ORGANISATIONS RESEARCH STUDY REPORT:

Exploration of institutional capacity, demand and opportunity for collaboration with the Africa Evidence Network (AEN)

AFRICA EVIDENCE NETWORK

December 2020

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SUGGESTED CITATION

Etale, L and Jessani N. (2020). Exploration of institutional capacity, demand and opportunity for collaboration with the Africa Evidence Network. Johannesburg: Africa Centre for Evidence as secretariat to the Africa Evidence Network, University of Johannesburg.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF BOXES

ACRONYMS

ACE	Africa Centre for Evidence
AELA	Africa Evidence Leadership Award
AEN	Africa Evidence Network
AfDB	Africa Development Bank
ALC	Africa Leadership Centre
CDC	Centre for Disease Control
CEDIL	Centre of Excellence for Development Impact and Learning
CEE-Johannesburg	Centre for Environmental Evidence-Johannesburg
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operating Officer
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DG	Director General
ED	Executive Director
EIDM/ EIPM	Evidence-Informed Decision/Policy Making
E2P	Evidence to Policy
F&G	Finance and Grants
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development.
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PERLSS [1]	Partners for Evidence-driven Rapid Learning in Social Systems
SADC	Southern African Development Community

---

[1] PERLSS is now known as Rapid Response Evidence Partnership (RREP)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) is a community of people who work in Africa and have an interest in evidence, its production and use in decision-making. This is a voluntary membership network with members from all sectors from various parts of the world. All of whom are working to support evidence-informed decision-making in Africa. One of the strategic outcomes of the AEN is to increase an understanding of within the AEN of what organizations are doing to support Evidence Informed Decision-Making (EIDM), and where in Africa they are working in order to support them. Further, the AEN seeks to obtain a greater engagement within the EIDM community in Africa, explore new and stronger opportunities for collaboration and growth in the EIDM sector. By doing the aforementioned, the AEN aims to shape the future development of the EIDM field in Africa and beyond.

In 2019, the AEN embarked on a study to understand the scope, reach, and activities of EIDM-relevant organisations in Africa, and furthermore to explore how scale on EIDM can be met through engagement with the AEN. The results in this report emanate from interviews with senior staff from 32 organisations across 12 countries in Africa. These organisations span government, non-government, research institutes, professional associations, academia and networks amongst others. With a focus on each organisation's EIDM capacity and activities, we found eleven different types of activities

to enhance EIDM that ranged from capacity strengthening of individuals, to providing rapid response services, to policy advocacy. These were facilitated by eight identified overarching factors such as collaborative partnerships and a set of core common values with five principal constraining factors.

There were several reflections as well as recommendations on how AEN can enhance engagement with these various organisations. Many of these recommendations have already been actioned with some planned for future endeavours. There were several however that were beyond the scope of the AEN. As a network, the AEN sought to learn from other similarly structured organisations and through this study has now been able to draw upon a better understanding of factors that enable as well as constrain effective functioning of a network. These are shared towards the latter part of the report.

The findings of this study have been shared through presentation with the AEN Secretariat and an external webinar targeting both members and non-members of the AEN. Ultimately, the finding of this study will be used to inform the plans, strategy and activities of the AEN for the benefit of the African evidence ecosystem.

OVERVIEW OF THE AFRICA EVIDENCE NETWORK

The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) was officially launched in December 2012 and has since grown into a community of over 3000 diverse people who share a vision to see an end to poverty and inequality through the use of evidence in Africa. The Network's mission is to work with others to contribute to this vision by increasing the use of evidence in decision-making. The Network is pan-African, open to all who live and work on the continent. As at the time of this report, the network had drawn membership from 86 countries worldwide. The membership includes researchers engaged in systematic reviews, evidence maps and rapid evidence assessments, as well as government science advisors, statisticians, M&E officers, evaluation specialists and so many more. It also includes members of parliaments, local councillors, civil servants, government researchers and a whole range of people from civil society. The aim of the Network is to link people and activities across various initiatives, organisations and fields working to produce and use better evidence in Africa. This brings opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing in the evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) field.

Starting with humble beginnings and no funding, the AEN has since had support from a variety of funders including the UK's Department for International Development, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Its secretariat is hosted by the Africa Centre for Evidence (ACE) at the University of Johannesburg. The secretariat is governed and led by a chairperson, an external advisory group and a member-representational reference group. The secretariat is currently staffed with a Head of Operations, Head of Strategy, three part-time Programme Officers and auxiliary communications and administration support from ACE. The 6 goals that guide the AEN can be found in Figure 1. The AEN achieves these goals through a multitude of activities, mechanisms and engagements that all intertwine to provide holistic outcomes, as outlined in Annex 1.
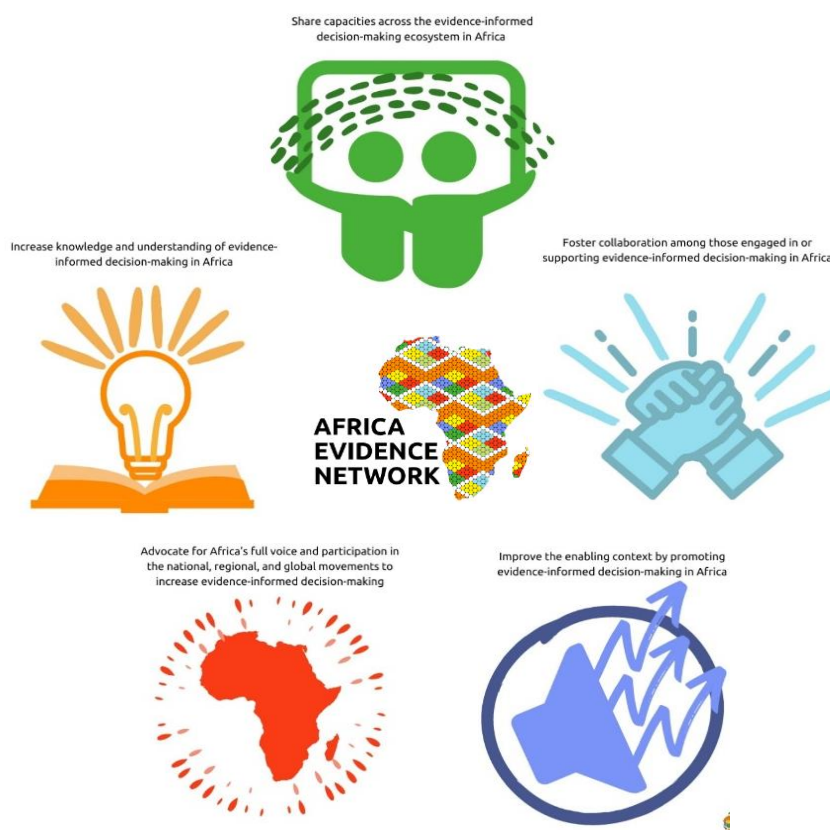
Figure 1 Strategic goals of the AEN

THE IMPETUS FOR A STUDY OF EIDM ORGANISATIONS IN AFRICA

The AEN has primarily engaged with individuals. In order to extend its continental reach and better serve its members, the AEN wanted to explore what institutional engagement and collaboration with EIDM organisations across the continent could look like.

Gathering experiences, opinions and recommendations: our process

The details of the study design can be found elsewhere (see Box 1 for the study goals and aims) but a few important points to anchor the findings are as follows:

- This was a qualitative study that sought to understand organisations in Africa who work on increasing the use of evidence in decision-making. All research ethics and protocols were observed accordingly.
- A previous scoping exercise[2] by the Africa Centre for Evidence (ACE) identified 250 EIDM **focused organisations in Africa was the** springboard for this study. But upon further screening the number was narrowed down to 90 organisations. Thereafter, subject to relevant inclusion and exclusion criteria, as well as recommendations from staff and participants, the study yielded a list of 113 eligible organisations.
- The inclusion of networks and associations that also worked in the EIDM field were particularly

Box 1: Goal and aims of the study

Goal of the Study
• To understand the scope reach, and activities of 250 previously identified EIDM organisations in Africa. • To explore how to enhance complementarity and amplification of EIDM between AEN and these organisations
Aims of the Study
1. Better understand the organisations within the African EIDM ecosystem
2. Capture information on existing capacities and capacity building endeavours across these organisations
3. Document perceived interest and opportunities in institutional collaborations with the AEN
4. Learn from other networks on the continent
5. Utilize data to identify opportunities for the AEN
6. Document and share results with the wider AEN community

---

[2] Nduku, P. (2018, September). *A geo-map of African Evidence-informed policy-making(EIPM) Institutions*. Presentation made at the Africa Centre for Evidence, Johannesburg. South Africa.

interesting due to the fact that, similar to the AEN, they also engage with a disperse set of members. We did not seek to evaluate them but rather learn from them.

- Respondents were selected through purposive as well as snowball sampling as per the criteria in Box 2. Note that respondents did not need to be AEN members to partake in the study but needed to fulfill all the inclusion criteria. Interviews were conducted in person or via remote online platforms between 11th of September 2019 and the 6th of December 2019.

The semi-structured interview guide predominantly comprised open-ended questions within seven sections: A - Organisational overview, B - Respondent overview, C - Overview of organisations' EIDM capacity and activities, D – Engaging with the AEN, E - EIDM networks and associations, F - Documentation, and G - Closure. Within each section, the number of sub questions ranged from 1 to 10. Table 1 provides an excerpt of questions embedded in sections C, D, and E.

113

organisations
invited

32

organisations
participated

252

individuals
targeted

36

individuals
participated

Figure 2: Summary of organisations' and individuals' responses and participation

Box 2: Criteria for study participation

Inclusion criteria
- Mid-to- senior level management at one of the identified EIDM organisations   - Demonstrated engagement in his/her organization's EIDM activities (e.g., through his/her position, activities, public posts through blogs, publications etc.); and   - Ability to communicate in English and/or French.

Table 1: Overview of the interview questions

C: OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONS' EIDM CAPACITY AND ACTIVITIES	D: ENGAGING WITH THE AEN	E: 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.

WHAT WE LEARNED WAS FASCINATING

Organisational overview

Out of the 113 organisations that were invited, we received responses from 32/113 (28%) (see Table 2 for organisations that participated in the study). Of these, 10 (31%) identified themselves as embedded within another organisation, while 22 (69%) said they were stand-alone organisations. 7 out of the 32 (22%) organisations were identified as networks or associations.

It was important for the study to obtain an understanding of the sectors in which the participating organisations engaged in. These are outlined in Figure 3. There were instances where some organisations preferred to name specific areas of technical engagement also shown in Figure 3.

The highest proportion 12/32 (38%) of organisations were based in South Africa, followed by Uganda 3/32 (9%) and Ethiopia 3/32 (9%). (See Figure 4). Important to note is that Collaboration for Environmental Evidence (CEE)-Johannesburg (hosted by ACE) as well as ACE (host for CEE- Johannesburg as well as AEN) participated in the study.

Table 2 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	

TECHNICAL ENGAGEMENTS

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
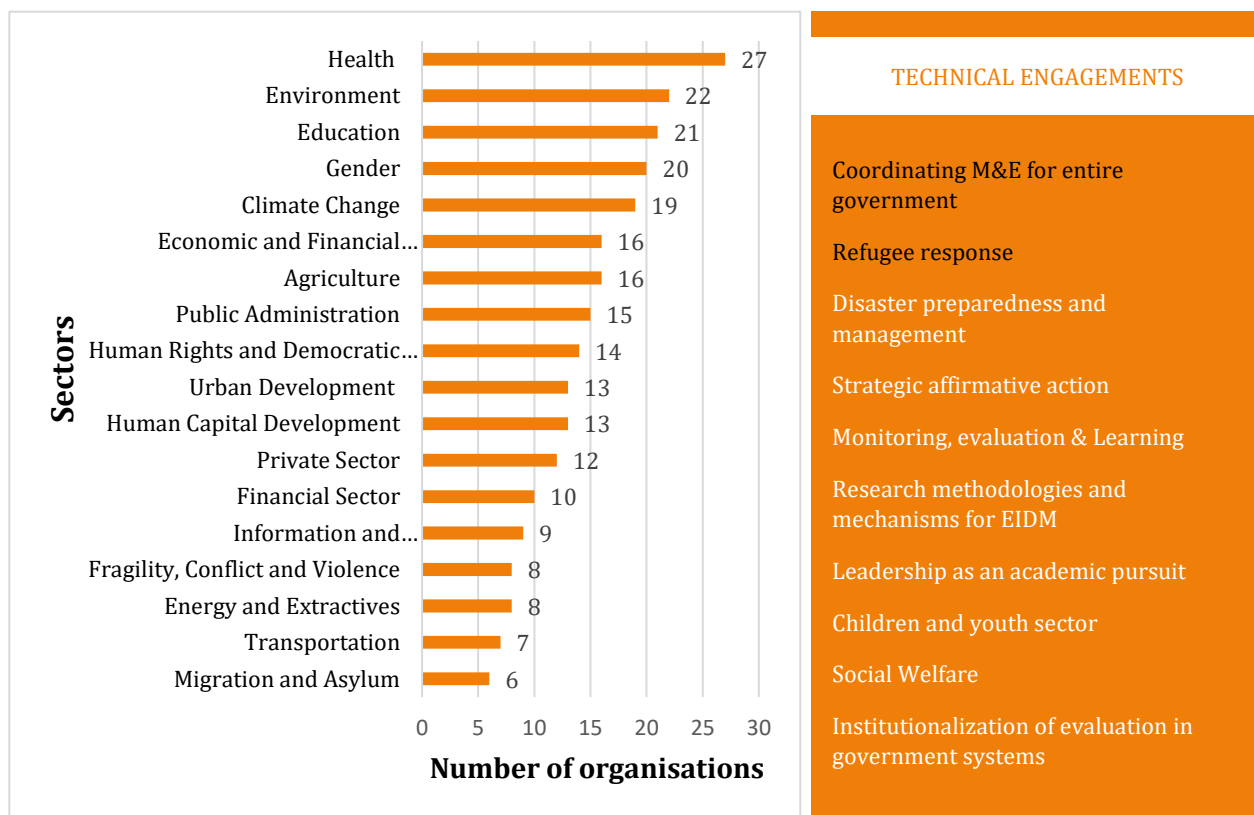
Figure 3: Reported sector engagement (k=32)

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
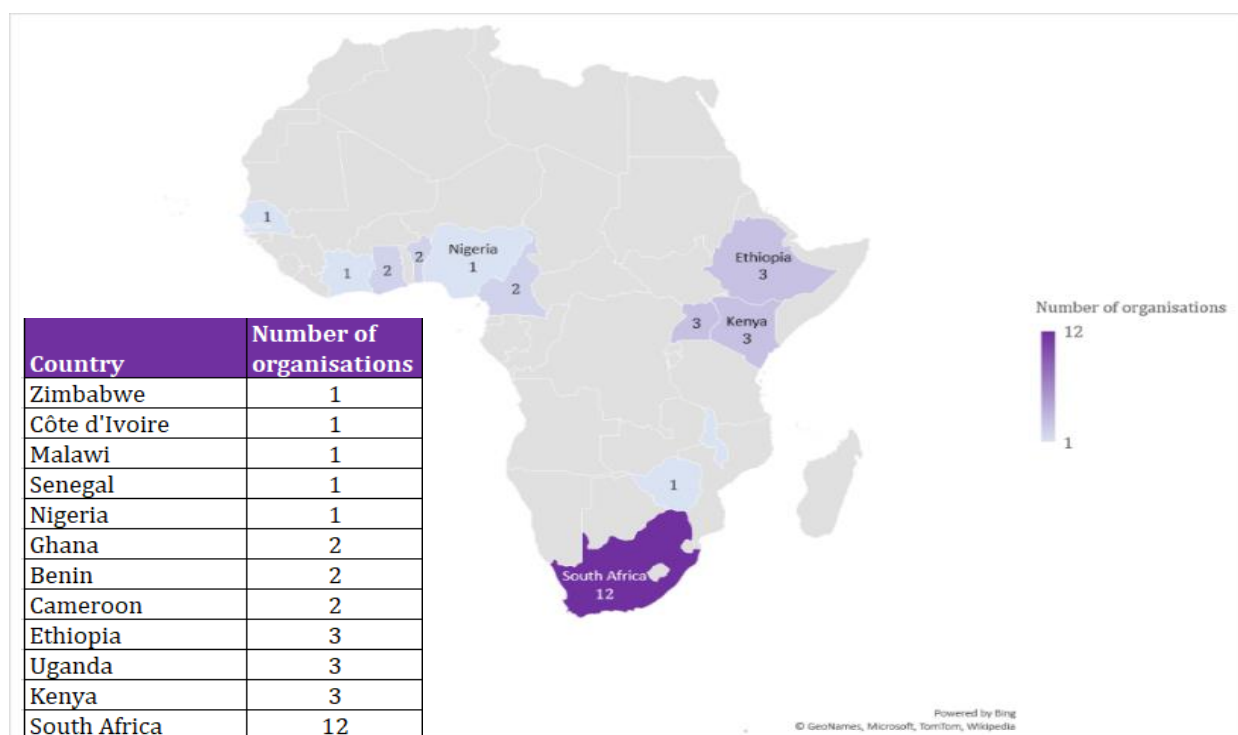
Figure 4: Primary organisational location (k=32)
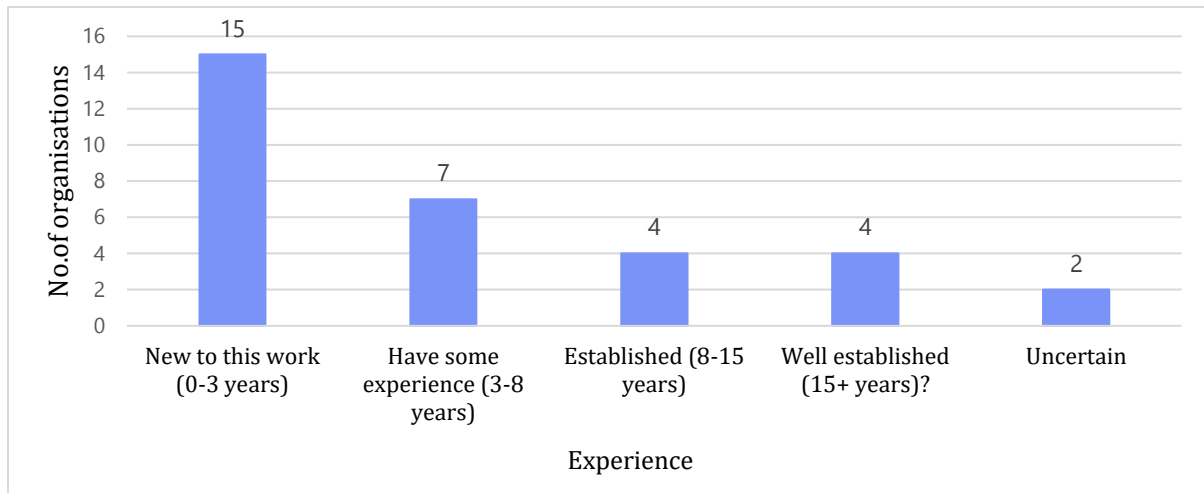
Figure 5: Organisations' experience in the field of EIDM (k=32)

In Figure 5 we see that 15/30 (50%) organisations considered their experience as new in the EIDM field with 4/30 (13%) stating > 15 years' experience. Responses from multiple respondents for two of the organization were contradictory and therefore were labelled as" uncertain".

Respondents overview

With 31 email addresses no longer in use, our total outreach ended up comprising 221 individuals. One hundred and thirty seven (137) did not respond and

of the 80/221 (36%) that did, we spoke with 32 (40%). Note that 4/32 organisations each had 2 representatives. Figure 6 below provides more information on the gender distribution and membership representation of the respondents.

Figure 7 outlines the information collected on the roles or positions of the study's respondents within their organisations. The highest percentage of respondents identified themselves with the "other" category at 9/36 (25 %.). These included senior research scientist, visiting lecturer, and chief
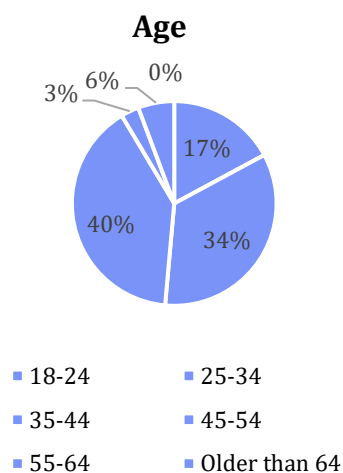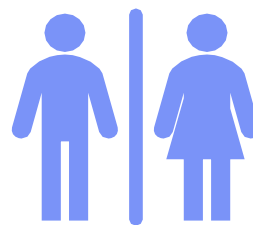
Figure 6: Respondent demographics

specialist scientist among others. This was followed by 7/36 (19 %) who were either director/team leader or executive director/ Chief Executive Officer/Director General at 6/36 (17%). None identified themselves as an advisor or general secretary.

The devil's in the details

The richness of our learnings and reflections were apparent in the details provided within the interviews. In this section we share some of those quotes and thoughts. We begin with an overview of the activities that organisations noted were key to how they build capacity to enhance evidence-use in their contexts.

Activities that enhance evidence use in decision-making in organisations

As shown in Figure 8, 16/32 (50%) organisations indicated being involved in policy advocacy at different levels of government and departments and that for some, involvement also included contributions in the policy decision-making processes.
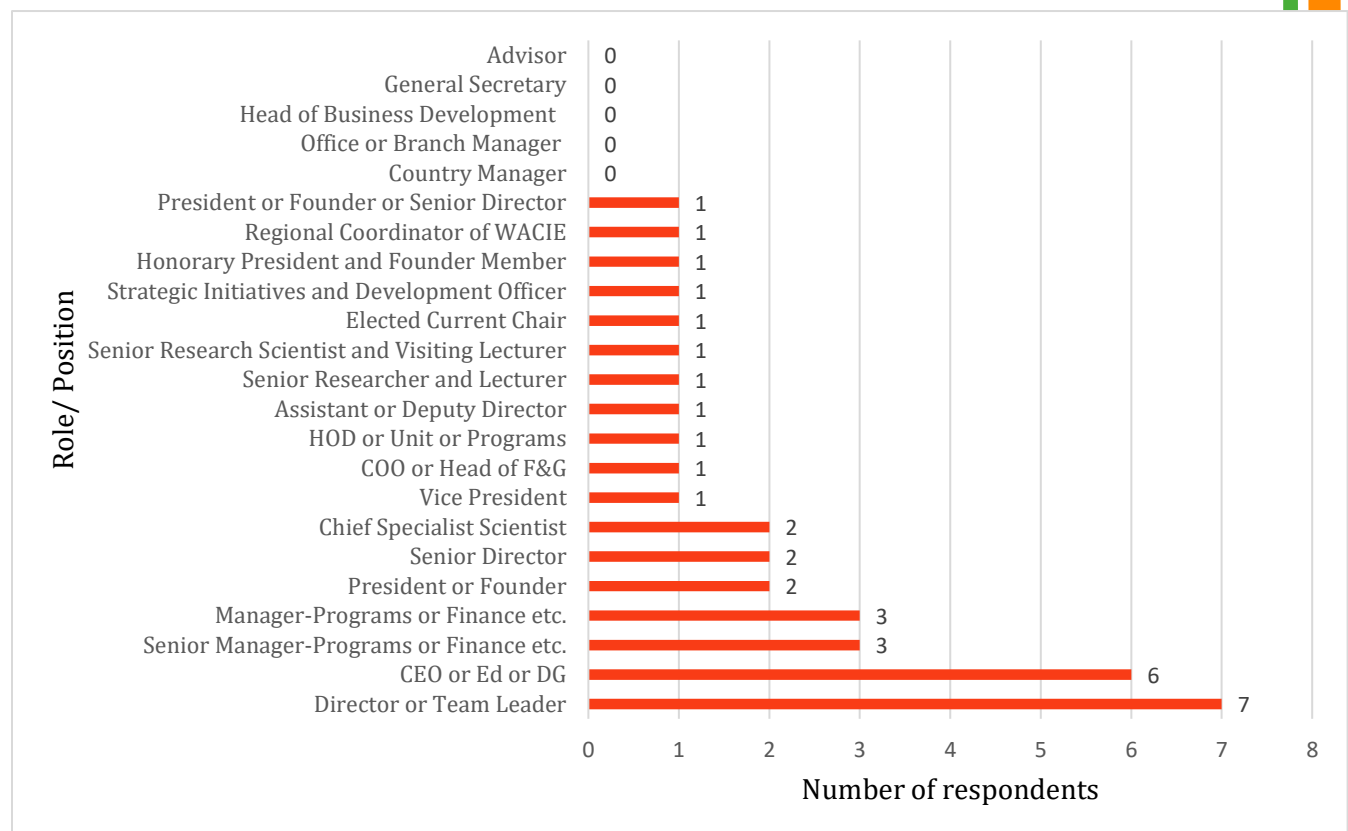
Figure 7: Representation of roles/positions of study participants within organisations (n=36)
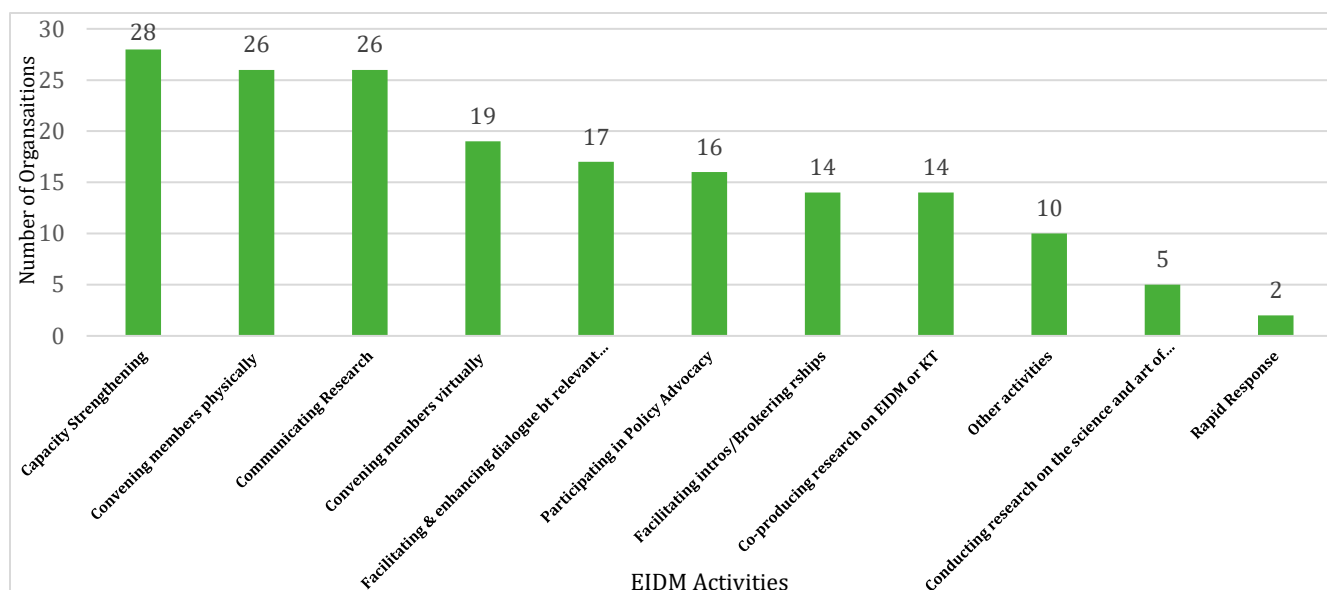
Figure 8: Activities that enhance evidence-use in decision-making in organisations (k=32)

Further, capacity strengthening was mentioned most frequently (28/32) with some being specific about a focus on strengthening national evaluation systems. Others elaborated on capacity strengthening through conducted trainings on advocacy, for instance. There were additional capacity development activities that were indicated in the "other" category. These included evaluation of projects and programs for evidence-based design and programming, undertaking evidence synthesis and evidence mapping (co-producing), conducting evidence synthesis, developing tools to facilitate the uptake of evidence, and implementation of evidence.

Making reference to figure 8 above respondents provided information on activities that enhance evidence use in decision-making that were relevant to their organisations. *Facilitating introductions or brokering relationships* was one of the activities as noted in this quote: "*These activities aid in developing relationships with other organisations especially with the Ministry of Health"*- Health institute unit Director,

Ethiopia. Another respondent noted that one of the EIDM organisations had brought together a private, regional and global organisation to convene a session at a conference held in South Africa. These organisations had previously not worked together and served to enhance relationships: "*The purpose of all these relationships is to improve M&E capacity in South Africa and building awareness on who is doing what within the different sectors and that they are able to speak to each other".* –Association Executive leader, South Africa.

Communicating research through policy briefs, newsletters, survey and study reports, conference proceedings, maps, and scientific articles was noted across the interviews as important. One such organization stressed that "*We use policy briefs during our policy dialogue meetings with Donor agencies and Govt ministries which contain synchronized messages for action on policy*". – University Research Institute Director, Malawi.

9

Another respondent described how they hold sessions to with ministry officials to meet their needs: "*Dialogue reports are compiled and sent to ministry. …We develop policy briefs and rapid reviews based on the demand of MOH and share with them*". – Health Institute Director, Ethiopia.

There were some organisations who indicated the value of media to communicate to grassroots community members such as the youth, as well as members of parliament. Social media such as Twitter is also being used widely to capture the attention of relevant stakeholders on various policy matters.

Participating in Policy Advocacy was identified by a number of respondents. For instance:"*We bring together different stakeholders from government, private sector, etc. to share research on monitoring and evaluation work in Ghana. Recently, we worked on a national M&E evaluation policy bringing together CSOs, government officials to come up with a draft policy that is waiting Cabinet approval to become law. We are currently pushing for the development of the Ghana National M&E Policy*". – Professional Association Executive member, Ghana.

An example of *Research on science & art of EIDM or knowledge translation* (KT) included a diagnostic tool that "*will be used periodically depending on the government agency that will have been identified. This tool will inform the kind of interventions that [our organisation] will be using to help the government*

agencies in taking up the use of evidence in policy and practice". – NGO Executive Director, Ghana.

On *Co-producing research on EIDM or KT*, we heard of collaborations between and among organisations to conduct studies, systematic reviews, and evidence maps, among other projects. A respondent mentioned the following:

"*Our research activities are mainly in collaborate with universities… to conduct research on climate change adaption in coastal areas of Benin. We produce research reports, policy briefs, research articles, materials for rural audiences. We are also involved implementation of the outcomes of research e.g. helping farmers to adapt to climate change. We also work with two municipalities and a Government ministry…, to produce knowledge on the most effective ways of promoting urban agriculture-out of this research we produce reports, scientific articles. We support local communities to implement allotment gardens in urban areas*". – NGO Executive Director, Benin.

Another organisation mentioned that they were collaborating with policy makers to produce a book on evidence in practice containing different studies. "*It is being co-authored with policymakers to try and give them exposure to the evidence journey and how to better use evidence*". –University Research Centre Director, South Africa.

Convening members physically and virtually served several purposes including sharing of research outcomes, as an avenue to facilitate dialogue on various EIDM issues, training, to raise awareness on various subjects such as M&E and EIDM, among others. Those who chose to have virtual meetings did so for various reasons including cost-cutting on physical meeting expenses. Some of the virtual meetings include webinars and general meetings while physical ones included conferences and annual general meetings. Here is one such example:

> *"We organize events such as workshops for example capitalization workshops where we present findings from evaluations and we ask the evaluation colleagues to share their experiences for cross-learning purposes. We organize larger events such as conferences for example the evaluation week where we invite topical speakers from organizations-parliament, think-tank organisations, researchers to come and discuss on certain topics and also to learn from each other and to share knowledge"*. –Division Manager within a multi-lateral organisation, Côte d'Ivoire.

Another respondent discussed what they do during their physical conferences: *"Through our themed annual conferences, we invite members to present their papers and participate in meetings, the findings of research presented are evaluated. We have independent reviewers who look at the papers ….adjustments are proposed, and finally published as*

conferences proceedings. We distribute the proceedings to our funders and university bookshops". – Professional Association Executive Member, Ethiopia.

Facilitating & enhancing dialogue between relevant stakeholders on EIDM was noted as one way to have stakeholders work on a policy. A respondent from Ghana described how they linked up two government ministries to dialogue on national planning aspects of M&E: *"With the Sanitation sector, we brought together key stakeholders (Ministry, CSOs) to look at the work that we had done (the project-how evidence is generated and used in the Sanitation sector). This meeting discussed the draft findings and as we finalized the project. We are preparing to do a wider sharing in a larger conference for all in the sector".* Professional Association Executive member, Ghana.

Capacity strengthening through conferences, webinars, workshops, and seminars, among others was a critical part of the activities of many organisations we spoke to. Here are several examples:

- *"We do capacity strengthening for policymakers (education and health)- so far we have been capacity building on formulating a policy question so that it can facilitate us to find the evidence needed to inform their decision-making process".*- NGO Team Leader, Cameroon.

- "*The interns are deployed within the organization to learn about various aspects of the organization particularly in the science-policy interface. There is a lot of capacity strengthening of interns and experts within our organization*". –Government Department Director, South Africa.

- "*On mentoring on systematic reviews, we target experts…, who we teach how to do systematic reviews when answering specific questions that have been raised. We are usually out on the look to forging these relationships for us to obtain these contracts*". – Health Institute unit Director, Ethiopia.

- "*We are helping parliamentarians to broaden upward accountability and pass legislation to promote evaluation in decision making. For example, in collaboration with African Parliamentary Network for Development Effectiveness (APNODE), we conducted an Africa-wide initiative to embed M&E in national frameworks and cross-ministerial strategic plans. These happened with creating relationships between and among offices. We also deliver training events to parliamentarians across the continent".* – University Research Centre Director, South Africa.

- *"We conduct training that is meant to empower county government officials on the importance of evaluation and use of evidence in their decision making. We coach, mentor and help them do citations of publications".* – Professional Association Executive Member, Kenya.

- *"…. we host a series of webinars every quarter on different topics e.g. visualizing evaluation data. The outcome of these activities is capacity development on various topics for those that attend".* – Professional Association Executive Member, South Africa.

Rapid Response Services emerged as an important activity that was raised organically with one such example here: "*The Department of Health reached out to us to help them with evidence to support their policy development initiatives".* – Senior University Research Centre Official, South Africa.

Another respondent noted that: "*We have done three…. on the role of centralized planning and the role of central planning agencies. We did case studies that were used to present to central planning agencies".* – Government Department Director, South Africa.

Factors that enable organisations' capacity development activities

We sought to understand the elements that facilitate capacity development activities that these organisations engaged in. Figure 9 provides an overview of these elements starting with *expertise and capacity in niche areas* of these organisations. An organisation in South Africa indicated that the kind of research they do allows for multi-disciplinary expertise and a more holistic approach:

"We have senior researchers who are experts from various disciplines which helps in the kind of work we do and taking into consideration that our field of Public Health is relatively new in South Africa. The kind of research that we do allows for multi-disciplinary expertise and therefore we benefit from various experts rather than if we were siloed in practice. We, therefore, have a rich network to draw expertise from whenever it is needed." –Government Deputy Director, South Africa

Having a ***conducive learning environment*** such as "*A culture focused on enhancing Human Resource skills. For instance the internal human resource capacity has been enhanced over time that they are now engaged in research and implementing activities informed by research*". NGO Executive Director, Benin.

A number of respondents referred to ***funding for capacity development*** that their organisations obtained from various donor agencies: "*We have been able to maintain donors for certain activities.*

For instance UNICEF has funded us for a long period now especially in developing capacity of our members through trainings and conferences geared towards M&E aspects of our work". –Professional Association

| Expertise and capacity in Niche areas | Common Values | Conducive Learning Environment | Funding for Capacity Development | Supportive Governance and Management of organisations | Strong and Collaborative Partnerships | Political will & demand for evidence in policy making | HR Devt/ CD Approaches |
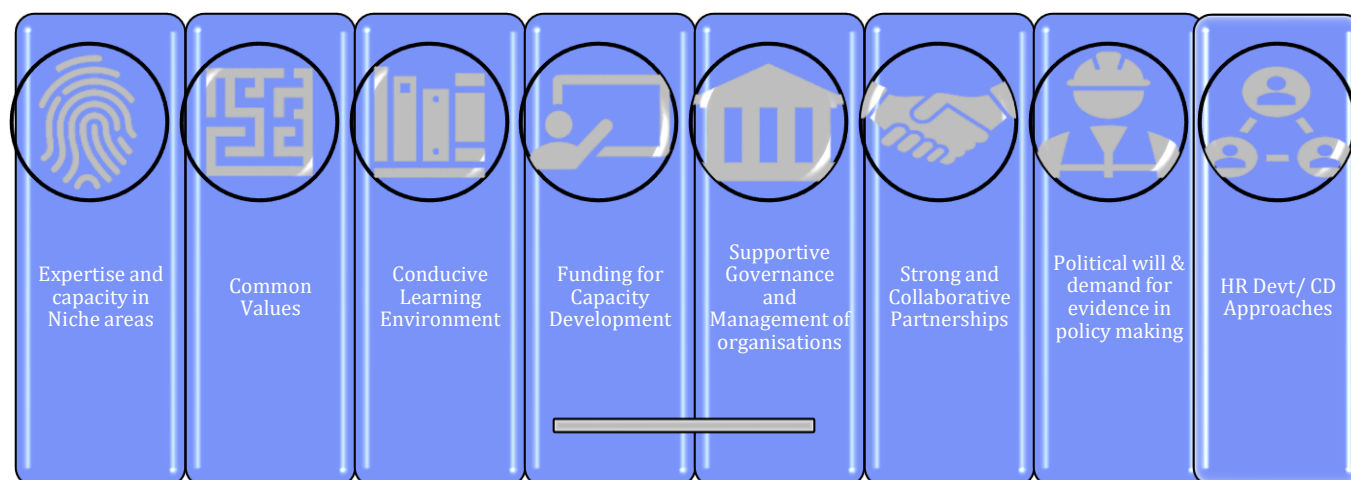
Figure 9: Factors that enable organisations' capacity development activities

Common values such as having passion for sustainable development helped one organisation wire their interventions in ways that were part of solutions to development problems. Another note on values underpinned this statement from a Kenyan respondent: *"All the people that we engage with, we are bound by a common set of values, importance of the African agency and African led thinking and processes of change".* – NGO Director, Kenya.

Executive Member, Ethiopia. These donor agencies included UNFPA, UNDP, World Bank, and UNICEF, among others. Fund raising through course offerings was another enabler:

On *Supportive Governance and Management of organisations*, various organisations, especially within networks & associations, several respondents mentioned the value of strategic leadership and direction from their governing boards in helping to steer the organisations' capacity development activities. One respondent mentioned that commitment of board members on a voluntary basis played an important role: "*The board is made up of 10 persons from various sectors such as private sector, academic, government, CSOs- based on volunteering. The board members give their time faithfully overall".* – Professional Association Executive Member, South Africa.

Strong and Collaborative Partnerships was identified as one of the enabling elements. Here, diversity of experts across different sectors that can be called upon, was mentioned as enabling organisations in implementing their capacity development activities. From these connections, organisations were able to draw on the best available evidence and also enhance different capacities within their organisations.

A number of respondents identified *Political will & demand for evidence in policy making* as an enabling factor in their capacity development initiatives. The responses ranged from available policies, supportive leadership, and sound relationships, among others. Below are some of the different perspectives from the respondents:
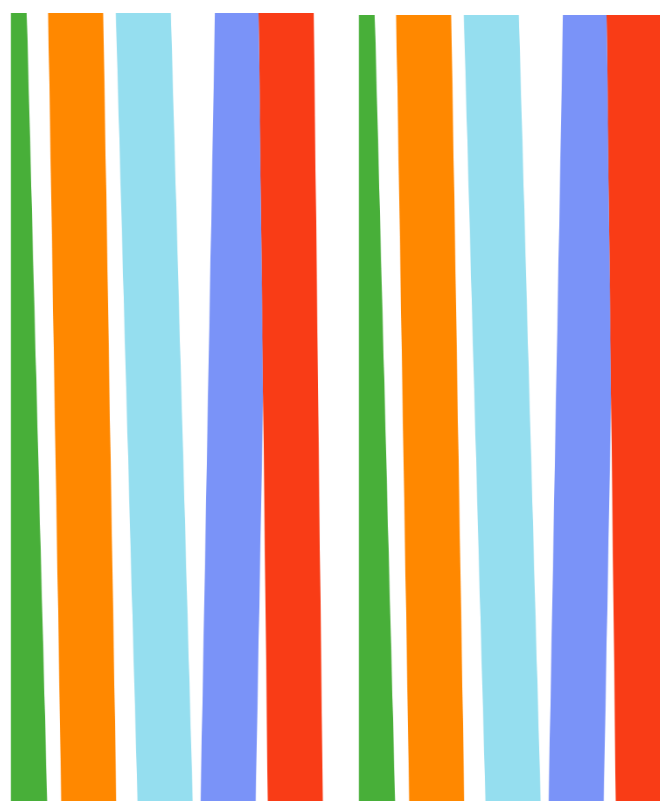
"The existence of the structure of knowledge translation directorate within Institute with a government policy... there is policy on evidence-based decision making as important factor in the sector". – Health Institute Unit Director, Ethiopia.

"We have the legal and constitutional mandate across the country- expected to build capacity in M&E in the country- it helps attract resources because of mandate. The mandate enables us to be champions of M&E. Also, there are existing policy and regulatory frameworks: National M&E policy 2013 (articulates the roles and responsibilities, guidelines for M&E and the processes to be undertaken, strategies for building capacities)". – Government Department Coordinator, Uganda.

"Political leadership supports the push factor- The past two decades we have experienced two presidents who have championed learning from evaluation to the whole organisation". – Division Manager within a multi-lateral organisation, Côte d'Ivoire.

HR Development/ Capacity Development Approaches as an enabler focused on supporting experts in submitting their research outputs to various platforms, secondment of staff to other organisations, investment on internship opportunities for junior experts, and bursary schemes for training, among others.

Factors that constrain organisations' capacity development activities

It was important for us to find out from the respondents what their organisations experienced as constraining factors or their capacity development activities. We grouped the factors within the 5 themes as indicated in Figure 10.

In as much as political will was an enabling factor to some organisations in Figure 9, it was also a constraining factor for some. We termed it as ***Non-supportive government policy/Political issues***. Here is one example:

"Government officials rely on their own political views rather than using evidence-based research products that institutions such as [our organisation] would want them to apply.....there is non-supportive Government policy towards research in terms of limited funds from the government". – Health Institute Unit Director, Ethiopia.

Another respondent mentioned that, *"There are issues where there is political sensitivity, for example when we are discussing results of what they have been doing as an organization- yet these are evaluations that have been commissioned by themselves".* – Executive Member of a Professional Association, Senegal.
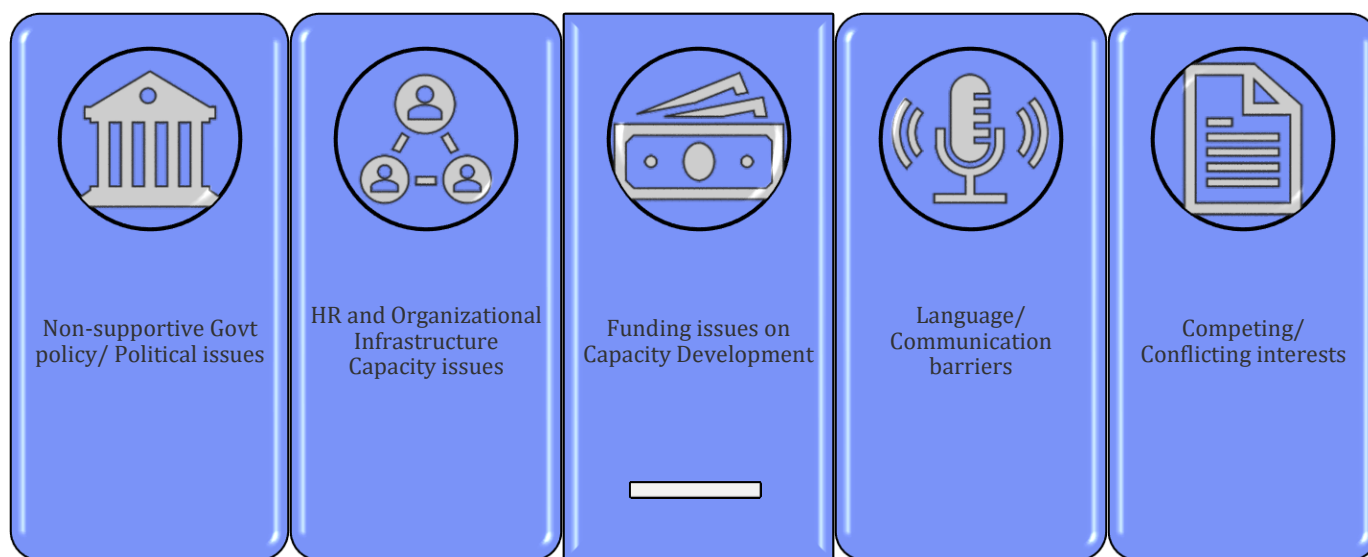
Figure 10: Factors that constrain organisations' capacity development activities

Another constraining factor is ***Human and Organizational Infrastructure Capacity issues***. The issues here included lack of specific expert in some fields, high staff turn-over, limited funds to maintain hired staff, internet connectivity issues, and unsustainability of voluntary-based staff/experts, among others as evidenced in the quote below:

"A higher education institution (HEI) cited lack of experts in the market on EIDM especially stemming from the fact that HEI training curriculum does not capture EIDM. Staff turn-over is high in the institute and directorate- related to low remuneration by Government that demotivates the staff. The new employees have to be trained which heavily takes up time and finances from the organisation". – Health Institute Unit Director, Ethiopia.

On the same note, a francophone respondent mentioned that "*Lack of sufficient capacity especially*

in Francophone areas in terms of experience in the evidence ecosystems. During our activities, we lack in terms of experts vs meeting the need of trainees". – NGO Team Leader, Cameroon.

One of the issues was that training new employees on EIDM relies heavily on funding that was not consistent with the prevailing needs of staff. ***Funding issues on Capacity Development*** was therefore raised as a constraining factor as seen here:

Enhancing the African EIDM Ecosystem together

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

Language/ Communication barrier was noted as a frustrating challenge particularly in cases where organisations sought to work with colleagues from different parts of the continent: *"Language constraints hold back the organisation from venturing into West Africa (Francophone) - working out of SADC region is constrained by language issues".* – Executive Member of a Professional Association, Zimbabwe.

With respect to **competing/ conflicting interests**, *"It seems we do not have enough time to conduct trainings because of trainers who are engaged in other university assignment-as such we do not hold these trainings as much as possible to satisfy the demand for these course".* – University research center Director, Malawi.

The ideas we received have been summarized within the three areas in Figure 11 next page, i.e. individual, organisation, and network levels. Given that not all respondents were AEN members, we noted that several suggestions and recommendations were likely due to limited understanding of the scope of AEN as well as already established activities. This is also reflected in recommendations of priorities for AEN. We refer readers to Annex 1 of this report where we talk about activities, mechanisms and engagements of the AEN.

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

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

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

Figure 11: EIDM capacity development recommendations for the AEN

Individual level

On *Capacity Enhancement of all involved in EIDM* at the individual level, there was a request for more information on training opportunities:

> "*Provide information and/or on training opportunities on evidence use, integrating evidence in policy making for our members. This will allow us to venture actively in engaging in policy advocacy based on evidence. We feel that there is more that we could do as an Association on sector specific EIDM work especially in policy advocacy and co-producing research even that which effectively involves our members. The network can also help our members to gain from its existing members to learn from their experiences in evidence generation and use in both policy and practice*". – Executive Member of a Professional Association, Ethiopia.

Another respondent suggested that: "*The AEN Secretariat can provide internships at the Secretariat so that experts can learn from the Secretariat's expertise*"- NGO Director, Cameroon. On the same note, another respondent shared a desire for the AEN to facilitate organisations in implementing peer to peer exchange where skills exchange can take place.

On *Learning from and celebrating an African EIDM Culture* at the individual level, the following a recommendation was given concerning the young and upcoming experts in the field of EIDM:

18

> "*Exposure especially for the next generation- to the spaces where evidence based research (from conception to ideas development, to it becoming a project and transforming into a research project to producing evidence)- deliberate targeted programming for the next generation starting from interns all the way to the more experienced experts.- so that they can relate to each other. This takes time and needs investment*". – NGO Director, Kenya.

Furthermore, there was another recommendation on mutual learning amongst members of the AEN:

> "*Joint-program with other countries on sharing what is being done in the different countries for learning purposes for individuals within the network. This is more especially on M&E aspects of development in different countries. I think individuals within our network would be interested in seeing how other organisations and networks are engaging their governments on matters of production and use of evidence so that our members can learn and replicate where necessary*". – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana

Emphasising *M&E as part of EIDM* was raised as critical for the greater evidence ecosystem: "*People do a lot of M&E as a requirement and not as an important aspect of development- so much evidence is generated but its utilization cannot be substantiated*". – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana.

Increased attention to *Communication Enhancement/ Embracing Non-traditional Communication* as an area for AEN to consider was framed as follows: *"Create awareness during training for individuals on the use of story-telling to communicate research and evidence to the right constituents".* – NGO Team Leader, Cameroon.

Organisational level

On *learning, sharing and collaborating* at the organisational level, a recommendation was given on encouraging communities of practice (COPs) as an approach to enable organisations learn from each other's experiences and benefit from opportunities to collaborate on projects. Another respondent suggested hosting "*Annual or biannual conferences/ meetings for African organizations to showcase their milestones, challenges, and opportunities to collaborate on EIDM capacity development activities*". – Research Institute Senior Official, Kenya.

With respect to *Capacity to support prioritization and tracing/evaluating of E2P (EIDM),* one particular organisation did not have a system in place to prioritize EIDM needs including tools on how to trace

the impact of EIDM work done and requested for the AEN to provide assistance in this regard.

Measuring evidence uptake and use was a notable challenge as expressed here: *"We are not able to measure how individuals use the evidence produced. The AEN can design approaches on how to approach the use of evidence as individuals in organisations"*. – Executive Member of a Professional Association, South Africa.

Dissemination of products generated by an organisation was raised under the theme of *Communication & EIDM/ KT* as follows: *"How we can get better at disseminating the consensus study reports that we come up with. Currently we have only experimented with policy briefs and reports. We would like to learn how to adapt reports in different formats targeting specific audiences"*. – NGO Director, Uganda.

Network level

One respondent suggested that the AEN play a *brokering and networking role*: "*We have a number of African regional organizations such as African CDC, EGAD...etc. Can AEN secretariat be able to network with these organizations to see how they can market stories of change to advocate for widespread use?"*. – NGO Director, Kenya.

Similar to recommendations about assisting with organizational collaborations for funding, one respondent suggested that the AEN "*Put more*

emphasis on the network members to prioritize resource mobilization to support evidence activities. The website can be used to communicate aspects such as guidelines on resource mobilization, what works, and opportunities". – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana.

A different respondent talked about devising mechanisms that ensure *building meaningful networks* especially those that result into collaborations as expressed here: *"The AEN can help in defining and creating an opportunity for our organisation to network with those that have experience in bidding for grants/ fundraising. The conferences held by AEN have been a good starting point especially when looking for consortiums...but nothing really has come out of these networking starting points- we need to be mentored on fundraising, especially with others"*. – NGO Team Leader, Cameroon.

One more recommendation related to *how AEN can enhance its own role, governance, communication etc*. There were various ideas shared by the respondents including the one stated below:

"The AEN could facilitate contact between those who are in need of evidence and those who supply the evidence... based on the AEN conference in 2018 the focus was mainly on those who provide evidence such as think-tanks and researchers but we did not see for instance any government participants yet we wanted the Govt to see the need to apply evidence in their operations, plans and programs. Expecting the government to take up evidence which they have not asked for may be a bit of a long shot. So the AEN could do better by bridging the gap between supply and demand of evidence in some of its activities- most importantly maintaining contact among the suppliers of evidence and those that could demand for it or are supposed to demand for it". – Division Manager within a multi-lateral organisation, Côte d'Ivoire.

On *partnerships and collaborations,* there were various ideas on how a network's capacity development needs can be prioritized including

1. working with communities of practice in delivering knowledge management dissemination
2. Collaborate on research activities with members of other associations/ networks

3. Creating the potential of long term training through linkage with other universities training/ researching on EIDM
4. Jointly sourcing for proposals/funding, among others.

In addition to these four ideas, one respondent indicated that there needs to be *"clearer synergies on issues of roles and what networks are doing. Having a clearer picture of how these networks can synthesize for a bigger impact and being clear on how they link with each other because that is the essence of coming together on platforms"*. – University Research Centre Director, South Africa.

Sustainability of networks/Associations including membership was another key priority area around EIDM capacity development at the network level as evidenced in this quote: *"Talking about evidence is very easy but sustaining a network is not easy- how do we create a network that is active where there is a win-win situation among members of the network? How do you create networks on EIDM that are real networks that produce results? How do we create networks that bring about tangible results as a network? Addressing issues of benefits such as publication channels, conference, training opportunities, functional website with materials"*. – University Research Centre Co-Director, South Africa.

How the AEN can support organisations' EIDM Activities (areas of synergy)

Part of this study was dedicated to exploring potential collaboration of the AEN with organisations, keeping in mind that currently membership is for individuals only. Figure 12 depicts the seven overarching ideas that were mentioned. Majority focus on the role of the AEN as a platform serving several purposes.

As several areas synergy were identified, we highlight just a few here. In reference to AEN being a *Platform for building relationships and collaboration*, one respondent asked: "*How can the AEN ensure that members have relationships such that for instance if an organisation or individual posts on Twitter, they would be sure that such an action would cause others within the network to engage as organisations?*" - University Research Centre Co-Director, South Africa.

With respect to the *Platform for Learning and experience sharing* recommendation, a respondent talked about encouraging south-south learning. "*The AEN should focus more on the aspect of sharing experiences among organisations specifically on what has worked, what has not worked and under which specific circumstances in terms of evidence-based projects.. Learning from experiences as organisations within the same and different sectors should be a key component of AEN's work within the continent. From our experience, we are learning more from South-North partnership/networking rather than from*

outside the continent of Africa" - University Research Centre Director, Malawi.

"*Since AEN wants to be the go-to organization that fosters collaboration among organizations, it should be interested in such a process and bring issues and experiences of members of its network to the fore so that the conversation can be enhanced with consensus-building being at the core on how to deal with these issues. Consensus on how to think about research impact collectively and not competing- how to conceptualize this could be an area that the AEN might want to plug in. The consensus aspect of different organizations and different levels of research for EIDM working together might be appealing to funders*". – Senior NGO Official, Uganda.

Under the *Platform for Capacity development & opportunities* one respondent proposed that the AEN consider developing skills of members in advocacy: "*We are not really specialized on EIDM, we are more on evaluation so sharing technical assistance especially on how to engage policy advocacy would be of help to us*". – Division Manager within a multi-lateral organisation, Côte d'Ivoire. Another respondent suggested that the AEN perhaps consider conceptualizing a consensus on how to think about research impact collectively rather than competitively.

| 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) | |

Figure 12: EIDM activities that the AEN can support

AEN leveraging strengths and capacities of other organisations

Apart from AEN supporting EIDM activities of EIDM organisations on the continent, we also sought to explore how AEN could benefit from the strengths of peer organisations. Box 3 provides a summary of the offers that were received, while Box 4 provides a list of ideas that relate to potential for mutual capacity sharing in a world where we imagine symbiotic relationships between the AEN and other EIDM organisations in Africa.

Box 3: Opportunities to benefit the AEN offered by other EIDM organisations in Africa

- Be a point of reference on health matters on behalf of the AEN within Ethiopia
- Support the development of policy briefs and conducting dialogues- how to engage decision-makers to use new evidence
- Share expert's time and expertise in the sectors such as environment, climate change, evaluation of programs and projects, among others
- 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
- Contribute to the AEN newsletter and blogs.
- Train people on using leadership as an analytical tool.
- Share lessons on policy advocacy in a fairly politically-restricted environment
- Share expertise in producing citizen evidence apart from the standard research evidence

Box 4: Opportunities for mutual capacity sharing among EIDM organisations in Africa

- Mentor and host students
- Facilitate conferences & meetings that AEN has organized, e.g. sessions of Evidence Conferences
- Liaise to each other when developing and disseminating products, e.g. evidence maps
- Co-design advocacy agenda/strategy around evidence use
- Support the AEN and its members during webinars or sharing tools
- Assist in creating training materials and chair in training sessions
- Share information on evidence generation and use with other organisations
- Assist with French translation of various materials
- Joint proposal development to work across countries

Networks/Associations and EIDM

Why include & understand networks and Associations?

The reason for asking "are you a network or association?" was in order to better understand networks who deal with a multitude of members such as AEN. We did not seek to evaluate them but rather sought to learn from them. The following is a summary of the reasons behind including these organisations:

- The reality about dealing with a diverse and dispersed set of members, not about their legal status.
- To learn from their experiences as a member-driven network/association including their enabling and constraining factors
- To identify similarities between the AEN and these associations and networks if any

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

Three networks and 4 associations (total 7) representing a myriad of individuals from various sectors participated in the study as shown in Figure 13. The highest number of these respondents were from academia with the least being the intermediaries/brokers. Figure 14 notes that most operate at the National level. In this case, local refers to geographical coverage that is within a country such as counties and provinces. Regional refers to contexts

that are blocks divided within a continent such as West Africa and Southern Africa.

Networks or associations core functions

The following section discusses the core functions of networks and associations in the study.

Providing capacity development opportunities for members was noted as key for this respondent from Ethiopia: "*We facilitate trainings for our members: these are done together with different institutions on M&E, but mainly on evaluation methodologies, development of evaluation tools, application of tools, development of information collection tools, software, etc. In these we mainly engage other NGOs with capacities to help us in these identified areas*". - Executive Member of a Professional Association, Ethiopia.

Figure 13: Diversity of members within networks/associations (k=7)

On the same topic, a respondent from Kenya notes that that their association builds capacities of individuals and institutions and for the wider public sector based on the national M&E mandate. They also spearhead *advocacy for the use of evidence as an integral part of development* in Kenya: *"This is about the professionalization of the profession- to be recognized as profession through developing professional standards of ethics, credentialization of our members, addressing matters of competence, and having to be supported by an act of parliament"*. – Executive Member of a Professional Association, Kenya.
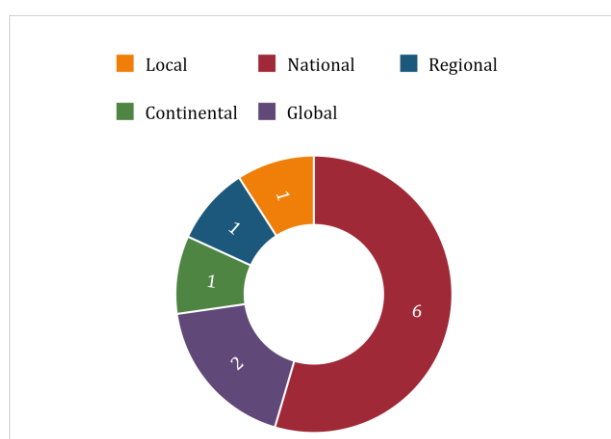

Figure 14: Geographical coverage of networks/associations

Similarly, an Ethiopian respondent indicated that they *facilitated training for their members*: *"These are done together with different institutions on M&E, but mainly on evaluation methodologies, development of evaluation tools, application of tools, development of information collection tools, software, etc. In these we mainly engage other NGOs with capacities to help us in these identified areas"*. - Executive Member of a Professional Association, Ethiopia.

An organisation in Ghana was also focused on *providing support for continuing M&E education* for its members by *"… establishing linkages with local and international M&E institutions/associations that provide continuing M&E educational opportunities. We also have a quarterly e-newsletter to share access to relevant local M&E information. We also organize day-long workshops for beginner, intermediate, and advanced training on the fundamentals of monitoring and evaluation"*. – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana.

Resource mobilization to support the functioning of the associations was also mentioned: *"We approach donors and develop concept papers, we list the items with the budget to request for funding. We also depend on members who also support us from their organisations funds. We also sell publications to support conferences. The member annual subscription fees also help and members are also expected to pay every year to access benefits such as recommendation letters to attend trainings, etc."* – Executive Member of a Professional Association, Ethiopia.

The importance of *cultivating a vibrant community on M&E* among its members was noted as key for an organization in South Africa whose respondent said, *"We strive to cultivate a vibrant community that will support, guide and strengthen the development of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as an important discipline, profession and instrument for*

empowerment and accountability in South Africa." Executive Member of a Professional Association South Africa.

Ghana on discussion of and advocacy for the use of evidence-based decision making in development". – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana.
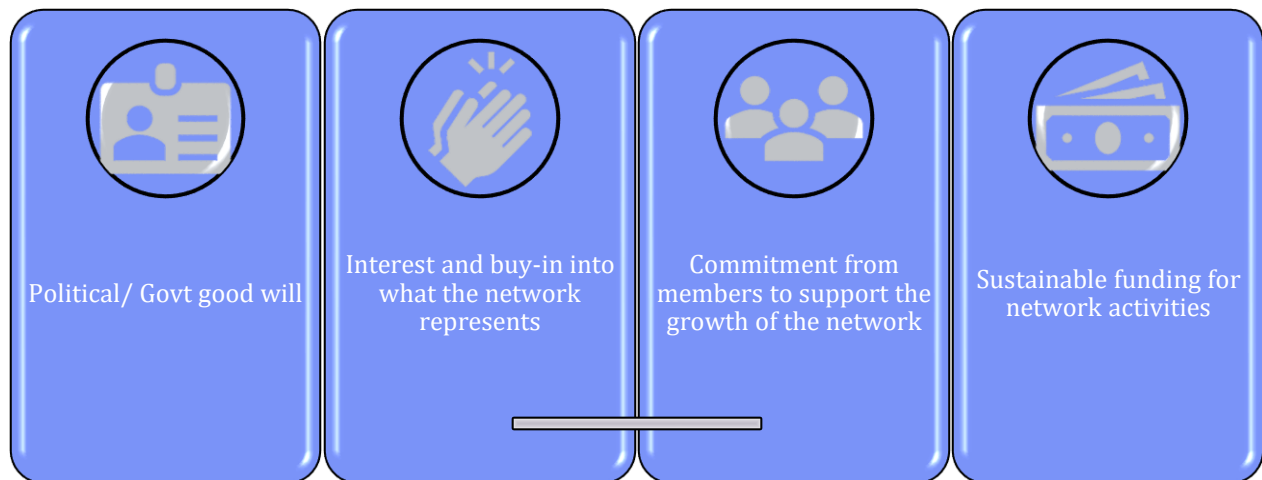

| Political/ Govt good will | Interest and buy-in into what the network represents | Commitment from members to support the growth of the network | Sustainable funding for network activities |

Figure 15: Factors that enable the functioning of networks and associations

Another function as identified was **public relations**: *"We achieve this mainly through attending different conferences … In such activities we inform participants on what we do through informal meetings but also through exhibiting our work, we make newspaper briefings involving journalists to publish our work in newspapers, also engage radios especially on our conferences, our conferences are also highlighted on TV".* - Executive Member of a Professional Association, Ethiopia.

Lastly, **providing a platform for scientific debate** for members was mentioned by respondents in Uganda as well as Ghana as seen here: *"We hold quarterly forums in Accra for discussion of and advocacy for the use of evidence-based decision making in development. We also hold annual conferences that feed into the regional meetings/conferences within*

Factors that enable Network/Association functioning

Four main factors that enable the functioning of networks and associations appeared as outlined in Figure 15 above.

On **political/ Govt will,** a respondent from Ghana noted that: *"Government support has been a good one especially on the need and use of M&E. We therefore, as a network have taken advantage of this opportunity to engage government officials in the network, more especially in evaluation of Government projects vs the impact of funding and the uptake on the use of evidence by Government departments since their officers are members of our organisation. It is now easy for the organisation to work with the government departments on issues of M&E because there is buy-in".* – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana.
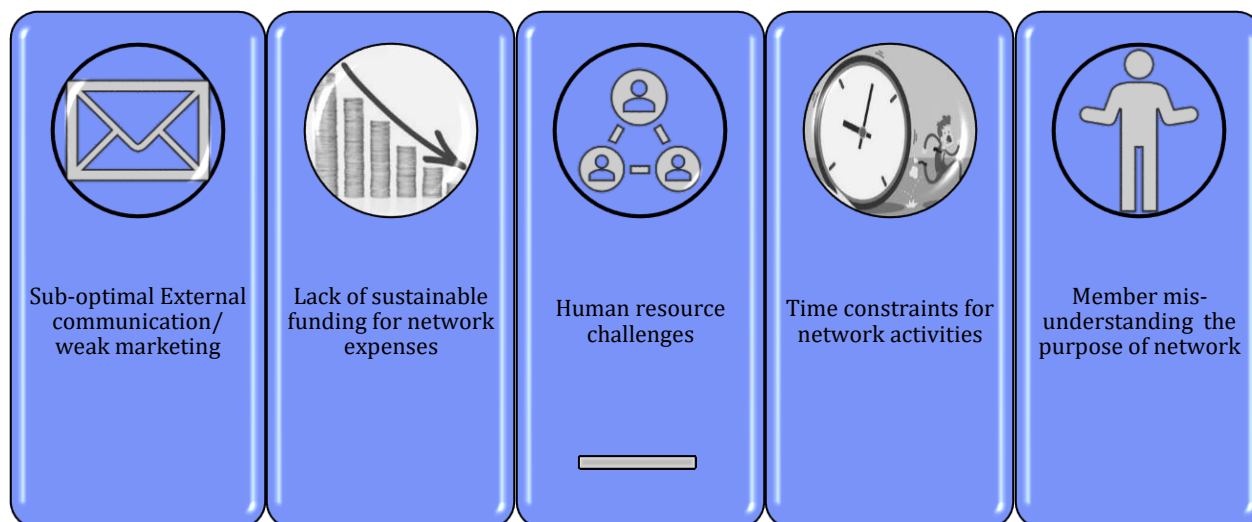
Figure 16: Factors that constrain the functioning of networks and associations

On *Interest and buy-in to what the network represents* one association in South Africa asserted that they are *"…the only association of its kind in the country- this means that we get members coming on board from different organisations and backgrounds. We also have the convening power (people from different professional and backgrounds)".* – Executive Member of a Professional Association, South Africa.

On *Commitment from members to support the growth of the network,* one association in Ethiopia acknowledged the opportunities it has in the EIDM field and continues to explore these through attending thematic conferences identified to benefit the association where it also sells its brand.

On *Sustainable funding for network activities*: an association from Senegal indicated that funds received through annual memberships fees are not conditional compared to those from external funding which provides more flexibility in its use: .*"Income from membership is not tied, it enables us to decide how to use it to the benefit of the association. This is opposed to the obstacles we face with donor funds*

that have specified activities". – Executive Member of a Professional Association, Senegal

Factors that constrain Network/Association functioning

There were various challenges that were identified but two stood out as follows:

First: *human resource challenges* and voluntary contributions of time: *"Our time as members of the secretariat is mostly limited by the fact that we are part-time and cannot volunteer more time as we should. It is also challenging to get other members of the network to volunteer time and expertise without pay*". – Executive member of a Professional Association, Ghana.

Second: *members' misunderstanding the purpose of network,* for instance being mistaken as a grant making institution. The respondent terms this as confusion/misalignment of priorities between membership and implementation. They said that: *"A fellow within the Academy sometimes misunderstands or is unclear on the added value of*

the academy to them…" – Senior Management Official, Uganda.

They end up being frustrated and are not satisfied with the fact the membership in such a network does not involve getting grants.

- *Targeting senior managers of organizations* suffered from assumptions that they possessed the required knowledge about their organizations' EIDM activities. Furthermore, some respondents pushed back on some of the basic questions about the organization stating that they were too clerical and either declined to interview or proposed other staff to interview on their behalf.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

People that straddle between organizations

Obtaining contact information was challenging

Organizations with no available representation

Non-responsiveness to emails

Targeting senior 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

Biases inherent to qualitative research studies

Figure 17: Study limitations

As is the case with all studies, limitations to this one are outlined in the figure above and extrapolated upon in the narrative.

- *Obtaining contact information* including email addresses and telephone numbers from public sources was not always possible or at times outdated
- *Organizations with no available representation*: There were cases where we could not get the appropriate persons to contact even when we had names of organizations

- *Biases inherent to qualitative research studies:* We note the likelihood of social desirability bias on behalf of the respondents as well as redundancy in responses due to fatigue. We tried to ensure clarifications to questions throughout the process as well as provided probes to assist with generating new ideas. Unintentional use of leading questions could have steered the responses towards specific ways of answering the questions which may have led to losing important information from the respondents.

CONCLUSION

There are a multitude of organisations on the African continent engaging in EIDM as well as enhancing capacity and understanding in this field. This presents plenty of opportunity for the AEN to expand its scope, clarify its mission, and embrace the diverse strengths of colleagues on the continent. In order to ensure that we meet the objectives of the study, it's imperative to take into consideration all the suggestions, recommendations, offers from partners, and opportunities presented to the AEN. The results of the study were shared internally with the AEN Secretariat as well as externally through an interactive webinar. There are some recommendations that we have already incorporated into our future strategy, some that we have excluded as outside of AEN's scope, and others that we will keep in mind for the future especially those which require resources that we do not have at the moment. Most importantly, we will also reach out to others who would want to collaborate.

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

Figure 18: Summary of next steps

ANNEXES

Annex 1: How the AEN achieves its 6 strategic goals

Goal 1: Fostering collaboration among those engaged in or supporting EIDM in Africa

- Hosted Evidence conferences (2014, 2016, 2018), Evidence online festivals, and webinars
- Provided a platform to spotlight individuals and organizations of the AEN network e.g. the Africa Evidence Leadership Award, and "spotlighting" individual endeavours in the AEN newsletter
- Created a virtual and accessible "EIDM hub" for Africa on the AEN website
- Identified synergies amongst individuals and / or organisations in Africa, and providing opportunities for individuals and organizations to meet (either in person or virtually) and foster their own collaborations. E.g. Cross-learning between other groups affiliated with AEN and ACE (such as PERLSS and CEDIL)
- Created working groups tasked with scientific and/or governance functions serving the AEN. These include the AEN Advisory Board, and the AEN Reference Group, Evidence conference working group, enhancing and redefining the AEN secretariat

Goal 2: Increasing knowledge and understanding of EIDM in Africa

- Provided a range of easy-to-access information on EIDM, explaining what EIDM is, and what it can achieve in Africa through social media platforms and AEN website and EIDM hub
- Demonstrated how supporting evidence-use has increased evidence-use leading to better outcomes on reducing poverty and inequality, for instance through collating stories of change.
- Conducted an in- depth analysis of the AEN membership to characterize and understand who is doing what and where. e.g. through surveys and descriptive statistics and trends from the membership database
- Spearheaded a qualitative research study on EIDM organizations in Africa

Goal 3: Share capacities across the EIDM ecosystem in Africa

- Collated and published an updated database of capacity enhancement resources and opportunities
- Documented and shared EIDM capacity strengths; capacity limitations; development needs; and development opportunities across the membership (and continent to the extent possible).
- Provided spaces for capacity development learnings and opportunities
- Explored solutions to capacity development through dedicated webinars and evidence online festivals

Goal 4: Ensure the Network's own organizational excellence, as a sustainable evidence-informed member-driven organization

- Consulted the Advisory Board, Reference Group, and members to contribute to internal reflection with a view to adapt and revise the AEN objectives, governance, activities and approach.
- Continued to explore alternative and diverse sources of funding e.g. activity grants and support for core network activities

Goal 5: Improve the enabling context by promoting evidence-informed decision-making in Africa

- Identified and spotlighted members to promote and communicate their work through the monthly newsletter and social networks
- Produced relevant resources on EIDM and made the available on the EIDM hub and raised awareness on these through blogs and other social media activities.

Goal 6: Advocate for Africa's full voice and participation in the national, regional, and global movements to increase evidence-informed decision-making

- Promoted African evidence leaders through the Africa Evidence Leadership Award
- Shared information about global events and about bursary opportunities though the monthly newsletter and social media platforms
- Recommended key African experts to contribute to continental as well as global discussions

The AEN embraces multiple modalities across all the 6 goals that include blogs, webinars, social media platforms, newsletter, and emails to raise awareness and disseminate information to various stakeholders.

Annex 2: Inclusion of additional organisations

Organisation	Reason to include
EVIPNet Burkina Faso, EVIPNet Cameroon, EVIPNet Ethiopia, African Institute for Health Policies and Systems, African Centre for Rapid Evidence Synthesis *Note: EVIPNet Ethiopia was changed to Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), a realization upon an interview with respondents from EPHI.*	Recommended from the PERLLS organized meeting at the University of Johannesburg in September 2019.
ACED (Actions for the Environment and Sustainable Development)	ACED contacted AEN with interest in participating in the research. ACE recommended that the study includes the organization.
Nigerian Academy of Science, The Global Young Academy, UNESCO Africa The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences	Recommended by the study's PI while an (International Network for Government Science Advice) INGSA meeting.
COCHRANE South Africa	Added upon recommendation of the PI
Knowledge Transformation Platform, Malawi	
Monitoring and Evaluation Department, Government of Kenya	Colleagues at Twende Mbele assisted in getting the contacts
Cameroon Centre for Evidence, Department of Science and Technology (South Africa), Ethiopian Evaluation Association, Ministry of Health (Malawi), West Africa Capacity-building and Impact Evaluation (WACIE), West African Health Organization- Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe Evidence Informed Policy Network (ZeipNET)	Included as part of the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) Reference Group
Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research	Based on a recommendation by a colleague
Hewlett funded organizations.	Colleague at ACE recommended that the study include other organisations funded under Hewlett's Global Development Programme. These are were mainly sourced from *Results for All September 2017 – February 2018 Report*
Council on Health Research for Development, African Economic Research Consortium; Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network, Africa Cabinet Government Network, African Center for Parliamentary Affairs, African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation	These are organisations from the Results-for-All-Network-Mapping-Report

Source: Desktop data collection (2019)

Annex 3: Networks/ associations that participating organisations are members of

List of 42 networks/associations that organisations are members of as identified by respondents

3iE	Francophone Evaluation Network	The International Union for Conservation of Nature
Africa Evaluation Association	Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative	The Network of African Science Academies
African Medical Laboratories Association	Global Water Partnership	The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
African Parliamentarians Network on Development (APNOD) Evaluation	Guidelines International Network	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
African Society for Laboratory Medicine	Health Technology Assessment International	The Centre for Learning and Evaluation and Results-Global
African Science Academy Network	Inter-Academy Partnership	The Clinical Research Initiative for Global Health
African studies association on Africa	International Council for Science	The Convention on Biological Diversity
American Society of Parasitology	International Network for Government Science Advice	The International Union for Conservation of Nature
COCHRANE Africa	International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation	The Network of African Science Academies
COCHRANE Nutrition	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
Collaboration for Environmental Evidence	Joanna Briggs Institution network	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Collaboration for Evidence in Africa	OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Development Evaluation	Twende Mbele
Drugs for Neglected Diseases under WHO	PERLSS	West African Civil Society Network
Ethiopian Public Health Association	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association	WHO EVIPNet
Ethiopian Medical Association	The Centre for Learning and Evaluation and Results- Global	
Evaluation Cooperation Group	The Clinical Research Initiative for Global Health	
FemWise-Africa	The Convention on Biological Diversity	