



## Africa Evidence Network

NEWSLETTER || March 2014  
South Africa branch launch edition

### Africa Evidence Network - South African Branch Launch

The South African branch of the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) was officially launched on 28 February at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The launch marked a milestone in the development of the AEN, which has secured funding by DFID via the UJ-BCURE programme for the establishment of country-specific branches and the hosting of two continent-wide colloquiums to provide capacity-building and capacity-sharing opportunities. **A video** of the launch, which was attended by distinguished guests from government and academia, is available.

Prof Marwala of UJ speaking at the launch



**Recent reports** account for the performance of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in South Africa and its attempts to increase the use of evaluation within government agencies. Among other, **the reports** analyse the National Evaluation Strategy – a major initiative of the DPME – two years after its adoption in parliament and provide **findings** of a survey on the perception of high-level policymakers in South Africa regarding M&E. **See also.**

On 11 March 2014 President Jacob Zuma released the **Twenty Year Review** which reflects on the country's progress since the dawn of democracy in 1994.

A DRUSSA **blog post** investigates how to get research into policy, using the case study of South Africa's national policy on disability.

DPME in partnership with the GIZ conducted a **study** on the state and use of M&E systems in the South African Public Service.

3ie invites **submissions of qualifications** to be considered for proposal preparation grants for two impact evaluations to be conducted in South Africa.

A recent PHASA **blog post** introduces the Policy BUDDIES–building demand for evidence in decision making through interaction and enhancing skills project.

**Maraise & Matebesi** published an evaluation of the degree to which evidence-based policy-making has been entrenched in the development of Provincial GDSs.

### Upcoming South African events

25 March: **Workshop discussing the findings of the research-into-policy landscape review in South Africa**

6-7 April: **HSRC roundtable on evidence-based deliberation and evidence-informed policy development**

30 September – 3 October:  
**Global Symposium on Health Systems Research**

### Announcements

- The African Evidence Network is pleased to welcome Tim Clynik as the new acting director of CLEAR.
- Preparations are underway for the 1<sup>st</sup> Africa Evidence Network Colloquium from the 25<sup>th</sup>- 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014 in Johannesburg – further details to follow in future newsletters.

The SACC is pleased to announce **a vacancy** for an appropriately qualified and experienced senior researcher to join the team on a full-time basis.



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### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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The AfDB recently highlighted the importance of M&E in a working paper entitled 'Patterns and Influences in the Supply and Demand of Evaluation and Monitoring in Uganda's Public Sector over the Past Two Decades'. The **paper** gives an historical account of M&E in the Ugandan political system and concludes that the demand-side conditions seem to be decreasing more recently in Uganda.

'Tools for Bringing Research to Policy Makers', was the theme of a recent **panel session** on the final day of the 8th Annual PopPov Conference on Population, Reproductive Health and Economic Development held in Nairobi. A summary of the debate is provided by Peter da Costa, the facilitator of the panel.

Hugh Waddington's recent **blog post** on 'How much evidence is enough for action? The value of systematic reviews and the totality of evidence' sheds light on how willing the international development evidence community is to discuss whether one of its flagship programmes is as evidence-informed as it appeared.

A new **blog post** by Kirsty Newman tackles the question of how to bring research rigour and context together. She finds that research quality and research relevance are two important issues and the fact that some research is not contextually relevant does not in any way negate the fact that some research is not good quality.

The 7<sup>th</sup> **AfrEA international conference** on Evaluation for Development: from analysis for impact was hosted in Yaounde, Kamerun from March 3-7. The AfrEA conference aims to promote and advocate AfrEA's "Made in Africa" approach to evaluation and support the culture of evaluation in Africa.

### Upcoming International events

**24-28 March: Malaysian Evaluation Society conference**  
*Focusing on lessons learned and experiences gained from various aspects of evaluation*  
<http://www.3ieimpact.org>

**2 April: Y4R - Training & Knowledge Sharing Workshop**  
*Provides training in monitoring development results*  
<http://copmfdrafrica.ning.com>

**10 April: INORMS conference**  
*Enabling the Global Research Enterprise from Policy to Practice*  
[www.inorms2014.com](http://www.inorms2014.com)

**16-19 June: Campbell Colloquium**  
*Theme for this year's colloquium is: 'Better evidence for a better world'*  
<http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/>

**6 July: SARIMA Conference**  
*Striving Towards Global Research & Innovation Excellence in Southern Africa*  
<http://www.sarimaconference.co.za/>

**tbc: Knowledge cafés & policy dialogues**  
*To create an enabling, informal environment for scientists to communicate their work to the public*  
<http://www.zeipnet.co.zw/>

Please contact Hazel ([hazelz@uj.ac.za](mailto:hazelz@uj.ac.za)) for questions and further information