

### UJ-BCURE Malawi: Mentoring and networking around evidence-informed decision-making

The UJ-BCURE programme in Malawi, in partnership with our implementing partner – Citizens' Health – focuses on supporting the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) in evidence-informed decision-making. In 2015 we are working in Mchinji and Ntchisi districts with the District Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinating Committees which comprise of M&E officers from various sectors. During a recent visit to Malawi members of the UJ-BCURE team participated in mentoring activities in both districts. Mentoring focused on the application of EIDM learning in specific sectors in cases that have been identified in partnership with Ministry. We were also able to attend a networking event in Mchinji that brought together government and non-government partners. The trip was very successful in promoting the AEN and we welcome all our new Malawi members to the network.



Networking event in Mchinji, Malawi

A news [article](#) published by [The Guardian](#) discusses a [bill](#) that seeks to limit the work of NGOs in Uganda. One of the bill's clauses is the power assigned to the Ugandan authorities to inspect and shut down an organisation. Further, NGOs that operate without a permit risk a jail sentence of up to eight years for directors. The bill affects NGOs working on issues such as oil, land ownership and corruption.

Tanzania hosted Africa's first [Open Data Conference](#) in Dar es Salaam 4-5 September 2015. President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete gave a [keynote address](#) and embraced open data as part of the development agenda in Africa. Open data promotes transparency, openness and accountability for the government and the people. Tanzania makes a range of data freely available [here](#).

INASP features a [blog](#) by Winnie Khaemba from the African Centre for Technology Studies. It covers a series of climate-change roundtables that have been held in Kenya to bring together scientists and policy-makers. Some of the highlights are the cross-sectoral learning and limited integration of climate-change adaptation and mitigation in planning.

The recent [re-analysis](#) of the [original study](#) about school-based deworming programmes in Kenya has prompted a [media](#) and [social media](#) debate. In the light of this debate, [Howard White](#) reflects on the importance of policy be informed by systematic reviews instead of single studies.

### Evidence events

25-27 September: [United Nations Sustainable Development Summit](#)

21 September-20 December: [A short online course on systematic reviews](#)

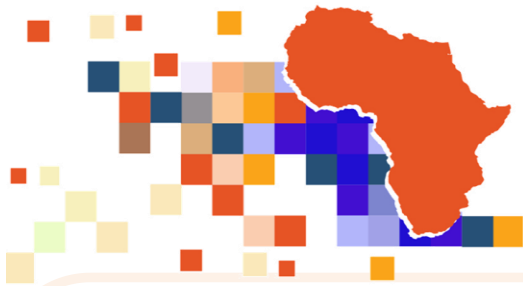
02-06 November: [Building gender-responsive national evaluation capacity training](#)

23-27 November: [2016-2020 Global Evaluation Agenda](#)

### Announcements

- AEN will have a stand at the [SAMEA conference](#) from 14-16 October 2015 at the Hilton Hotel in Sandton, Johannesburg. We hope to meet you there.

The latest [AEN blog](#) by Russell Wildeman from UJ-BCURE reflects on the recent UJ-BCURE workshop held on 13 August 2015 for government officials in South Africa. It deliberated on practical challenges that represent barriers to increasing the use of evidence in decision-making in government. AEN blog submissions are welcome on our [website](#).



## Financing for development: Using independent evaluation to turn aspirations into achievements

The **World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG)** presented a paper 'Financing for Development (Fin4Dev): Using independent evaluation to turn aspirations into achievements' at the **third UN financing for development conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, between 13-16 July 2015**. The paper covers over a decade of evidence on international development to support better project and programme implementation. This was an effort to support the **Fin4Dev agenda** and make best practices and evaluation insights easily available to stakeholders. The evaluation findings are structured around key funding streams: domestic public finance, private sector development, and jointly funded investments such as public-private partnerships and global programmes. IEG's evaluation has consistently found that ownership is one of the key drivers of success. This applies in all instances, including fragile and conflict affected states.



## INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

**EvalPartners** have been hosting global online consultations that started in September 2014 and will conclude with the **2016-2020 Global Evaluation Agenda**. This will be officially launched at the EvalPartners Global Forum at the parliament of Nepal in November 2015. The first preliminary **outcome** by the global evaluation community reveals that the most highlighted issue is the need for equity focus and gender responsiveness in evaluations.

The **Huffington Post** has launched a **What's Working SDG blog** series in conjunction with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It focuses on one goal every weekday in September 2015. The first article addresses Goal 1: ending poverty in all forms everywhere. It draws lessons and efforts from the Millennium Development Goals as the SDGs seek to advance ending poverty in the next 15 years.

Caroline Heider's **new blog** featured on the **Independent Evaluation Group** discusses the challenges that evaluation has to overcome in order to be fit for the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The 2030 vision promotes greater quality and inclusion. However, there are conflicting demands that need to be reconciled such as growth, equity and the environment. The evaluation family is faced with the need to enhance evaluation capabilities, adapt to complex systems and address issues intrinsic to the growth of the evaluation profession.

## Evidence from academia

**Wollum et al:** 'Benchmarking health system performance across states in Nigeria: A systematic analysis of levels and trends in key maternal and child health interventions and outcomes, 2000–2013'

**Naude et al:** 'Research evidence and policy: Qualitative study in selected provinces in South Africa and Cameroon'

**Stewart et al:** 'The effects of training, innovation and new technology on African smallholder farmers' wealth and food security: a systematic review'

The latest blog from **KirstyEvidence** features a thought-provoking **article** by Louise Shaxon from **ODI** about how to present research to government with practical examples. She first suggests a gentle approach to government departments recognising what has been achieved in order to put into context what yet has to be done. She advises recommendations should be presented as observations as it is a more constructive advice. Lastly, she encourages that these observations should include explanations of why things should be done differently.