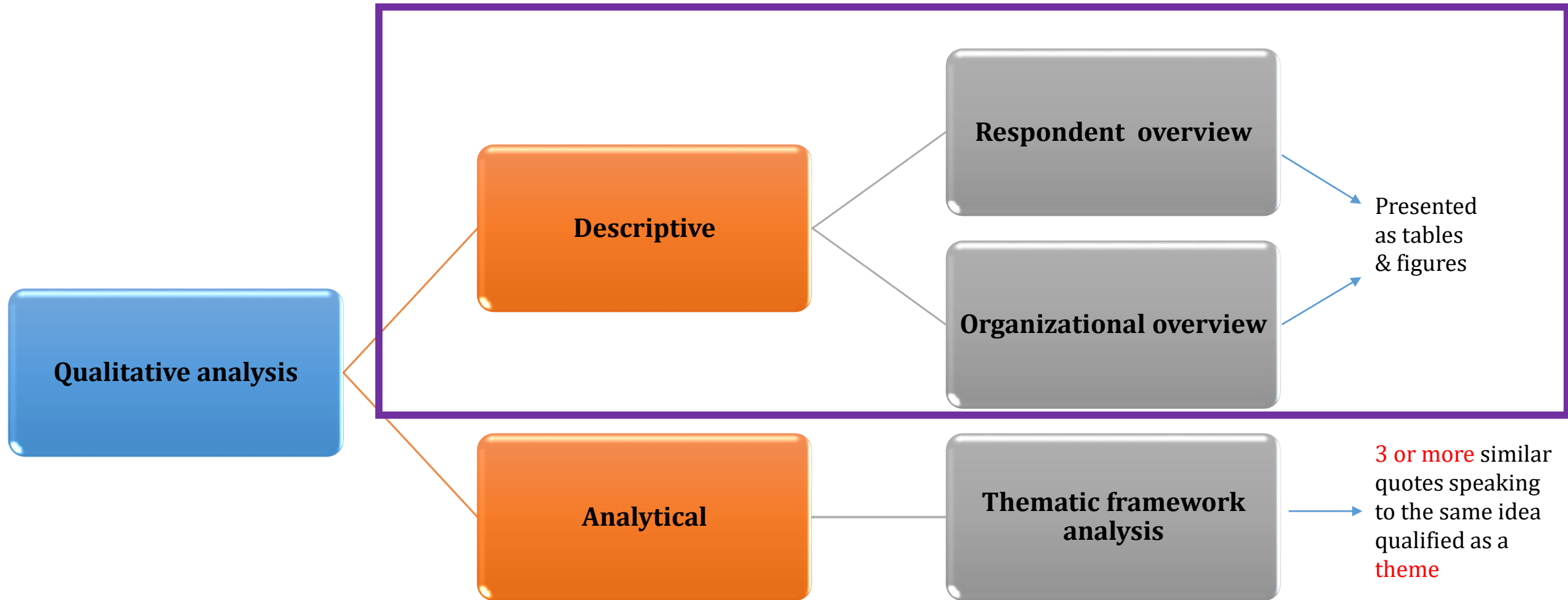
individuals targeted



36

individuals participated

Making sense of the data collected



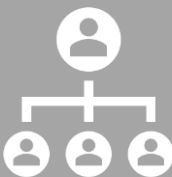
Respondent Demographics

Response overview



Interviews:
252 invitations sent out;
80 responses were received.

Out of the 80, 66 were positive responses with **36** interviews conducted.

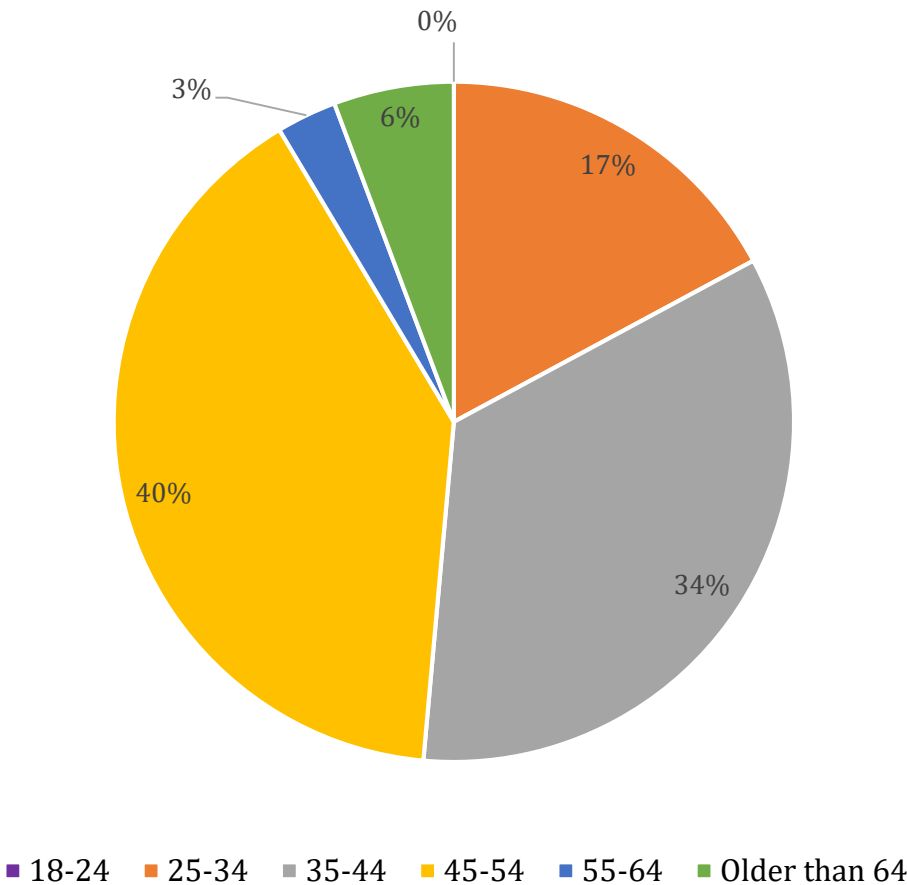


Respondents' position:
7/36 (19 %) identified as either director/team leader
6/36 (17%) identified as ED/CEO/DG respectively.

None identified themselves as an advisor or general secretary.

9/36 (25%) identified as other

Age of respondents (n=35)



There was no respondent for the 18-24 years category

Sex of respondents



60% (21/35) 40% (14/35)

Membership status

23
(64%) out of 36
were AEN members

Organisations that participated in the study

Africa Centre for Evidence	Centre for Social Research, University of Malawi	In On Africa
African Development Bank	Collaboration for Environmental Evidence (CEE) - Johannesburg	Kenya Medical Research Institute
African Leadership Centre	Collaboration for Evidence Based Health Care in Africa	Nigerian Academy of Science
Association Senegalaise d'Evaluation (SenEval)	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries	Office of the Prime Minister-Directorate of Monitoring, Evaluation & Inspection (Uganda)
Cameroon Centre for Evidence Based Health Care	Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation	PACKS Africa
Centre d'Actions pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable (ACED)	Effective Basic Services (eBASE)	Policy Action Network (Human Sciences Resources Council)
Center for Development in Research and Evaluation International Africa	Ethiopian Evaluation Association	South Africa Medical Research Council
Centre for Evidence Based Health Care (Stellenbosch University)	Ethiopian Evidence Based Health Care Centre, Jimma University	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
Centre for Health Policy (University of Witwatersrand)	Ethiopian Public Health Institute	The Ghana Monitoring and Evaluation Forum
Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR) - Anglophone Africa (AA)	Evaluation Society of Kenya (ESK)	Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS) West Africa Capacity-building and Impact Evaluation (WACIE)
	(Health Systems Research Unit) South Africa Medical Research Council	

32

Organisations

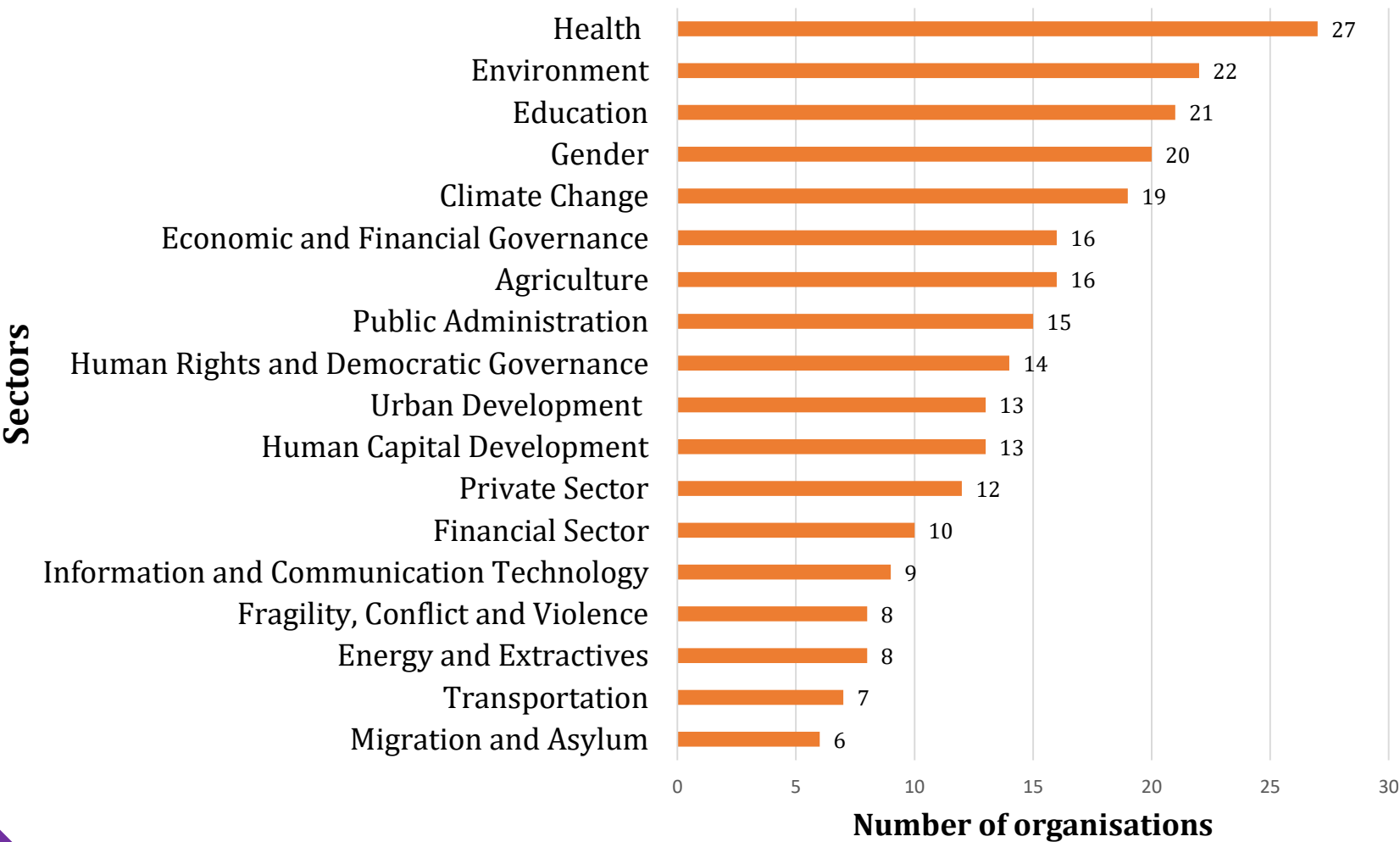


10 embedded within another organisation

22 stand-alone

4 networks & 3 associations amongst the 32

Reported sector engagement (k=32)

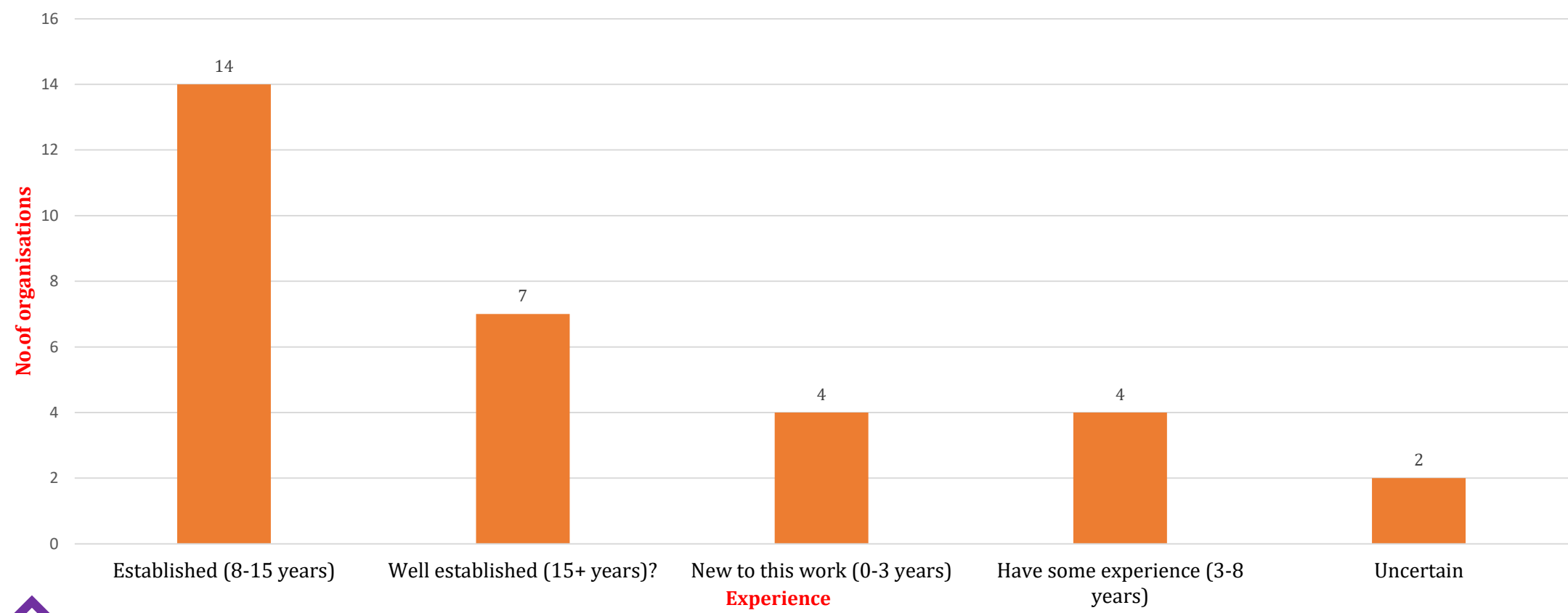


Other

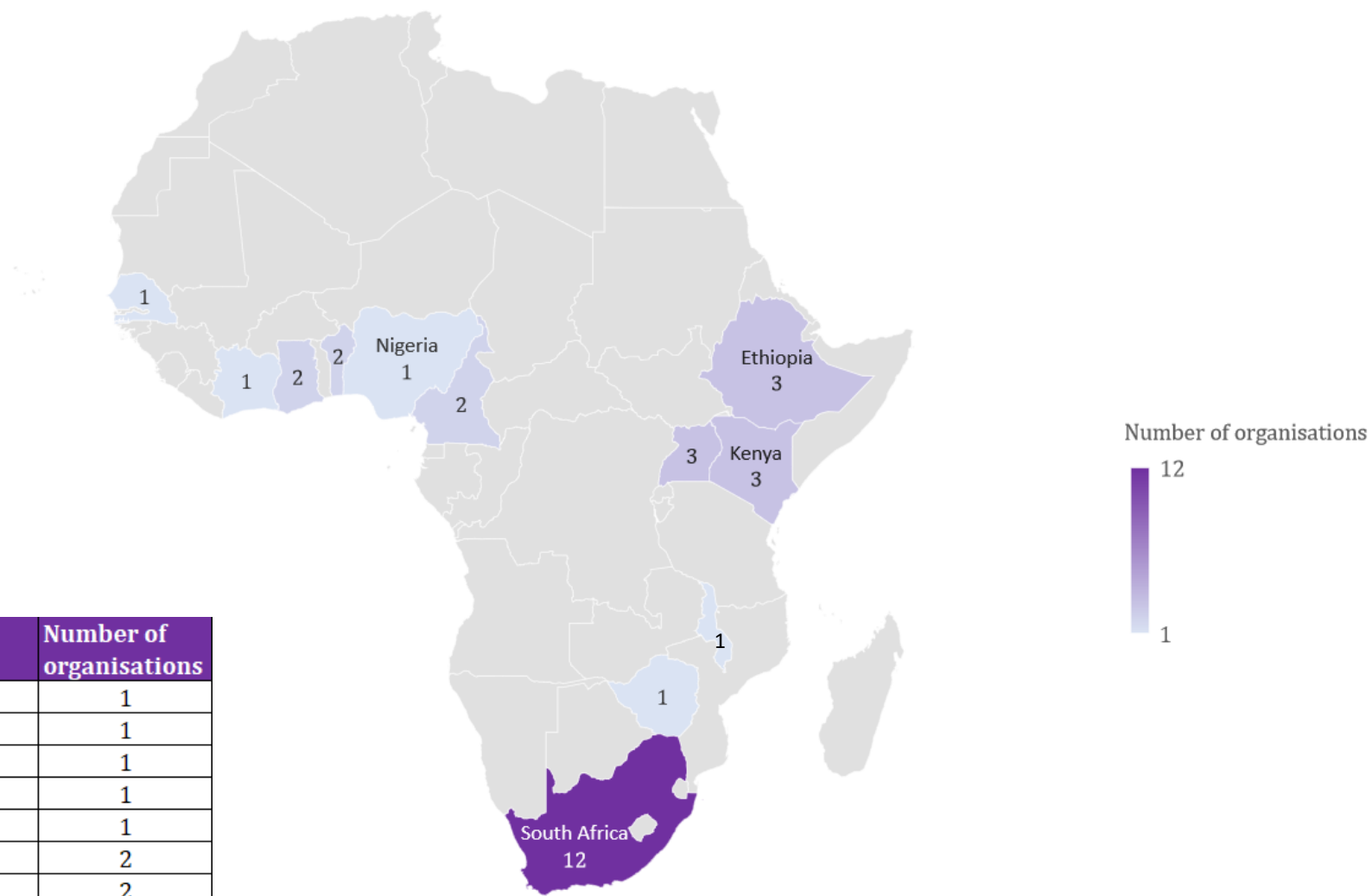
- Coordinating M&E for entire government
- Refugee response
- Disaster preparedness and management
- Strategic affirmative action
- Monitoring, evaluation & Learning
- Research methodologies and mechanisms for EIDM
- Leadership as an academic pursuit
- Children and youth sector
- Social Welfare
- Institutionalization of evaluation in government systems

NB: several mentioned above denote technical engagements rather than sector identification

Organisations' experience in the field of EIDM (k=32)



Primary organisational location (k=32)



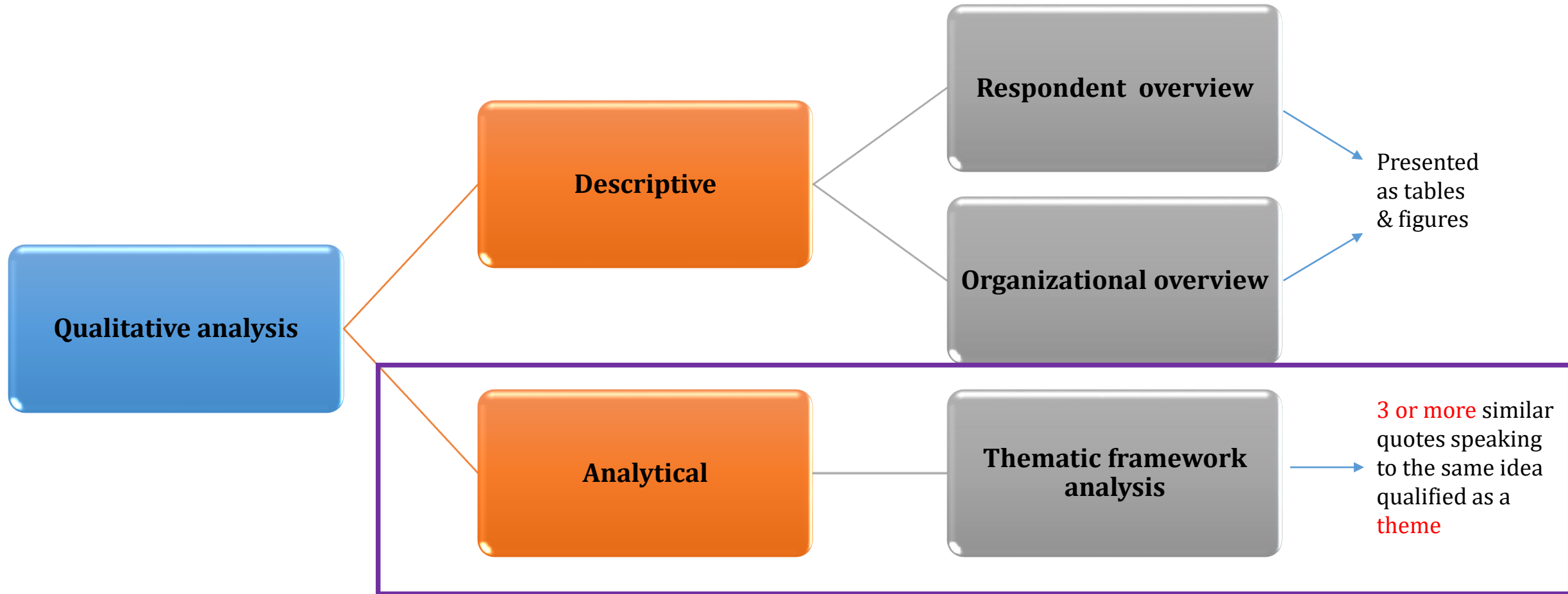
Country	Number of organisations
Zimbabwe	1
Côte d'Ivoire	1
Malawi	1
Senegal	1
Nigeria	1
Ghana	2
Benin	2
Cameroon	2
Ethiopia	3
Uganda	3
Kenya	3
South Africa	12

12
countries

21
out 28 (23%) org's
indicated that they were
members of one or more
networks/associations

7
out 30 (23%) org's
indicated that they were
a network (4)/
association (3)

Making sense of the data collected

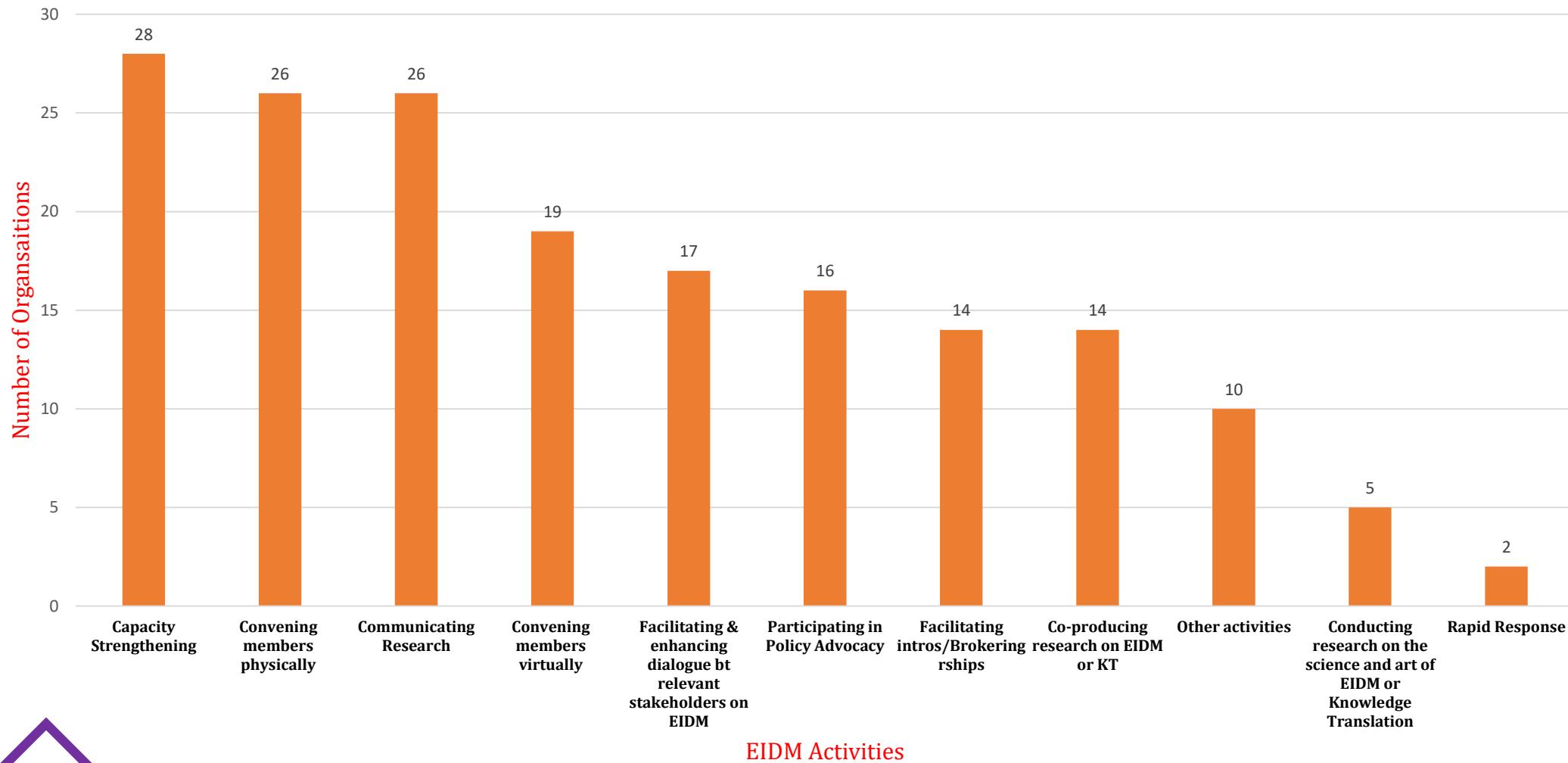


Interview questions

EIDM capacity enhancement	Engaging with the AEN	EIDM Networks and associations
What kind of activities that enhance evidence use in decision-making does your organization engage in?	Elaborate on how the AEN might support your work towards increasing the use of evidence in decision-making?	Who does the network or association “ serve ”? (e.g. researchers, decision-makers, community activists, advocacy groups)
What factors enable your organization’s capacity development activities?	How can the AEN capitalize from your strengths and capacities as an organization?	How would you describe the network’s or association’s core functions ?
What factors constrain your organization’s capacity development activities?	How can the AEN collaborate further with your organization to achieve our shared goals?	Please mention the TWO most important barriers to the network or association’s functioning.
What do you consider to be the key priorities around EIDM capacity development that AEN could support at the individual level, organizational , & network level?		Please mention the TWO most important enablers of the Network’s or association’s functioning.

Capacity Development Activities ($k=32$)

Activities that enhance evidence use in decision-making in organisations (k=32)



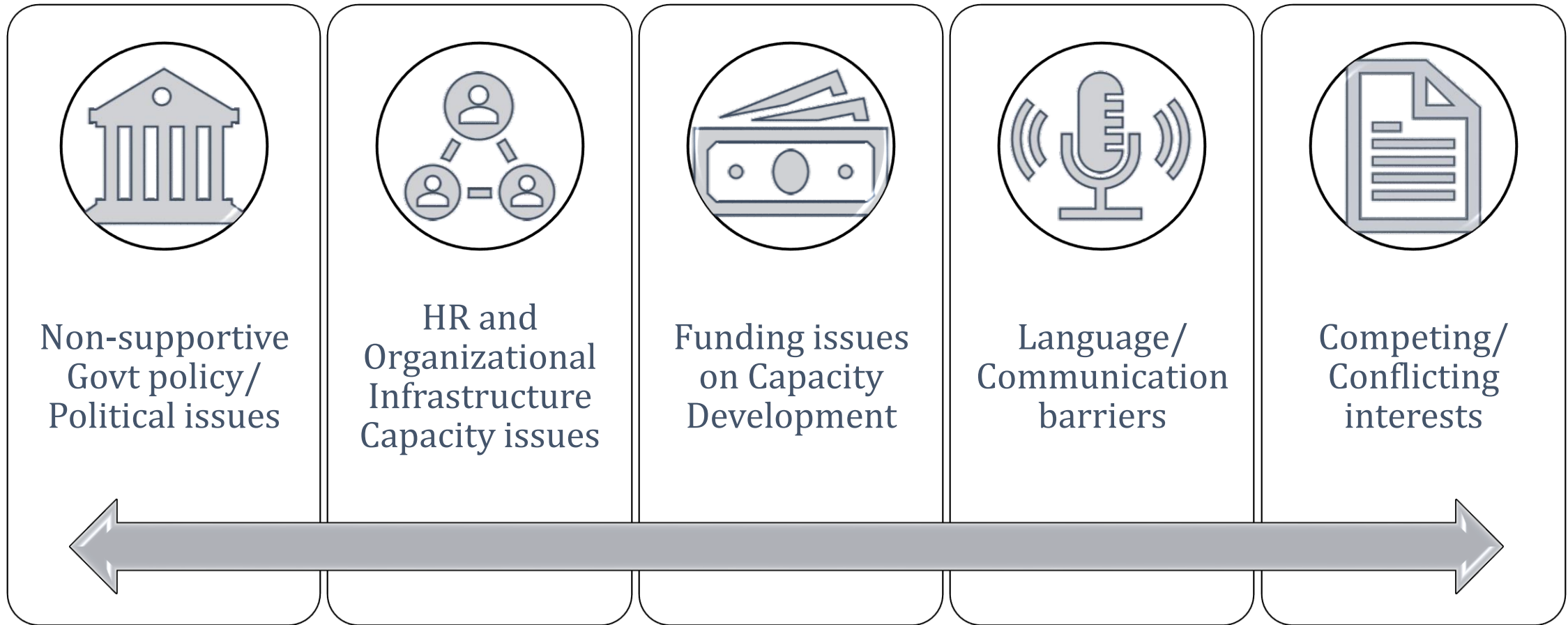
Other activities:

- Evaluation of projects and programs
- Undertaking evidence synthesis and evidence mapping (co-producing),
- Developing tools for evidence uptake and implementation.

Factors that **enable** organisations' capacity development activities



Factors that **constrain** organisations' capacity development activities



Enhancing the African EIDM Ecosystem together

Recommendations around EIDM capacity development that AEN could support at the **individual, organisation, and network levels**

Individual
Learning from and celebrating an African EIDM Culture
Capacity Enhancement of all involved in EIDM (researchers and decision-makers)
Communication Enhancement/ Embracing Non Traditional Communication
M&E as part of EIDM
Purposeful Networking & collaborations
Awareness Creation on EIDM
Organisational
Institutionalization of EIDM
Policy advocacy and EIDM/ Creating demand
Capacity to support prioritization and tracing/evaluating of E2P
Communication & EIDM/ KT
Learning, sharing and collaborating
Purposeful Networking & Collaboration

Virtual Engagement

- Website
- Learning hub
- blogs
- webinars,
- Africa Evidence Week
- Online festivals

In-person Engagement

- Evidence 2014,16,18
- meetings

Research & Reflection

- ACE Geo-map
- member surveys
- SoC
- Org Research Study

Special Initiatives

- Language translation (French)
- African Evidence Leadership Award

Social Media

- Twitter, LinkedIn

Network
Engaging with Policy Advocacy
Sustainability of networks/Assns. Incl. membership
Awareness creation, Learning & Sharing
How AEN can enhance its own role, governance, communication, etc.
Resource mobilization/ Funding
Partnerships and collaborations

How can the AEN support organizations' EIDM activities? (areas of synergy)



Platform for
communication &
marketing



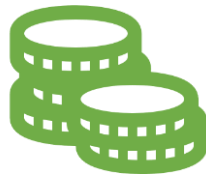
Platform for Accessing
experts



Platform for building
relationships and
collaboration



Platform for Capacity
development &
opportunities



Platform for Financial
Resource mobilisation



Platform for Learning and
experience sharing



Inititiatives for recognition
(awards)

How can other EIDM organisations support the AEN? (**leveraging** strengths and capacities)

The organizations with different capacities offered to:



help make connections in
Francophone countries



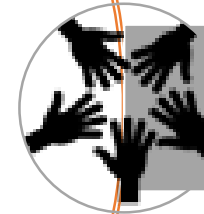
provide resources such as
guidelines & tools in specific
fields



provide expertise e.g. M&E and
EIDM



share lessons on policy
advocacy in a fairly-politically
restricted environment



work with others in
resource mobilisation



share opportunities &
information e.g. funding,
collaborations, training

Opportunities for mutual capacity sharing



Mentor & host students as we benefit from human resource



Facilitate conferences & meetings that AEN has organized, e.g. sessions of Evidence Conferences



Speak to each other when developing and disseminating products, e.g. evidence maps



Co-designing advocacy agenda/strategy around evidence use

EIDM NETWORK QUESTIONS

Why include & understand networks and Associations?



Reality about dealing with disperse set of members, not about their legal status.



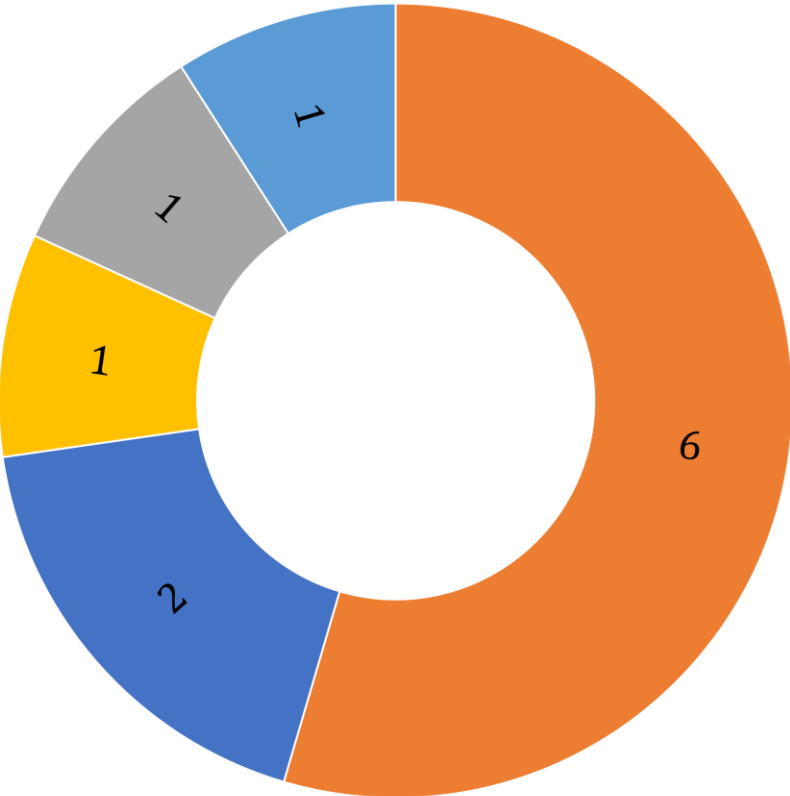
To learn from their experiences including their enabling and constraining factors



Identify similarities between the AEN and these associations & networks if any

Membership Diversity of the Networks/Associations (n=7)

Local National Regional Continental Global



- 4 Networks
- 3 Associations

Highest

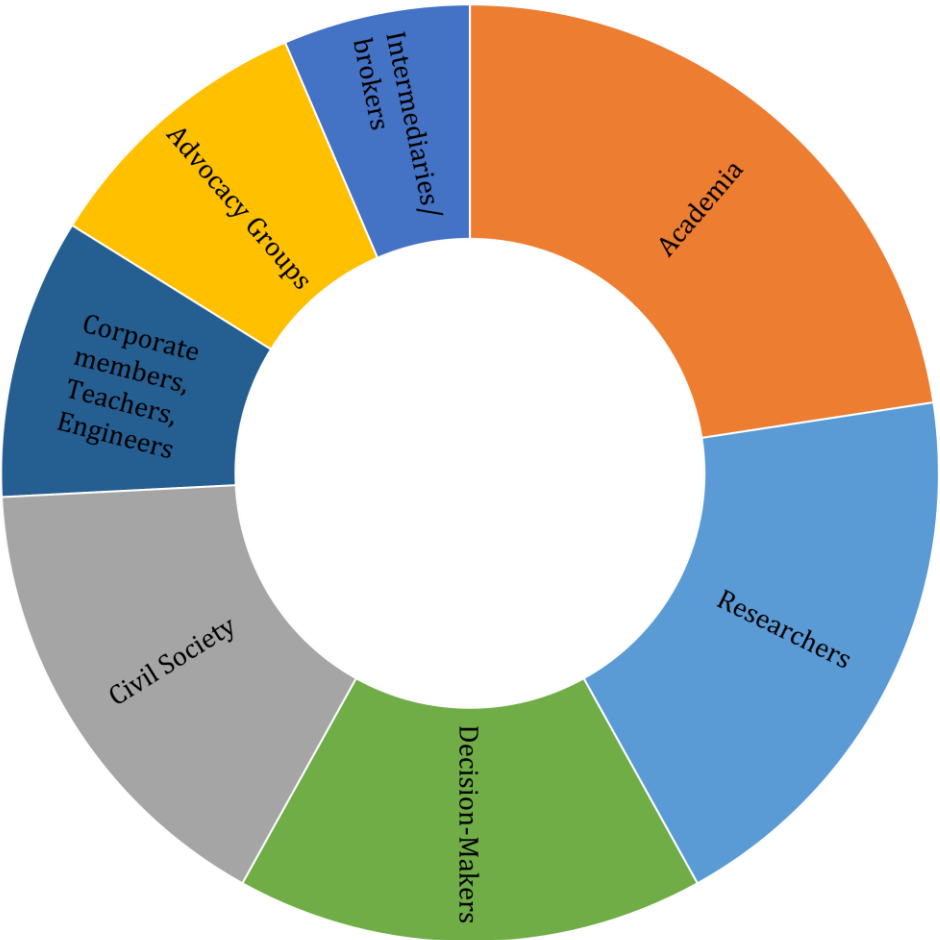
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Orgs' indicated membership consisted of academia

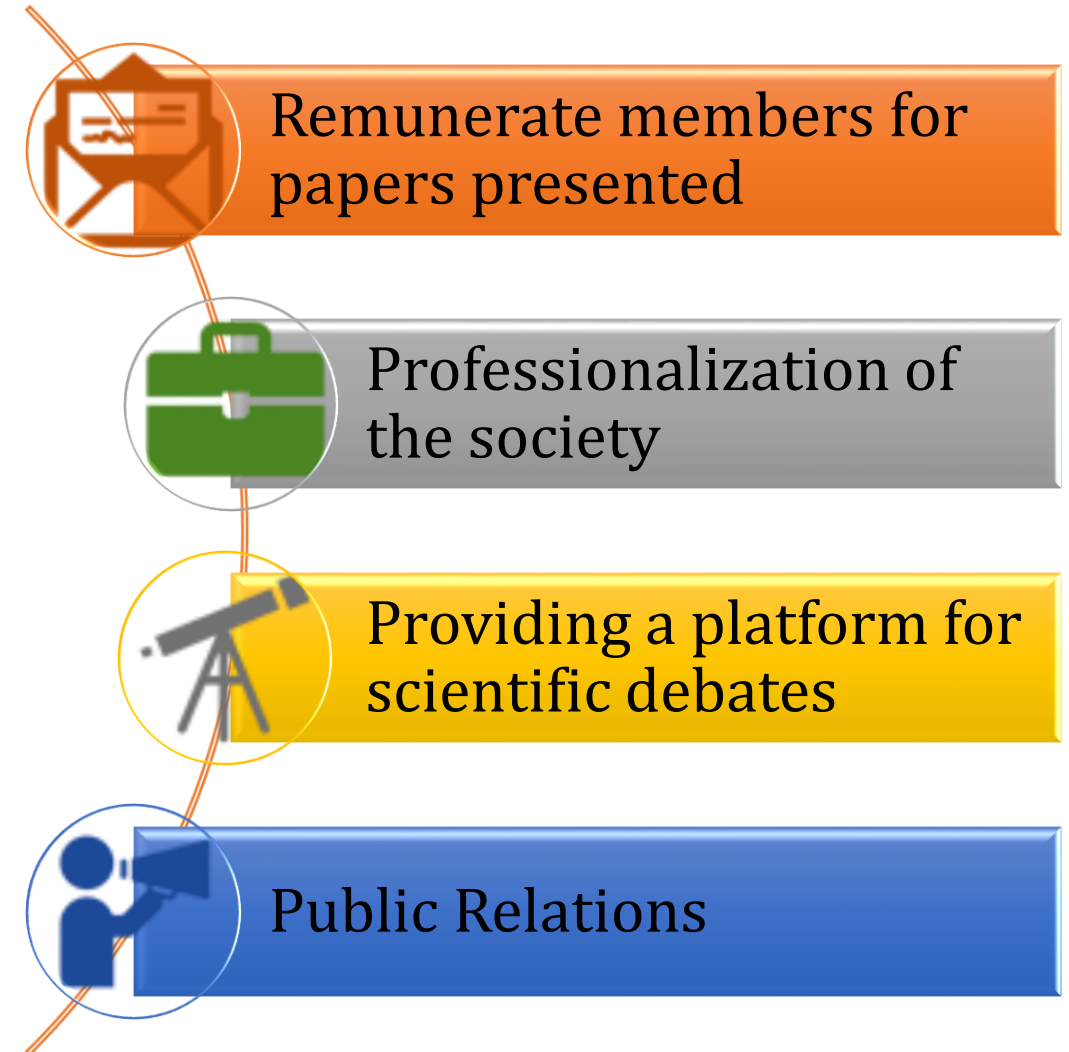
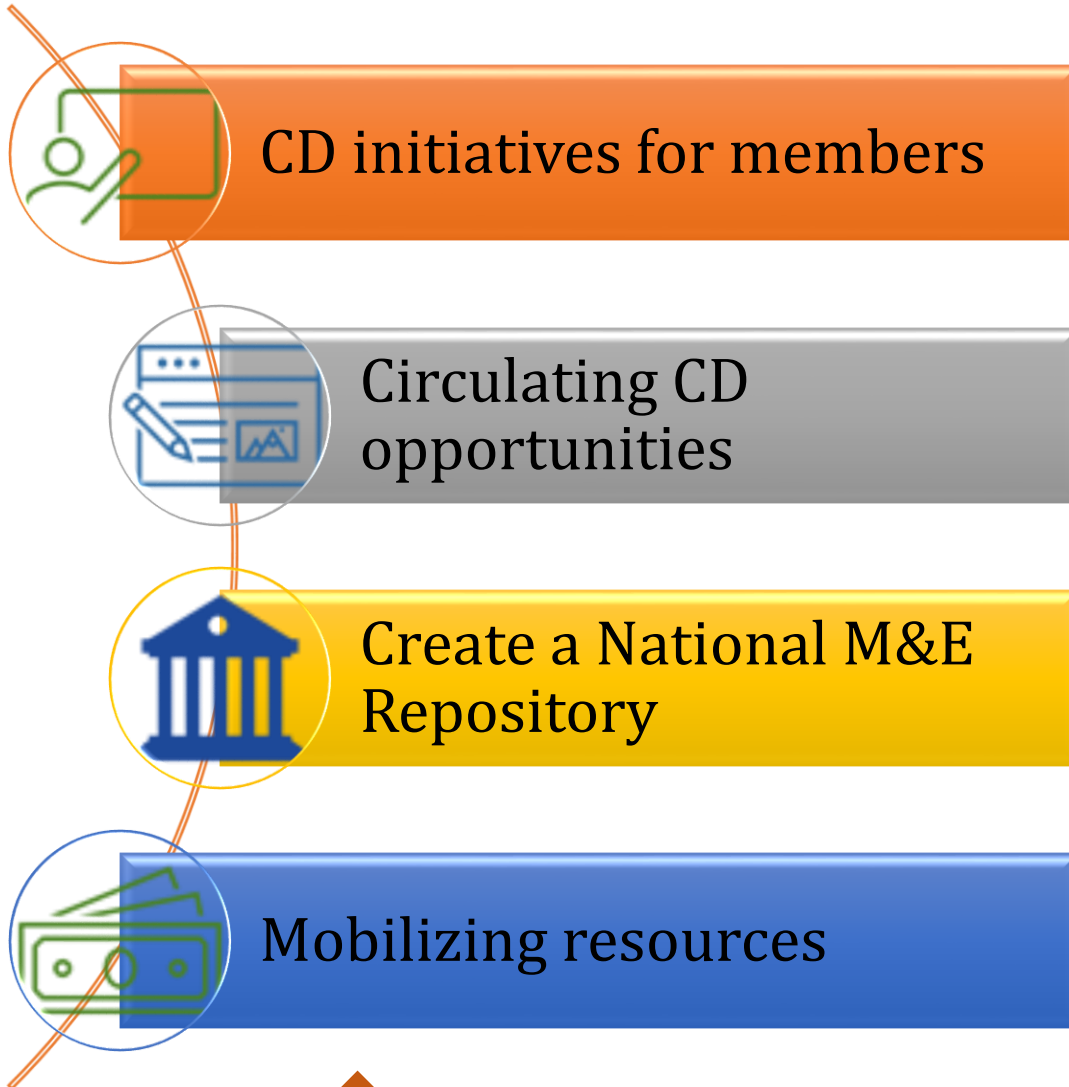
Lowest

2

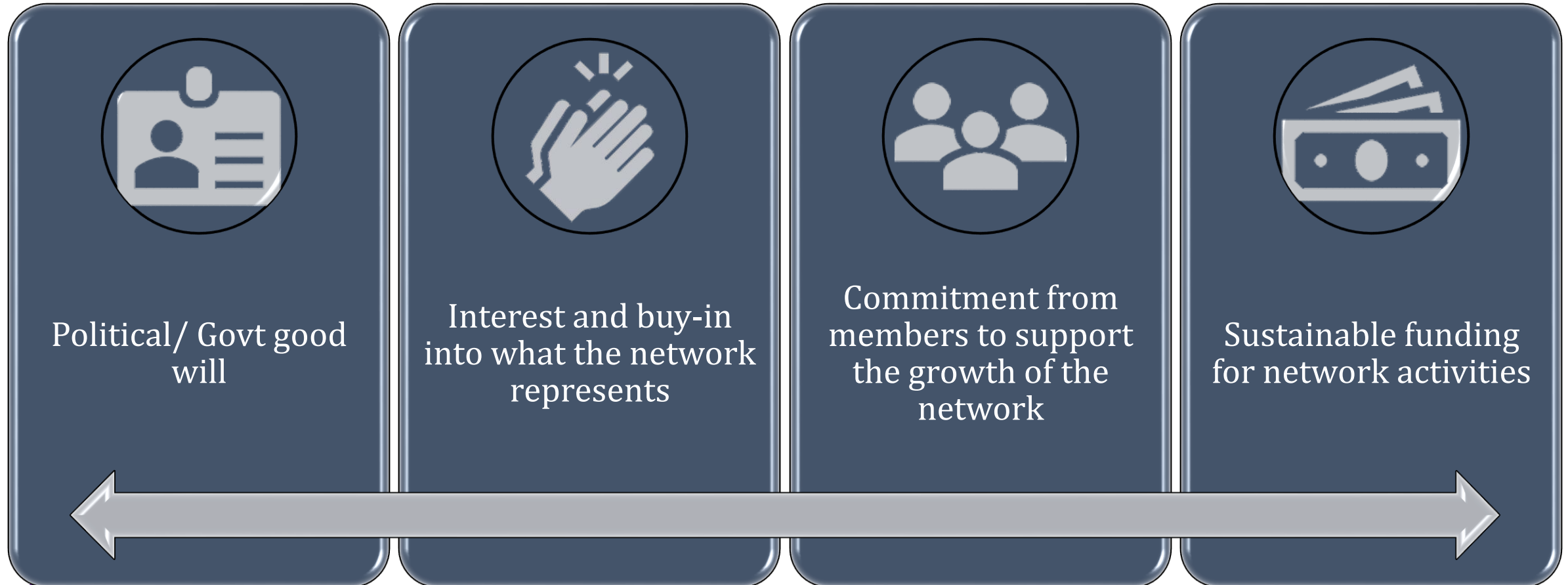
Orgs' indicated membership consisted of intermediaries/brokers



Networks or associations core functions



Factors that **enable** Network/Association functioning



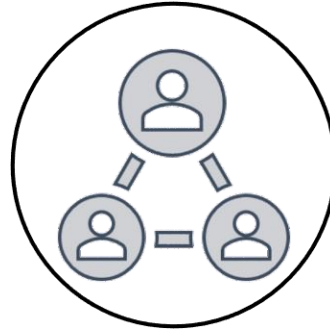
Factors that **constrain** Network/Association functioning



Sub-optimal
External
communication/
weak marketing



Lack of
sustainable
funding for
network
expenses



Human resource
challenges



Time constraints
for network
activities



Member mis-
understanding
the purpose of
network



Next Steps



We have already incorporated some of the recommendations.



We will reach out to organizations offering opportunities for collaboration.



Some recommendations are outside the scope of the AEN and so we will not be able to respond to them



There are recommendations that we will keep them in mind for AEN's future strategies

Study limitations



People that straddle between organizations



Obtaining contact information was challenging



Organizations with no available representation



Non-responsiveness to emails



Downside of targeting the top of the chain managers of organizations



Some managers felt that the interview questions were too clerical



Some managers could not respond to specific questions about their programming around EIDM



Cancellation, declining and/or re-scheduling of interviews



Bias: Habituation, Question- order

Acknowledgements



AEN Secretariat



ACE Staff



Organisational Study Respondents

Thank you



Linda Etale, PhD
Africa Centre for Evidence



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Questions? Email letale@uj.ac.za



Working together to make
evidence-informed
decision-making a reality



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