

Africa Evidence Network

NEWSLETTER || March 2016

AEN strengthening EIDM in Southern Africa

This month the [Africa Evidence Network \(AEN\)](#) hosted two new [roadshows](#) in South Africa and Malawi. (The first roadshow took place in Zimbabwe.) The aim of the roadshows is to engage with local networks in Southern Africa to strengthen evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM). All three roadshows had an attendance of 102 participants and we welcomed 60 new AEN members as a result. The roadshows proved to be a great vehicle in getting relevant role players in the field of EIDM into one room for the purposes of engagement and knowledge sharing and to promote collaboration in producing and using better evidence in decision-making. AEN looks forward in continuing the conversation at the upcoming [Evidence 2016](#) conference on 20-22 September 2016 in Pretoria, South Africa.



AEN roadshow in Blantyre, Malawi

The [USAID Deliver project](#) has published a new [report](#) that evaluates the piloted Zimbabwe Assisted Pull System (ZAPS) project conducted in Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. This project is the consolidation of four existing health commodity distribution systems into a single ZAPS for primary healthcare facility level. The results will inform the decision whether to expand the ZAPS model to the rest of Zimbabwe.

The [Next Einstein Forum \(NEF\)](#) is a platform that brings together leading thinkers in science, policy and industry. NEF hosted a conference in Dakar, Senegal on 8-10 March 2016. One of the [themes](#) that emanated from the conference is how African universities can widen their teaching of maths and its use in research to support solving development problems.

A [Research to Action blog](#) published an [article](#) that looks at the importance of studying the research environment in developing countries. This study was done by researchers from the [Global Development Network](#). According to the study only four universities from Sub-Saharan Africa are listed in the top 500 best universities worldwide in the Shanghai Ranking 2015.

[Development Gateway](#) has a [Results Data Initiative](#) that tracks [aid donors'](#) project accomplishments. This is done by tracking donors' report projects both output and outcome. The goal of the initiative is to provide good data to measure progress in development. For example, the initiative found 47 291 people have been trained in HIV treatments in Ghana in the past 10 years.

Evidence events

02-06 May: [3rd Pan-African Capacity Development Forum in Harare, Zimbabwe](#)

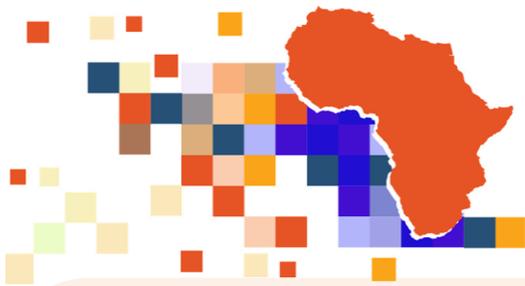
20-22 September: [Evidence 2016 in Pretoria, South Africa](#)

26-28 September: [What Works Global Summit in London, United Kingdom](#)

Announcements

- [Registration](#) is open for Evidence 2016, a conference hosted by the AEN.
- [Vacancy](#)- Deputy Director of Research Coordination at the Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa.

The latest [AEN blog](#) is by our AEN team who recently partnered with PAN Children for a roadshow in Cape Town. PAN Children focuses on children's rights to promote the use of evidence in policy-making. AEN blog submissions are welcome on our [website](#).



Africa Evidence Network

NEWSLETTER || March 2016

The What Works Global Summit 2016

The [What Works Global Summit 2016 \(WWGS2016\)](#) invites policy-makers, programme managers, media representatives, practitioners, and researchers to a conference which will take place at Bloomsbury in London on 26-28 September 2016. The international event will promote quality evidence and ways of producing and communicating evidence to maximize uptake into policy and practice. The WWGS2016 is organized by the [Campbell Collaboration](#), [International Initiative for Impact Evaluation \(3ie\)](#), [Sense about Science](#), and the [What Works Research Centre at Queen's University Belfast](#). The WWGS2016 is now accepting submissions for the conference activities. The AEN looks forward to participating in the summit and engaging with international AEN members.



INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

The global initiative [Healthcare Information for All \(HIFA\)](#) has launched a new programme on [Evidence-Informed Policy and Practice](#). HIFA is a global network that includes more than 15 000 health professionals, policy-makers, researchers, systematic reviewers, international/national guideline developers, publishers and information professionals in 175 countries who interact on five virtual forums in three languages.

[Devex](#) is a media platform that publishes global development news. In their Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) section, guest columnist from the [Overseas Development Institute's](#), Tiina Pasanen, [discusses](#) how the scope and scale of policy research projects have broadened, moving away from single research studies toward multicomponent, multipartner, and multisector endeavors. The article shares four key things to bear in mind when designing an M&E framework for a project.

The [World Bank](#) blog [features](#) Markus Goldstein who looks at what works for improving welfare in agriculture. The blog reviews findings from the Campbell Collaboration systematic review on [“The effects of training, innovation and new technology on African smallholder farmers’ economic outcomes and food security”](#) authored by AEN chairperson Ruth Stewart and co-authors. For example, the review reveals that out of 18 470 citations there are less than 19 high quality studies that show the impact of training interventions on farmers’ economic outcomes.

Evidence from academia

[Channing et al](#): ‘Assessing foreign Aid’s long-run contribution to growth and development’

[Lesley Green](#): “Give Us Evidence!” What does it mean to require “evidence-based research” in decision-making on hydraulic fracturing?’

[Schnitzler et al](#): ‘Using Twitter™ to drive research impact: A discussion of strategies, opportunities and challenges’

The [Overseas Development Institute](#) has published a guide which looks at [when and how to develop an impact-oriented monitoring and evaluation \(M&E\) system](#). The purpose of the guide is to address the challenges faced by many development programme staff that had the experience of commissioning an impact evaluation towards the end of a project or programme. These challenges included the M&E system failing to provide adequate data about implementation, context, baseline, or interim results. The interventions involved in the guide shared some common challenges related to the type of delivery and impact.