

Closing the African research gap

In a recent [blog post](#) on [Next Billion](#), programme manager for the [Global Networks Initiative](#) Maya Ranganath shares how the [Centre for Effective Global Action](#) (CEGA) uses different mechanisms for increasing high-quality research produced and used in Africa, all to overcome the African research gap. These mechanisms include matchmaking events, training on impact evaluations, and sharing of funding opportunities and are delivered during semester-long fellowships at the [East Africa Social Science Translation Collaborative](#). There are three main reasons for the research gap within Africa, she continues to argue: limited supply of professional researchers, scarce funding for sub-Saharan Africa, and daunting political challenges.



Filling the gap Fellowships that support training and matchmaking events aimed to fill African research gap

The first [meeting](#) of the [Malabo Montpellier Forum](#) took in Benin in December last year. The aim of the forum is to share lessons between decision-makers on what has helped combat malnutrition and hunger in Africa. His Excellence Abdoulaye Bio Tchané, Beninese Minister of State for Planning and Development, stated that the meeting was “a brilliant way to share what works, why and how”.

The South African Health Review (SAHR), published annually by [Health Systems Trust](#), is currently seeking [abstracts for their 2018 issue](#). With their [20th publication](#) having been published last year, the aim of the SAHR is to share a South African perspective on current health policy issues. The deadline for abstract submission is 30 January.

The [International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications](#) (INASP) published an [evidence brief](#) which showcases how eastern and southern African decision-makers in HIV prevention engage with evidence. The [report](#) states how decision-makers prefer research using conducted within their own countries when making decisions.

At the end of January, the [Africa Evidence Network](#) (AEN) will be launching the Africa Evidence Leadership Award. The award consists of a keynote address at [Evidence 2018](#), registration and flight to attend the [conference](#), and an additional travel grant provided by the AEN. Any AEN members working in Africa in any sector are eligible to apply.

Evidence events

8 February: [Eval Fest 2018](#), New Delhi, India.

22—23 March: [Ghana Education Evidence Summit](#), Accra, Ghana.

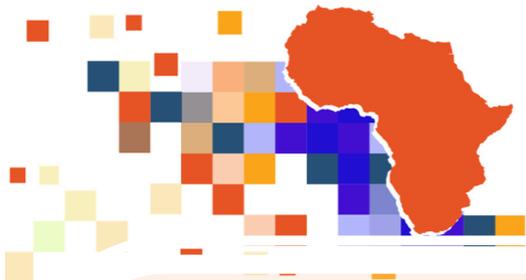
18—21 June: [Adaptation Futures: Dialogues for solutions](#), Cape Town, South Africa.

22—25 September: [Evidence 2018](#), Pretoria, South Africa.

Announcements

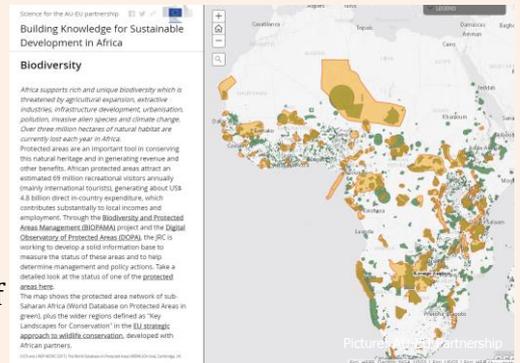
- African Research Leader awards: [proposals open](#)
- Guidelines International Network conference 2018: [registrations open](#)
- [Registrations open](#) for Global Evidence and Implementation Summit

Evidence 2018 co-chairs – Dr Shanil Haricharan, Dr Rhona Mijumbi-Deve, and Prof Ruth Stewart – [hope to welcome you](#) to the conference in this month’s blog post. View all blog posts [online](#) and use the Network to share your view – submit your AEN blog [here](#).



Science for the AU-EU Partnership launches StoryMaps

The **African Union-European Union (AU-EU)** partnership has published a **report** entitled 'Science for the AU-EU Partnership - Building knowledge for sustainable development'. Produced by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and many African-based organisations, the report presents key findings relating to the priorities of people, planet, prosperity, and peace. The report is accompanied by an interactive online service called **Africa StoryMaps** which presents the current state of knowledge on the main themes of the report – people, planet, prosperity, and peace. Users of StoryMaps are able to scroll through findings of the report – such as food security, biodiversity, and climate change under the theme of planet – while simultaneously viewing the data visually represented on a map of Africa.



Using evidence to tell many stories

StoryMaps shares the main findings of the *Science for the AU-EU Partnership* report while simultaneously visually representing that information.

INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

The latest innovation from the **McMaster Health Forum** is the launch of their **Social Systems Evidence** service. The beta version of this service aims to support decision-makers, researchers, and practitioners from across the globe to access the best-available evidence within a timeframe that facilitates evidence-informed decision-making.

In a **blog post** from 2017, Oxfam Humanitarian Policy Adviser Ed Cairns shares various methods for using evidence to influence public perception of the refugee crisis in Europe. Aiming to integrate evidence into public messages on the issue, Cairns argues that evidence and emotion need not be perceived as contrary to one another; the most powerful messages in fact draw on both.

The Cochrane Collaboration has **launched a new online interactive course** focused on training authors on how to conduct a systematic review. Researchers, decision-makers, and other practitioners from countries classified as **World Health Organisation** **Hinari A** or **B** countries qualify for free access to the various modules which include an introduction to conducting systematic reviews, writing the review protocol, and searching for studies.

Evidence from academia

Cooper et al: 'A comparison of results of empirical studies of supplementary search techniques and recommendations in review methodology handbooks: a methodological review'

Baron et al: 'The Tools of the Mind curriculum for improving self-regulation in early childhood'

Lianlian et al: 'Knowledge translation to advance evidence-based health policy in Thailand'

Stewart: 'Do evidence networks make a difference?'

EvalCommunity is a network aimed at a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) professionals. The portal hosts information on M&E jobs, tenders, and events from around the world. The portal also provides a directory of M&E professionals from across the globe, stipulating in what region experts may be found.