

Africa Evidence Network

NEWSLETTER || August 2017

Low uptake of data blamed for food insecurity in Africa

Ghana's Minister for Monitoring and Evaluation, Dr. Anthony Akoto Osei, opened his [speech](#) at the first [West Africa Evidence to Action Conference](#) by stating that the huge disconnect existing between researchers and policy-makers is the main cause of food insecurity in Africa. The conference focused on agriculture and food security and was hosted by the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED) at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER) in Ghana. Dr Osei believes that the disconnect between researchers and policy-makers in Ghana can be corrected: with the right level of support, collaboration between researchers, evaluation experts and decision-makers, the translation of evidence-based research findings into actionable policy, and programmatic guidance, addressing this disconnect will be an achievable goal.



Monitoring and Evaluation Minister Dr. Anthony Akoto Osei speaking at the Evidence to Action conference in Legon, Ghana. Image credit: [CitiBusiness News](#)

[J-Pal reports](#) that the Ministry of General Education in Zambia is planning to scale up basic literacy and numerical skills through their Catch Up programme to 1800 schools for the next three years. The Catch Up programme is based on the [Teaching the Right Level programme](#) approach pioneered by the Indian NGO Pratham. The Ministry hopes Catch Up will address low-learning levels in the country.

The [Africa Centre for Evidence](#) has been running a blog series on evidence, networks, and relationships. The latest [blog](#) focusses on how research producers might gain better understanding of decision-makers and decision-making. Previous blogs covered the [dangers of a single study](#), the [production of useful evidence](#) and [what we know about facilitating evidence-use](#).

Sarah Owings [addresses](#) the lack of infrastructural support which hinders Africa's retention of science graduates, impacting the continent's scientific independence and contributing to the so called 'brain drain'. Some academic commentaries suggest that investment in infrastructure and training in entrepreneurship is key in creating science careers.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy in Lisbon. CAAST-Net Plus will launch a book in October 2017 reflecting on and sharing the experiences of the Africa-EU collaborations in science, technology and innovation. In its latest edition, the [CAAST-Net Plus Magazine](#) highlights food security and Horizon 2020 lessons from Africa.

Evidence events

12 September: [AEN and 3ie satellite session](#) at the GES, Protea Hotel Victoria Junction, Cape Town

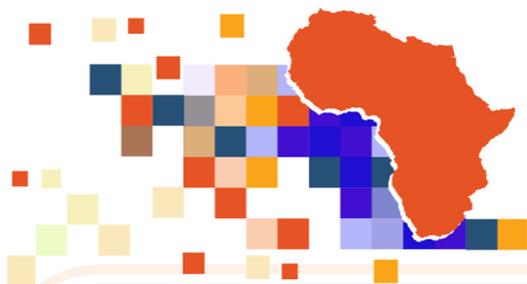
12-17 September: [Global Evidence Summit](#), Cape Town, South Africa

26 September: [EU4FACTS: Evidence for policy in a post-fact world conference](#), Brussels

Announcements

- The AEN Chairperson Professor Ruth Stewart will be giving the following keynote at the Global Evidence Summit: '[Do evidence networks make a difference?](#)'
- Visit us the AEN stand at the [Global Evidence Summit](#).
- [AEN consultation](#) on the Evidence 2018 strands continues – share your views.

Dr Tamara Kredon from the South African Medical Research Council and Cochrane South Africa authored this month's [AEN blog](#), sharing what is happening at the 2017 Global Evidence Summit in Cape Town, South Africa. Submit your AEN blog [here](#).

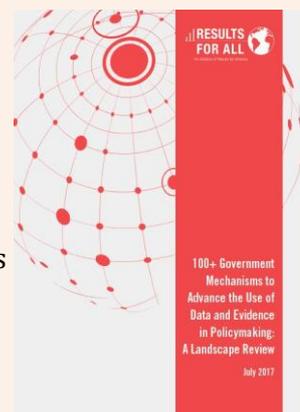


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Results for All releases a global landscape review

The [Results for America's](#) global [Results for All](#) initiative has released a global landscape review entitled '[100+ Government Mechanisms to Advance the Use of Data and Evidence in Policymaking: A Landscape Review](#)' which features case studies from Ghana, Kenya, and Canada. The purpose of the landscape review is to understand the different approaches governments are taking to create formal strategies and mechanism to promote the use of data and evidence in government policy and practice. The review showcases more than 100 promising approaches from countries across the globe and is based on a combination of literature reviews, an in-depth questionnaire, expert consultation, country visits, and learning from the [Evidence Works 2016](#) forum in London. It is also accompanied by resource tables and related case studies on evidence-informed policy-making training in Ghana, demographic dividend policies in Kenya, and a community safety strategy in Canada. The case studies aim to explore factors that contribute to evidence-informed policy-making in great depth.



INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

Clara Richards [shares](#) how [INASP](#) and [Politics & Ideas](#) are exploring new approaches to improving knowledge-to-policy systems in government agencies. The need for new approaches comes from the complexity in which public agencies operate. Therefore, the Context Matters Framework was developed to address this complexity. The framework summarises key organisational factors influencing government use or none-use of knowledge.

The latest [London International Development Network blog](#) investigates who should do research on aid effectiveness. This question was addressed by the Global Development Network in their two policy dialogues held last year. The dialogue concluded that both governments and researchers of aid-receiving countries need to take a lead in setting the aid research agenda.

[Lessons from a trial of the Success Case Method](#) are featured in a recent blog from [Better Evaluation](#). The blog describes how the Success Case Method approach is useful for documenting stories of impact and for understanding the factors that help or hinder impact. The Success Case Method was adapted and applied to a multi-country capacity-building project funded by USAID. One lesson from the project involves knowing the long-term programme objectives and activities in order to know the pathway from activities to impact.

Evidence from academia

[New edition](#): Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice, Volume 13, Number 3

[Obuku et al](#): 'Working with non-state providers in post-conflict and fragile states in primary healthcare service delivery'

[Porumbescu et al](#): 'Translating policy transparency into policy understanding and policy support: Evidence from a survey experiment'

[Stewart et al](#): 'Terminology and tensions within evidence-informed decision-making in South Africa over a 15-year period'

[Cochrane Learning Live](#), in partnership with [GESI: the Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative](#), has released the latest [videos](#) from their webinar on the importance of knowledge synthesis. They also share examples of evidence synthesis and types of knowledge syntheses.