



1. AFRICA EVIDENCE NETWORK (AEN)

We believe that only together will evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) become a reality in Africa. Over the last decade, the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) has grown into a broad community of over 4,000 diverse people who share a vision to see an end to poverty and inequality in Africa. The Network’s mission is to facilitate connections and collaborations that contribute to this vision by increasing EIDM together.

The Network is pan-African, open to all who live and/or work on the continent. It is unique in its inclusivity and diversity in six broad dimensions, spanning:

- i) all countries in Africa;
- ii) all sectors across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the AU’s Agenda 2063;
- iii) all domains, including government, academia, civil society, citizens, and all intermediaries;
- iv) the full diversity of roles within these domains ranging from politicians to program managers and researchers;
- v) all elements of the evidence production and use cycle, from the generation of evidence to its integration into policy and implementation; and
- vi) all types of evidence from administrative data, evaluations of all kinds, experimental research, citizen experiences and systematic syntheses of primary studies.

Our goals are to foster collaboration among those engaged in or supporting EIDM in Africa, increase knowledge and understanding of EIDM, share capacities across the EIDM ecosystem, improve the enabling context by promoting EIDM in Africa, and advocate for Africa’s full voice and participation in the national, regional, and global movements to increase EIDM.

2. WHAT IS EVIDENCE?

EVIDENCE series was launched in 2014 as a biennial event hosted by the Africa Evidence Network (AEN). The series began as an [in-person colloquium in 2014](#) to bring together members of the AEN to explore how to enhance the overlaps in their work to support EIDM in Africa. In 2016, the event series was rebranded as EVIDENCE. Since the inception colloquium, the Network has hosted [EVIDENCE 2016](#), [EVIDENCE 2018](#) which included EVIDENCE ONLINE 2018, and [EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE](#) and [EVIDENCE 2022](#). This year, EVIDENCE 2023 takes place for three days from **13 until 15 September 2023 in Entebbe, Uganda**.

The key purpose of our EVIDENCE events is to facilitate engagement, broker understanding, and support impact of EIDM in Africa. The theme and format of each EVIDENCE event is always unique, shaped by what members want to take forward, as well as impacted by external factors (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic). Irrespective of its distinct blend of virtual and in-person activities, every single EVIDENCE event has delivered on its core purpose: engage, understand, impact.

Because they are responsive to real needs within the evidence ecosystem and we never follow a set format, these events always attract diverse participants from all sectors. Members of civil society, government, academia, and all in between convene to push forward the agenda of reducing poverty and inequality in Africa through the support of EIDM.

EVIDENCE 2023: Coming together to build a knowledge base for EIDM practice

In 2023, the AEN is proud to continue this tradition of innovation in facilitating collaboration with EVIDENCE 2023. *The objectives of this next instalment of the EVIDENCE event series are to:*

- Bring together the Pan-African community for learning, sharing, and relationship-building.
- Provide an opportunity for connection and collaboration to enhance mutual learning and the development of new ideas about supporting EIDM.
- Build content for EIDM practice.
- Provide opportunities to share EIDM practice experiences of different experts in the community.

Currently, the event is planned as a combination of in-person and virtual experiences that facilitate real-time and offline collaboration with participants from around the world. The event will also celebrate awardees of the Africa Evidence Leadership Award for 2023.

3. HOW WILL IT WORK?

EVIDENCE 2023 will continue connecting conversations that are rooted in three work streams below. These work streams were launched during EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE where participants actively contributed to the development of concepts, Manifestos, or visualisations – among other things – within these different work streams.

3.1. Work stream one: Enhancing evidence capacities

This work-stream will offer an incredible opportunity to contribute to improving access to and use of capacity-development resources, including exploration of frameworks and resources for the professionalisation of evidence practitioners and increase Africa-Africa learning with particular emphasis on what we know about engagement with citizen (community) evidence and how we can together fill this gap in our field whilst adhering to issues of gender, equity and inclusion in the generation and use of different forms of knowledge.

3.2. Work stream two: Making connections and building collaborations

The second work-stream facilitates connections between those working in the EIDM field, with an emphasis on strengthening the social networks of existing members and the wider community and sharing experiences on: 1). How to gain a deeper understanding of what individuals and organisations are doing to support EIDM in Africa, with close attention to aspects of gender, equity, and inclusion, and with a new emphasis on organisations and how they might collaborate 2). How to enable new and/or deeper collaborations that have the potential to enhance the work of individuals and organisations in the EIDM field, through the identification of shared areas of interest and potential for learning and working more closely together.

3.3. Work stream three: Increase knowledge and understanding of EIDM in Africa

This work- stream aims to 1). Improve access for those working in the African EIDM field to reliable, clear, localised information about what EIDM is 2). Improve access to the best available evidence about how to increase the use of evidence in decision-making in Africa, including the identification and sharing of

innovations in Africa, many of which we know are not well documented, 3). Share understanding of how evidence has shaped decisions in Africa and how this knowledge was used to inform others.

4. PROPOSED STRUCTURE

Day	Date	Format	Activity & details
1	13 September 2023	In-Person/Online	Setting the tone for engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Live opening and welcome address - Synchronous plenary sessions - Showcase of innovative EIDM practice (online) - Synchronous presentation session - Facilitated break-out session - Structured networking sessions
2	14 September 2023	In-Person/Online	Sharing EIDM experiences from content and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day 1 summary - Showcase of innovative EIDM practice (online) - Keynote address: <i>decolonising the Art and Science of EIDM practice in Africa</i> - Panel discussion on innovative EIDM practice - Synchronous presentation session - Facilitated break-out session
3	15 September 2023	In-Person/Online	Connecting the dots for our next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day 2 summary - Panel discussion on innovative EIDM practice - AELA award ceremony - Going forward message: Unveiling EVIDENCE 2025

5. HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

EVIDENCE 2023 will be a physical and virtual space for building and sharing EIDM practice, content and experiences, networking and collaborating with members from around the world committed to the same goal of using evidence to reduce poverty and inequality in Africa. The virtual experience of EVIDENCE 2023 will remain open to all at no cost. To mitigate potential risks to the event posed by COVID-19, the in-person elements of this event will be small and at a cost depending on availability of registration spaces. You can register to participate in EVIDENCE 2023 in the following ways as:

- I. Be a member of one of the three working groups.
- II. Submit brief overviews of content (not more than 300 words) you want to share. The content submitted should be aligned to event work streams described above: *if your content is selected for inclusion in the event, we will communicate with you in a range of ways.*

Full registration details will be forthcoming, but all expressions of interest to participate in EVIDENCE 2023 can be directed to info@africaevidencenetwork.org