



## Africa Evidence Network

NEWSLETTER || April 2017

### New national health financing advocacy network in Nigeria

Nigeria is committed to attaining universal health coverage (UHC). The country recognises that UHC can be achieved through engagement with a wide array of stakeholders including policy-makers and legislators for reforms, support and participation. To speed up the health financing reforms for the purpose of achieving UHC, the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH), in collaboration with the West African Health Organisation (WAHO) has established a National Network of Advocacy Champions for Adequate Health Financing to contribute to better health financing. The Network's role is to use strategic and targeted advocacy action at relevant points in the budget development process. This is to hold federal and state government in health accountable for their financial resolutions. The WAHO has committed US\$50,000 to fund the network.



Left to Right: United Nations Population Fund representative, Dr. Akin Oyemakinde (Director, Department of Planning, Research and Statistics, Nigerian FMoH), Prof. Eytayo Lambo (Former Minister of Health, Nigeria), and Dr. Gafar Alawode (Health Finance and Governance (HFG) Chief of Party).  
Photo: HFG

South Africa's **Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)** in the Presidency has published its third annual **report** on the National Evaluation System and the first that include DPME's emerging research work. The report outlines important findings emerging from the evaluations of policies and programmes such as the implementation of the National Development Plan and evidence map on human settlements.

**Africa Rising for Justice, Peace and Dignity** is a new pan-African solidarity movement founded by 272 individuals from 44 African countries that was established in August 2016. One of the key **aims** of the movement is to inspire millions of African people to demand good governance as they all work collectively towards common goals of peace, social inclusion, and shared prosperity.

The **Institute for Security Studies'** latest article states that over 40 million people are expected to face extreme poverty by 2040 in Southern Africa. The region is expected to see an increase in poverty because it has the highest level of inequality coupled with low economic growth that does not provide for the growing population.

The latest article from **University World News** highlights the launch of the African Research Universities Alliance, a network of 16 top African universities. The launch was held on 3 April 2017 at the University of Ghana in Accra. During his keynote address, Ghana's President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo emphasized the need for African governments to invest heavily in research.

### Evidence events

**22 May: Evidence Synthesis in Africa Seminar in Johannesburg, South Africa**

**23-27 October: SAMEA 6th Biennial Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa**

### Announcements

- **Call for nominations** to serve on the Human Sciences Research Council board
- **Call for nominations** for the Global Evidence Summit 2017 Awards

The latest **AEN blog** is by Clement Dlamini from the Monitoring and Evaluation Association of Swaziland (MEAS). The blog highlights the establishment of MEAS and its participation at the 8<sup>th</sup> International African Evaluation Association which took place in Kampala in Uganda on 27-31 March 2017. Submit your AEN blog [here](#).

### Is measuring policy influence like measuring thin air?

The [Indonesian Knowledge Sector](#) has released a [working paper](#) that reflects on the experience of SurveyMETER, a policy research institute based in Yogyakarta, in producing three episode studies of research-based policy influence on public services for the elderly in Balikpapan, Denspasar and Jakarta. Episode studies start from a clear policy change and chronicles key events that led to the policy change. SurveyMETER conducted this type of study to assess and document its policy influence. A key lesson from the experience of SurveyMETER is that the investment of time and resources to produce the episode studies is the result of the commitment of the organisation to understand what works and what does not work for policy engagement and to influence activities. Episode studies is a tool among many that can help policy research organisations and think tanks document the uptake of their research work in policy making.



### INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

[Howard White's](#) latest blog argues that intuitive evidence could result in irrational decisions when it comes to evidence-informed policy-making (EIDM). He explains, confronting irrationality with the facts and teaching critical evidence appraisal is a starting point to EIDM. In producing evidence it is important for researchers to understand the context in which policy-makers operate and the levels of evidence criteria.

[Better Evaluation](#) is running a new series to document ideas, challenges and examples around using monitoring and evaluation to support adaptive management. Patricia Rogers' [blog](#) starts a process of exploring this issue and is followed by a second [blog](#) by Fred Carden and Arnaldo Pellini in which they share what they learned about adaptive management.

[The R&E Search For Evidence blog](#) by Annette Brown summarises findings of an evidence gap map conducted by 3ie which seeks to find out how many scientific facts are there about science, technology, and innovation for development. Some findings from the map showed that there are 134 impact evaluations of mobile health interventions that measure global health outcomes. The vast majority of these outcomes are measured at the individual or household level.

### Evidence from academia

[Collie et al:](#) 'Academic perspectives and experiences of knowledge translation: a qualitative study of public health researchers'

[Gillespie et al:](#) 'The use of randomisation-based efficacy estimators in non-inferiority trials'

[Stewart et al:](#) 'Building capacity for evidence-informed decision making: an example from South Africa'

The latest [BMJ Opinion blog](#) features [Kamal Mahtani](#) who examines the importance of systematic reviews in reducing research waste. His argument stems from the global spend on biomedical research and development which is estimated to be about US \$250 billion but of which much is wasted. This estimate of wastage is derived from failure to conduct, describe and publish research to standards that make the output useful. He proposes a step to reduce this waste by arguing that new research should not be conducted until a systematic assessment of existing research has been performed.