

## The First FAO/WHO/AU International Food Safety Conference

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the African Union (AU) organised the **first international food safety conference**, held in Ethiopia from 12 to 13 February. It brought together government ministers, policy-makers and representatives of non-state groups from all regions across the world to reflect on various food safety challenges with the aim of strengthening food safety systems. A follow-up event, the International Forum on Food Safety and Trade, will be hosted by the World Trade Organisation in Geneva on 23-24 April 2019.



**Two days of transforming knowledge into action in Addis Ababa** Delegates at the launch of the report by Global Food Safety Partnership

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The **Africa Evidence Network** is currently updating its **online database** of available resources, tools, guides and opportunities for capacity-building in evidence-informed decision-making in Africa. Kindly send the resources to Precious Motha on [ace@uj.ac.za](mailto:ace@uj.ac.za) by end of February 2019. In sending us this information, you are agreeing that we can share the information within our **online database**.

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In an article in the *Conversation*, David Richard Walwyn and Laurens Cloete argue that research and development aid in South Africa should benefit the public. South Africa's government put in place guiding principles which aim to ensure that the country's sustainable and comprehensive development is driven by the use of science and technology.

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One of the findings of a recent article entitled **Lessons learned from Evidence-Informed Decision-Making in Nutrition & Health (EVIDENT) in Africa: A project evaluation** was that EVIDENT has been effective in creating a collaborative partnership between researchers and decision-makers.

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Canada's International Development Research Centre, the International Labour Organisation and INCLUDE hosted a **workshop** in Nairobi on how to boost decent employment for African youth. Agnieszka Kazimierczuk shares **the crucial lesson from the workshops**, i.e. the significance of incorporating gender analysis in a research process.

### Evidence events

26 February: [Africa Evidence Webinar](#), Online, 14:00-15:00 (UCT+2).

26-27 February: [The 4th AIDF Africa Summit](#), Nairobi, Kenya.

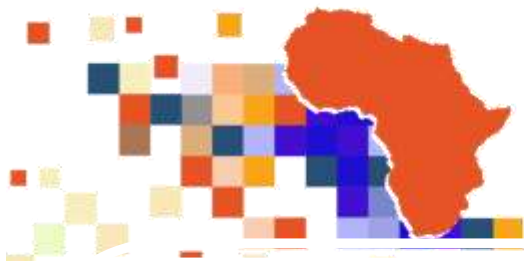
11-15 March: [9th AfrEA Conference](#), Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

18-22 March: [Africa Climate Week 2019](#), Accra, Ghana.

### Announcements

- **Campbell Collaboration** is looking for screening and coding consultants.
- **Stellenbosch University** will be offering a short course on Clinical Guidelines from March to July 2019.
- The African Population and Health Research Center is **hiring: apply**.
- The International Fund for Agricultural Development has **vacant posts**.

In this month's **blogpost**, Ruth Stewart (AEN) and Beryl Leach (3ie) write about moving from capacity building to developing capacities. View all blog posts **online** and use the Network to share your view – submit your AEN blog **here**.



## Understanding public policy: How to maximise the use of evidence

The UK's Institute of Development Studies launched a [new Evidence into Policy and Practice Lecture Series](#) with the objective of facilitating the exchange of ideas and learning on the interactions between knowledge, policy and practice. [At the launch Paul Cairney](#) offered numerous interesting arguments on the topic of evidence-informed policy and practice. One of the five tips on [how to maximise the use of evidence](#) is for all policy-makers to decide on what counts as evidence and what "evidence-informed" means. [James Georgalakis](#), who is a member of the [Africa Evidence Network](#), and the [IDS' Director of Communications and Impact](#), responded to Paul's talk by encouraging everyone to better engage with policy theory and the reality of politics.

### IDS Evidence into Policy and Practice Series

#### Understanding Public Policy: How to Maximise the Use of Evidence

Paul Cairney, Professor of Politics and Public Policy, University of Stirling

**Evidence-informed policy-making: context is everything** If policy-makers are really devoted to taking full advantage of the use of scientific evidence in policy, they must consider how far they will go to get what they want.

## INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE

The huge gap between evidence and democracy can be bridged through channels that bring people and evidence together i.e. "mini-publics" where the citizens get an opportunity to be actively involved in public issues. [Jonathan Breckon](#) and [Anna Hopkins](#) in [a blog](#) point out that citizens should be given the platform to make informed decisions based on evidence.

Despite the numerous environmental disasters, policy-makers and politicians still struggle to comprehend the severity of the current environmental breakdown. [Roger Harrabin](#), a [BBC environment analyst](#), poses a very important question: "will society take the solutions on offer?" [Harriet Bulkeley](#), a geography professor at Durham University, offers a solution for the future by raising the importance of implementing an "evidence-based" policy.

Teaching and research should not to be regarded as contradictory but must be considered as equally important, since they are both essential for the improvement of society, says [Amanda Stutt](#) in [a blog](#). Universities tend to place too much emphasis on research since they use it as a yardstick for academic success which neglects teaching. Conscientising lecturers on the essentials of teaching can be a way of ensuring that teaching is prioritised.

## Evidence from academia

[Chambers et al](#): 'Evidence to support delivery of effective health services: A responsive programme of rapid evidence synthesis'

[Keikelame & Swartz](#): 'Decolonising research methodologies: Lessons from a qualitative research project, Cape Town, South Africa'

[Nyanchoka et al](#): 'A scoping review describes methods used to identify, prioritize and display gaps in health research'

[Shaxson](#): 'Uncovering the practices of evidence-informed policy-making'

In her [blog](#), [Isabelle Pelly](#) emphasises that [collaboration is very important](#) since it saves money and makes services more effective. Collaboration will be influential in a network when members are given a platform to contribute. Networks play a significant role in driving collective action. An effective network is characterised by a shared mission, a policy momentum and is governed by a committed secretariat.