



EVIDENCE 2022: A Report by the Africa Evidence Network



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1. INTRODUCTION

EVIDENCE is an event series hosted every second year by the Africa Evidence Network. The series began as an [in-person colloquium in 2014](#) with the intention of bringing together members of the AEN to explore how to enhance the overlaps in their work to support evidence-informed decision-making in Africa. In 2016, the event series was rebranded as EVIDENCE. Since the inception colloquium, the Network has hosted [EVIDENCE 2016](#), [EVIDENCE 2018](#) that included EVIDENCE ONLINE 2018, [EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE](#) and [EVIDENCE 2022](#).

The key purpose of any EVIDENCE event is to facilitate engagement, broker understanding, and support impact in evidence-informed decision-making in Africa. The theme and format of each EVIDENCE event is always unique, shaped by what members want to take forward, as well as impacted by external factors (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic). Irrespective of its distinct blend of virtual and in-person activities, every single EVIDENCE event has delivered on its core purpose: engage, understand, impact.

Because they are responsive to real needs within the evidence ecosystem and we never follow a set format, these events always attract diverse participants from all sectors. Members of civil society, government, academia, and all in between convene to push forward the agenda of reducing poverty and inequality in Africa through the support of evidence-informed decision-making.

2. GROWTH OF THE AEN

The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) is a broad community of over 4034 diverse people who share a vision to see an end to poverty and inequality in Africa. The Network's mission is to work with others to contribute to this vision by increasing the use of evidence in decision-making. The Network is Pan-African, open to all who live and work on the continent. It is unique in its inclusivity and diversity in six broad dimensions. It spans i) all countries in Africa; ii) all sectors across the Sustainable Development Goals; iii) all spheres, including government, academia, civil society and all intermediaries; iv) the full diversity of roles within these spheres from members of parliament to program managers to researchers; v) all elements of the evidence production and use cycle, from the generation of evidence to its integration into policy and implementation; and vi) all types of evidence from administrative data, evaluations of all kinds, experimental research, citizen experiences and systematic syntheses of primary studies.

We believe that there is a need for systemic shifts in the profile and use of evidence across Africa that capitalise on the wealth of expertise and growing appetite to engage with evidence. In a context of limited resources on the continent, emerging EIDM capacity needs to be actively fostered and developed. New relationships between stakeholders in the ecosystem need to be facilitated and strengthened. As a continent-wide 'made-in-Africa' network spanning the major stakeholder groups in EIDM, we have the potential to change norms in the use of evidence for the benefit of our region, and in so doing, to contribute to the achievement of our ultimate goals.

3. STRATEGIC EVIDENCE INFORMED DECISION MAKING EVENTS (EIDM) EVENTS

The AEN has established flagship regional evidence events that bring together the Pan-African community for learning, sharing and relationship-building. We hosted 5 successful events as described below:

a. Evidence 2018

Evidence 2018, involved more than 500 delegates online and in-person. A total of 213 delegates registered for Evidence 2018, with 160 attending the in-person conference in Pretoria from different sectors, including academics, civil servants and practitioners. A total of 32 countries were represented: 28 African countries and six from outside Africa. A total of 308 individuals from 52 different countries participated in the Evidence 2018 online platform over the course of conference, including those that registered but could not physically attend the conference. This increased the global coverage of the event by both nine and 15 African and non-African countries respectively.

A detailed conference concept note and report are publicly available, highlighting how the event supported the AEN's mission of building relationships and connections.

Concept note: <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/137/>

Report: <https://aenweb.blob.core.windows.net/aenweb/publications/files/AEN-EVIDENCE-2018-CONFERENCE-REPORT3.pdf>

b. Africa Evidence Week 2019

The 2019 Africa Evidence Week attracted attention by showcasing over 64 incredible EIDM activities across the continent with the support of 31 African organisations from 14 African countries. Some of the continent's EIDM leaders and organisations participated in the first Africa Evidence Week designed as a virtual celebration of Africa's EIDM. The week-long event, hosted by the AEN secretariat from 9 to 13 September 2019, can be described as one of Africa's leading platforms for promoting the use of evidence among decision-makers on the continent.

The aim of the Africa Evidence Week was to showcase and promote the state of EIDM on the continent. The [programme](#) for the week included in-country physical events, Twitter conversation starters, webinars, live-streamed events, blogs, and videos. During the week, the AEN promoted EIDM content for various African organisations such as [Cochrane South Africa](#), [PACKS Africa](#), the [West African Health Organisation](#), the [Policy Action Network](#) and [eBase Africa](#) through its communication platforms. Over 900 people from across Africa attended in-country events hosted by thirteen organisations during the week. Blogs were one of the most popular ways that organisations participated in Africa Evidence Week with twenty-two blogs posted during the five days. Twitter conversation starters promoted sharing of EIDM resources such as reports and policy briefs from organisations. This increased engagement and interaction on Twitter, and as a result the #AfricaEvidenceWeek hashtag attracted three hundred and ninety-nine online participants from 15 different countries representing 91 organisations, reaching over 1.2 million people on Twitter.

Highlights from the week include a series called [“Why I fell in love with EIDM”](#), launched by the AEN secretariat. These videos featured messages from emerging EIDM leaders within Africa. More highlights are captured in the AEN's [special edition newsletter](#). The success of the Africa Evidence Week received recognition and support from international organisations including [International Initiative for Impact Evaluation \(3ie\)](#), [FHI 360](#), and the [Collaboration for Environmental Evidence \(CEE\)](#).

AEN newsletter September 2019 was our first special edition of the Africa Evidence Network newsletter which features all the excitement from Africa Evidence Week. The Week was a virtual event driven by African evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) organisations showcasing their excellence in supporting evidence-use. There were over 64 EIDM activities including in-country events, conversation starters, webinars, live-streamed events, blogs, and videos. The #AfricaEvidenceWeek hashtag received over 4 million impressions, and the conversation continues with the hashtags #BeyondAfricaEvidenceWeek and #Evidence2020.

<https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/file/30/>

c. EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE (23-25 September 2020)

- In addition to the achievements above, we are working to increase member ownership further, giving new opportunities for members to get involved in the activities and decisions of their Network.
- As indicated above, our membership diversity is increasing, and we continue to monitor the diversity across the Network and respond to opportunities to engage with additional evidence communities. This has included launching our virtual conference to support those who are unable to travel to the costly international EIDM conferences, and reaching out to new evidence communities.
- The AEN achieved a milestone by successfully hosting EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE on the 23-25 September 2020. This event, a fully virtual working meeting, succeeded in fostering collaboration, facilitating dialogue, and advancing evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) in Africa.
- The pivot required a significant re-imagining of the EVIDENCE 2020 conference to go fully online. The link to the full programme is [here](#). Whilst we had always planned for greater network member engagement in EVIDENCE 2020 related activities, COVID-19 resulted in the creation of dedicated online working groups to support the Programme Officers to advance the agenda and content for each of the work streams. It also necessitated a weaving of COVID-19 throughout all three work streams.
- The three-day programme centred around four different types of sessions: Inspiration sessions, Working sessions, Networking sessions, and Collective Reflection sessions. These sessions cut across three work streams aligned to the Network's strategic goals. These work streams are the 'art and science of evidence-informed decision-making', 'enhancing evidence capacities' and 'making connections and building collaborations'.
- Evidence gathering is Africa's largest and innovative Evidence-Informed Decision Making (EIDM) event welcoming more than 600 participants from 44 countries all over the world. It featured a great mixture of 36 sessions (inspirational, networking, working, and collective reflections) that generated content before and during the event. 12 exhibitors had an opportunity to showcase their work. The speakers, panelists, facilitators, working group members, and note-takers all made wonderful contributions. And all the feedback received for the event shows it to have been an outstanding success. Important conclusions were reached namely:
 - The importance of inclusivity in engagement,
 - Equality and equity,
 - The power of voices in an amplifying space,
 - Authenticity of our contributions,
 - The impact of crises and the power of collaboration in times of crisis,
 - The need for systematic change,

- The importance of stories (substantiate stories with literature; substantiate literature with stories), and
- Relationships remain the glue that keeps our Evidence-community together.

The detailed report on EVIDENCE 2020 ONLINE and concept note were published on the Africa Evidence Network (AEN).

Concept note: <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/file/105/>

Report: https://aenweb.blob.core.windows.net/aenweb/publications/files/20210225_report_EVIDENCE_2020_ONLINE.pdf

d. Africa Evidence week(AfEW) 13-17 September 2021

Africa Evidence Network hosted its second virtual Africa Evidence Week and shared its concept note https://aenweb.blob.core.windows.net/aenweb/files/files/Africa_Evidence_Week_revised_concept_note_17_May_2021_FINAL_VERSION.pdf to encourage members to participate in this incredible showcase and promotion of Africa's vibrant EIDM ecosystem. The objective for AfEW is to showcase and promote the state of EIDM on the continent, specifically highlighting the involvement of Africa's decision-makers. As the evidence community in Africa, we used this totally free, completely public virtual event to celebrate initiatives across Africa supporting the use of evidence in decision-making.

The [programme](#) for the week consisted of 104 activities including live webinar events, pre-recorded webinars, blogs, Twitter conversations/resources shared, stories of change, and EIDM emerging leader videos arranged by 37 organisations from 11 African countries. Over 900 people from across Africa attended live webinar events hosted by fifteen organisations during the week. Videos were one of the most popular ways that organisations participated in Africa Evidence Week with twenty-five videos posted during the five days. Twitter conversations promoted sharing of EIDM resources, such as reports and stories of change. This increased engagement and interaction on Twitter, and as a result, the #AfricaEvidenceWeek hashtag attracted three hundred and ninety-nine online participants from 15 different countries representing 91 organisations, reaching over 6 million people on Twitter. AEN newsletter October 2021 is a special edition that captured what transpired during #AfricaEvidenceWeek2021: <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/file/207/>

e. Evidence 2022 (19-21 September 2022)

In 2022, the AEN is proud to continue this tradition of innovation in facilitating collaboration with EVIDENCE 2022. The aim of this next instalment of the EVIDENCE event series is to:

- Celebrate ten years since the establishment of the Africa Evidence Network
- Provide an opportunity for collaboration to enhance mutual learning and the development of new ideas about supporting evidence-informed decision-making with this two-part objective, the theme for EVIDENCE 2022 is coming together to enhance mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making.

The event was a combination of in-person and virtual experiences that facilitate real-time and offline collaboration with participants from around the world. A large element was to celebrate – both in-person and online – a decade of the existence of the AEN, as well as awardees of the Africa Evidence Leadership Award from 2019 until 2022.

Evidence 2022, involved more than 200 delegates online and 82 in-person. A total of 346 delegates registered for Evidence 2022, with 82 attending the in-person event in Pretoria from different sectors, including academics, civil servants and practitioners. A total of 32 countries were represented: 17 African countries and 15 from outside Africa. This increased the global coverage of the event by both African and non-African countries respectively.

A detailed conference concept note and report are publicly available, highlighting how the event supported the AEN's mission of building relationships and connections.

Concept note: <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/file/216/>

Report: <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/publications/>

f. EVIDENCE 2023



On the 21 September 2022, Evidence 2023 was unveiled by Mr. Kirchuffs Atengble, PACKS-Africa: Ghana who is the Co-Chair for the event. The event is taking place on the 13-15 September 2023 at Entebbe, Uganda.

4. Evidence 2022: Message from the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) Founding Chair: Ruth Stewart



Leading the Africa Evidence Network and seeing it grow over the last decade has been the greatest privilege I could imagine. I have met so many people, each contributing to tackling poverty and inequality in our continent through increased use of evidence in decision-making. We have learnt so much together on this journey. AEN members have been, and continue to be, my inspiration.

Ten years on from that first meeting in Bangladesh, and it is with great pride and some sadness that I am stepping down as Chair of the Network. Sadness, because it's been an absolute pleasure to lead this extraordinary community of people, and pride because of all we have achieved. As the Network moves into its second decade, I am delighted to be handing over to the new AEN co-chairs: Siziwe Ngcwabe and Rhona Mijumbi-Deve. My reflections are also penned on this blog <https://lnkd.in/eXu2iyGK>. They already have big plans, working closely with Kirchuffs Atengble to prepare for EVIDENCE 2023.

I have committed to our new Co-Chairs that I will remain available to support them as they take up their new responsibilities. And I will of course remain an enthusiastic and active member of our Network because I truly believe that only together will evidence-informed decision-making become a reality on our continent.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Stewart".

Ruth Stewart

Africa Evidence Network (AEN) Founding chairperson

5. Message from the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) Co-Chair: Rhona Mijumbi-Deve

“CELEBRATING, REAPING AND SOWING”



September of every other year is an exciting time for the Evidence family in Africa. It comes with an opportunity for us to get together to share all the exciting things we have been up to since we last met. And although over the past few years the engagements in between the EVIDENCE conferences have increased, it is still a time we all look forward to, this biennial EVIDENCE conference.

In 2020, for the first time we were faced with a new situation – the Covid-19 pandemic and this meant that what we usually held as physical meetings could not be held as such. We quickly adapted to the times and held what has been rated by many as a world-class online conference. At the time we hoped that by our next conference, the bad times would be behind us and we would see each other again. Unfortunately, by the EVIDENCE 2022 conference, this was not to be as the times were still difficult to enable physical meeting. But this did not put any spirits down. The enthusiasm and excitement during the 3-day online meeting were tangible. We were still coming home. And there was a lot to do. We needed to celebrate, to reap, and to sow.

Evidence 2022 was a time to celebrate. It marked 10 years of the Africa Evidence Network. What a time to be alive! What had begun as a small idea between 14 individuals, a shared craving, had left the cradle through an email, the first email that activated what we see today as the close to 4000-strong-member-network. This and all the achievements of the 10 years were worth celebrating, and celebrate we did.

Evidence 2022 was a time to reap. It was at this conference that Prof Ruth Stewart who has steered the Network from the cradle to where it is, as its founding chair, passed on the baton to new leadership. Her brilliance and stewardship that have brought us to this place will always be invaluable. Join me in applauding her and wishing her the best as she steps down from this position but continues to be a critical and valuable member of the Network's leadership. In the same spirit, we found new leadership within ourselves, reaping where we had been sowing for the past years. Yours truly is honoured to have taken over the reins from Ruth and will be your chair alongside the very capable Siziwe Ngcwabe. What an honour!

Evidence 2022 was also a time to sow. We are living in unprecedented times that have come with new challenges and require novel interventions. The Network has been at the forefront of many novel home grown solutions and the current times present it opportunities to showcase the amount and diversity of capacities it holds, and therefore its position in supporting Africa's most pertinent decisions. I hope that as you read this report you will, one, see what I see every day in each of these members, that Africa loves evidence. And that two, you will want to be a part of the much-anticipated EVIDENCE 2023 in Entebbe, Uganda.

Rhona Mijumbi- Deve

Africa Evidence Network Co-Chair

6. Message from the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) EVIDENCE 2023 Co-Chair: Kirchuffs Atengble

“Envisioning 2023 – a restoration point in its truest sense”



Soon, we are closing up activities for Evidence 2022. It goes down memory lane as the first time the Evidence community in Africa took the bold step to restore (through a hybrid event), following ravaging effects of the infamous coronavirus pandemic, which forced many traditionally in-person events (including Evidence 2020) to be shifted online. Incidentally, it marked 10 years of the community, which is hosted by the Africa Centre for Evidence (ACE) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). Together with network members, we marked the “essence of mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making”, and highlighted essential pathways for advancing this course for #TheAfricaWeWant.

As plans are far advanced, we expect Evidence 2023 to be a completion point for this restoration. Entebbe will be the converging place for our next gathering, and we expect further innovation in programming, content and logistics, to deliver another sterling event. This particularly becomes necessary as we hope to launch even further across the region. If you have not booked your calendar (13-15th September 2023) at the moment, simply take a breather, do that and continue relishing this vision of an event.

To make this event even better, the AEN is leveraging its revised approach to exceptional leadership. At Evidence 2022, the 2 new chairpersons for the network were introduced – Siziwe Ngcwabe, representing the AEN Secretariat, and Rhona Mijumbi-Deve, representing the Reference and Advisory Groups of the network. A strong on-grounds presence is therefore expected, with these two key individuals working with the organising team to deliver beyond expectations. And the great new is that, our very exceptional events partners (Conference SA), who have been with us, managing logistics for our events, will be with us in Entebbe.

As much as possible, we hope to creatively weave the different identities of our African polities into programming for Evidence 2023. But most importantly as a community of practice, we will seek to engender a collective approach to developing literature for our practice, led by our very members, drawing on unique contexts in which we operate, but in collaboration with our partners across ecosystems and beyond the region. We look forward to engaging members at various points, even as we co-design, direct and deliver on this grand vision of Evidence 2023.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'K' followed by a cursive 'A' and a small flourish.

Kirchuffs Atengble

EVIDENCE 2023 Co-Chair

7. What did we want to achieve with EVIDENCE 2022?

Evidence 2022 wanted to achieve the following 1). bring together members of the AEN to explore how to enhance the overlaps in their work to support evidence-informed decision-making in Africa, 2) facilitate engagement, broker understanding, and support impact in evidence-informed decision-making in Africa, 3). Ensure we put together unique event, shaped by what members want to take forward, as well as the impact by external factors (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic), 4) deliver on event core purpose: engage, understand, impact. 5). celebrate ten years since the establishment of the Africa Evidence Network and 6). provide an opportunity for collaboration to enhance mutual learning and the development of new ideas about supporting evidence-informed decision-making.

8. What did we achieve with evidence 2022?

The AEN is a well-established Pan-African network of over 4,000 individuals committed to making a difference through the use of evidence. We continue to use tried and tested approaches for inspiring and encouraging emerging and established evidence leaders to make a difference in their work. We succeeded in making connections across the continent that go beyond disciplines, methodologies, sectors and national boundaries. As well as enabling collaborations, largely facilitated through in-depth engagement of teams and small groups. The AEN has established flagship regional evidence events that bring together the Pan-African community for learning, sharing and relationship-building and EVIDENCE 2022 on of the events. We increasingly looked to by the global evidence ecosystem for sharing and learning on how to run an impactful regional evidence network.

9. Who participated Evidence 2022

Of 346 participants who registered to attend in EVIDENCE 2022, a total of 285 delegates from across the world logged on and participated over the course of the three-day event. Of these, 185 were from 17 countries within Africa and 100 were from 15 countries outside Africa. Online participants were from 29 different countries across the world. The highest representation was from South Africa with 69, followed by Nigeria with 29, United Kingdom with 15, both Kenya and Cameroon had 14.

Country					
Benin	1	Equatorial Guinea	1	Nigeria	29
Brazil	4	Ethiopia	4	Senegal	2
Burundi	1	Gabon	1	Serbia	1
Cameroon	14	Germany	4	Somalia	1
Canada	1	Ghana	4	South Africa	69
Chad	1	India	1	Trinidad & Tobago	1
Colombia	1	Kenya	14	Uganda	9
Côte d'Ivoire	3	Lebanon	1	United Kingdom	15
Denmark	1	Malawi	8	United States	7
		Malaysia	1	Zimbabwe	2

In Person event on the 21 September 2022 participants were from 20 different countries across the world. The highest representation was from South Africa with 35, followed by both Nigeria and United States 5, Ethiopia 4. To see Evidence 2022 highlights [Evidence 2022 - Highlights \(vimeo.com\)](https://vimeo.com/681111111)

Country			
Benin	1	Germany	1
Brazil	2	Ghana	1
Burkina Faso	2	Kenya	2
Cameroon	3	Lebanon	3
Canada	1	Malawi	2
Chile	3	Nigeria	5
Colombia	3	South Africa	35
Ethiopia	4	Tanzania	1
Uganda	3	Trinidad and Tobago	3
United Kingdom	2	United States	5

A large proportion of attendees at EVIDENCE 2022 described themselves as being employed in an academic institution followed by those working in non-governmental organizations. Other affiliations included funders, government agencies, think tanks, and multilateral organizations.

10. Evidence 2022 programme overview

10.1. Sessions in the EVIDENCE 2022 programme

Evidence 2022 was rooted in coming together to enhance mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making. Secondly to celebrating ten years since its establishment and the event will be a combination of in-person and virtual experiences that facilitate real-time and offline collaboration with participants from around the world. To achieve this participant engagement, different types of event sessions. These session types each had a different purpose (see Box 1) and contributed to the overall objectives of the event. Below, we discuss the activities of each type of session in the EVIDENCE 2022 programme.

Box 1: Types of sessions at Evidence 2022

Opening session	The opening session included an opening address, welcome address and headline address. This session aimed to welcome all the participants and set the tone for Evidence 2022. Opening sessions were designed to welcome all participants and usher in the new dawn for the AEN. Four speakers were featured in this session 1) Prof Ruth Stewart/Ms Siziwe Ngcwabe officially opened the event, and two Co-chairs were announced Dr Rhona Mijumbi-Deve and Ms Siziwe Ngcwabe to take the AEN to the next decade. Prof Ruth Stewart will stay on as the founding chair to support the transition. Mr Jan Magoro from the Premier's office in Gauteng welcomed all the participants in Gauteng. Dr Rhona Mijumbi-Deve the new co-chair, set the scene for the event.
Video sessions	We had two video sessions showcasing the following: 1). Video: Short documentary that features the experiences of founding members and others 2). Video: Ten-year video on the AEN that showcases what we've done
Networking sessions	There were five formal open and structured collaborative sessions in the programme that are focused on exploring and enhancing collaborations between network members. It indicates how as the AEN Secretariat we value relationships and networking that we place these in the programme rather than just leaving them to happen over breaks (where there will also be spaces for networking and connecting). These sessions were built into the programme because of the AEN Secretariat's value of relationships and networking. The objective is to create networking opportunities and enhance how the AEN fosters collaboration.

Webinar discussions	<p>We had four Webinar sessions discussing the following topics: The recording for all the webinars are available on the Evidence 2022 platform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar 1 was titled: Looking back over ten years Looking back on the EIDM evidence ecosystem over the past ten years. The objective of this webinar was to reflect on the EIDM evidence ecosystem over the past ten years. The blog is available on the AEN website https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/223/ • Webinar 2 was titled: Mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making (What have we learned in the past 10 Years). The objective of this webinar was to share lessons learnt around mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making over the last ten years. The blog is available on the AEN website https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/224/ • Webinar 3 was titled: What the lessons of the past years mean for the next 10 years. The objective of this webinar was to reflect on the lessons learnt over the last 10 years and map out what the EIDM future looks like. The blog is available on the AEN website: https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/221/ • Webinar 4 was titled: What are the current trends for Africa EIDM ecosystem and AEN for the next ten years? The primary purpose of this webinar was to obtain insight into the current trends in the EIDM ecosystem and use this perception to reposition ourselves - the direction of where the AEN is going and its position in the EIDM ecosystem. The blog is available on the AEN website: https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/22/
AFRICA talk session	<p>We had four AFRICA talk sessions during EVIDENCE 2022. The sessions were in two parts where the AEN members sharing reflections in their context on the past and the next 10 years of EIDM in Africa and share their experiences. Secondly our four Africa Evidence Leadership Award (AELA) winners from 2021 and 2022 had an opportunity to share about their work.</p>
Story telling session	<p>We had two story telling sessions during EVIDENCE 2022 that aimed to showcase the innovation by Effective Basic Services Africa (eBASE Africa) in Cameroon storytelling approach and Stories of change by the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) members Gallery of African EIDM Stories: https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/eidm-in-africa/stories/</p>
Exhibition session	<p>We have 2 exhibition sessions to show case some of our partners work from these different categories. Exhibitors for Evidence 2022 were invited exhibitors, as well as those which requested to exhibit their organisations, in our dedicated exhibition space on the online platform. The exhibitors were Tanzania Enlightenment Development Innovation (TEDI): Tanzania, Effective Basic Services Africa (eBASE Africa): Cameroon, IDinsight: Malawi, Provide and Equip Ltd: Uganda, On Think Tanks (OTT): United Kingdom Africa Evidence Network (AEN): South Africa, Institute of Monitoring of Development Policy Program & Project: Benin and Impact and Innovations Development Centre (IIDC): Uganda</p>
Celebratory sessions	<p>During these four sessions we reflected and celebrated the 10 years of the AEN establishment and achievements made in the EIDM field in Africa showcasing innovations. The following topics were covered: The use of evidence in Africa: understanding what works and how to measure it; Short Learning Programme (SLP), Thoughts as the AEN turned 5... this year, we are celebrating our 10th Birthday, do evidence networks make a difference? And participants shared their celebratory messages</p>

Country tours sessions	<p>We had 10 Country tours during this session: Benin, Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa. Uganda, Zimbabwe. This session took place both in-person and online. Session title: What the future of evidence-informed decision-making looks like.</p> <p>In preparation for the session, each country was asked to share highlights on developments in EIDM in their country over the last decade and how they see the future developing. The following questions were designed to help guide their talk. Each country representative had to welcome delegates to their country, and they could use their own languages in doing so. After this, they had to tell people about the last decade by addressing the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has evidence-informed decision-making in your country been across sectors? Mostly in health? Tell us a bit more. • Has evidence work in your country focused on how evidence is produced and/or used? How has this changed over time? • What role does government play in your country's evidence ecosystem? • Are civil society involved? <p>Each country had to go on and tell delegates about the future through answering the guiding questions accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We anticipate the future challenges for evidence-informed decision-making in our country to be.... • We are excited about the future of evidence-informed decision-making because...
Closing sessions	The closing session covers the following what does the future look like? wrap up key messages and going forward message.

10.2. Opening sessions



EVIDENCE 2022: Registration

Stepping down as Chair of the AEN and the dawn of a new era

Congratulations Siziwe & Rhona
WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST

Photo credit: Africa Centre for Evidence & Africa Evidence Network

If I close my eyes, I transport myself back to 2012 and the first meeting of the Africa Evidence Network after dinner in a hotel in Bangladesh. A group of us from Africa had independently talked our way into the Campbell-3ie organised event despite the focus on Asia. At the time there were no such evidence events in Africa. Together we dreamed of connecting a community of people across our continent who shared our vision of increasing evidence-informed decision-making.

Ten years later and we have what might well be the longest lasting, strongest and most diverse continental evidence network in the world, the Africa Evidence Network. This year the Network is celebrating not only its 10th birthday, but also its 5th pan-African convening of the EVIDENCE events. We now number 4000 individuals from every corner of the continent, including those working in governments, parliaments, universities, think tanks and more. Through all of our work, the connections we have made and the collaborations we have formed, we have made real and lasting impacts on the use of evidence in Africa. Over the last 10 years I have had the privilege of meeting so many of you, all dedicated individuals, and visiting many of your teams across the continent. We have learnt so much together on this journey. We have critiqued and debated, listened and learnt, met and even danced together. You have been, and continue to be, my inspiration.

Ten years on from that first meeting in Bangladesh and it is with great pride and some sadness that I am stepping down as Chair of the Network. Sadness, because it's been an absolute pleasure to lead this extraordinary community of people, and pride because of all we have achieved. As the Network moves into its second decade I am delighted to introduce you to the new co-chairs of the Network. They will not be new to you.

First, **Ms Siziwe Ngcwabe** has been working tirelessly to lead the AEN Secretariat since 2017. Over this time, under Siziwe's leadership, the AEN has advanced its governance processes, strengthened its financial sustainability and both responded to, and led, shifts in the evidence landscape on the continent. Siziwe is the ideal Co-Chair to take the AEN into its next decade. She will hold particular responsibilities for governance, management of the secretariat, and curator of our next strategic plan.

Second, Siziwe will be joined by **Dr Rhona Mijumbi**. Rhona not only brings extensive experience of working within the evidence ecosystem in Africa, but also a vision for its future. Rhona is the ideal Co-Chair to work alongside Siziwe. She will hold responsibilities for the Reference and Advisory Group processes of the AEN in particular. As the AEN embarks on its next decade, it brings new leadership, ideas, and innovation to champion evidence-informed decision making on the continent.

I have committed to our new Co-Chairs that I will remain available to support them as they take up their new responsibilities. And I will of course remain an enthusiastic and active member of our Network because I truly believe that only together will evidence-informed decision-making become a reality on our continent.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in published blog posts, as well as any errors or omissions, are the sole responsibility of the author/s and do not represent the views of the Africa Evidence Network, its secretariat, advisory or reference groups, or its funders; nor does it imply endorsement by the afore-mentioned parties.

The **first opening session** Ruth Stewart and Siziwe Ngcwabe shared the stage to officially open the event as well as introduce new leadership that is taking Africa Evidence Network to the next decade.



Second opening session Jan Magoro is currently a director responsible for Research and Policy Development in Gauteng Office of the Premier within Policy Research and Advisory Services Branch did a welcome address to warmly welcome all delegated both virtual and in person participant in Gauteng Province, South Africa



The **third session** was a headline address was led by New Africa Evidence Co-Chair Rhona Mijumbi-Deve to set the tone for the event.

10.3. Video session

Looking back over ten years on the achievements in supporting the African evidence ecosystem over the last decade. This virtual session showcasing two video 1). Featured the experiences of founding members and others. This short documentary aimed to capture the experience of the founding members of the AEN who met in Bangladesh in 2012 to establish the AEN, <https://vimeo.com/750721006>

2). Ten-year video on the AEN that showcases what we've done, this short documentary showcased AEN's achievements over the past 10 year, <https://vimeo.com/750714878>

10.4. Networking sessions

Making space for connections was an important aspect of Evidence 2022. We had four networking session and two virtual happy hours for to network with each other and possible foster collaborations. These sessions enabled 116 participants to network.

SESSION	ATTENDEES
Day 1 – Morning Networking	33
Day 1 – Afternoon Networking	21
Day 1 – Virtual Happy Hour	20
Day 2 – Morning Networking	22
Day 2 – Virtual Happy Hour	9
Day 3 – Morning Networking	11
TOTAL	116

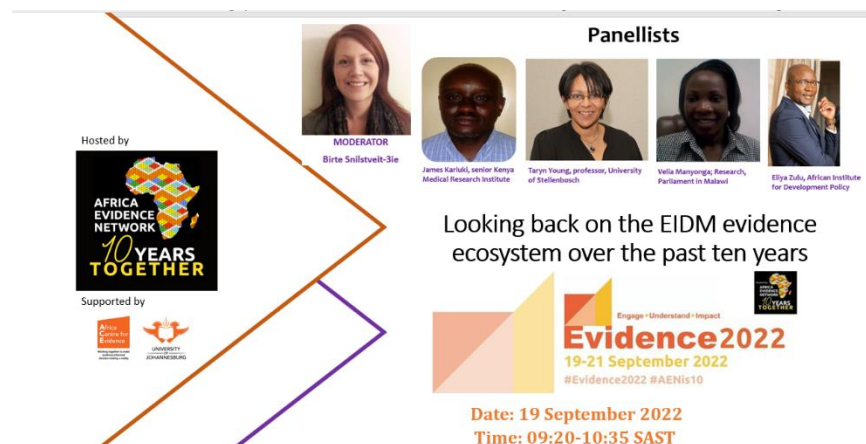
10.5. Webinar discussions

The webinar series comprises four sessions, each of which runs for 1 hour and 15 minutes. The series was launched during Evidence 2022 event from 19-21 September 2022. The **primary objectives** of the webinar series were

- to reflect on the EIDM evidence ecosystem over the past ten years;
- to share lessons learned around mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making over the last ten years;
- to reflect on the lessons learnt over the last 10 years and map out what the EIDM future looks like
- to obtain insight into the current trends in the EIDM ecosystem and use this perception to reposition ourselves - the direction of where the AEN is going and its position in the EIDM ecosystem.
- The **secondary** aim is to assess the implications of these lessons on the current evidence ecosystem in Africa.
- The **tertiary** objective is for these discussions to be the basis for improving the evidence ecosystem and evidence use in Africa.

The webinar series overview. Reflection is a critical and integral component of the learning process. It allows individuals and organisations to learn more about themselves and their work, including how they learn. Reflection assists in improving EIDM practices through the identification of weaknesses and strengths in the EIDM ecosystem. EIDM is not a static process. It is dynamic. Hence, the need to adapt and repurpose the old to succeed in the new. Reflection allows the development of metacognition and more robust learning to occur as people recognise past failures and successes that need rectification and strengthening. A key rationale for reflection is that experience alone does not

necessarily lead to learning. A more deliberate reflection on experience is critical as members get to see and label forms of thought and theory within the context of their work experiences and how these link to the EIDM ecosystem. Through reflection, they are not merely looking back on past actions and events. Still, they take a conscious look at their experiences, activities, and initiatives as opposed to formal learning, then use the insights to add to their existing evidence base and get to a higher level of understanding. Webinar participants will reflect over the last ten years and discuss what has transpired in the EIDM ecosystem in Africa, the various activities to support EIDM and their impact, what has worked, where and how. This process will lead to continuous adaptation and learning to improve the African EIDM ecosystem.



The first webinar **“looking back on the EIDM evidence ecosystem over the past ten years”** was held in the morning on the 19 September 2022.

The session was a panel discussion, with a moderator posing questions and facilitating a discussion initially

amongst panelists and then with the audience. The session was chaired by Siziwe Ngcwabe and Moderated by Birte Snilstveit 3ie. Our panelists were James Kariuki Ngumo, KEMRI, Taryn Young, University of Stellenbosch, Velia Manyonga, Parliament of Malawi and Eliya Zulu AFIDEP. There is a recording of the session and a blog <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/223/> posting of the webinar to encourage continued asynchronous discussions of the topic after the session.



The second webinar **“mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making”** was in the afternoon on the 19 September 2022. The session was a panel discussion, with a moderator posing questions and facilitating a discussion initially amongst panelists and then with the audience. The session was

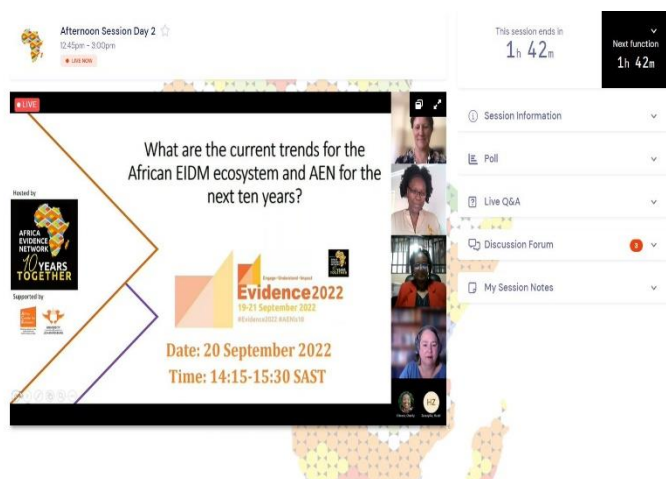
chaired by Siziwe Ngcwabe and Moderated by Nasreen Jessani, University of Stellenbosch. Our panellists were Patrick Okwen, Effective Basic Service Africa, Opere-Kumi, University of Oxford and Laurenz Mahlanza-Langer, SACE. There is a recording of the session and a blog <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/224/> posting of the webinar to encourage continued asynchronous discussions of the topic after the session.



The third webinar “what the lessons of the past years mean for the next 10 years?”

was held in the morning on the 20 September 2022. The session was a panel discussion, with a moderator posing questions and facilitating a discussion initially amongst panelists and then with the audience. The session was chaired by Siziwe Ngcwabe and Moderated by Josephine Watera, Parliament of Uganda. Our panellists were Eric Ngang, Action

Group on Governance and Environmental Management, Mapula Tshangela, Department of Environmental Management Affairs and Ronald Munatsi, Zeipnet. There is a recording of the session [LINK](#) and a blog <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/221/> posting of the webinar to encourage continued asynchronous discussions of the topic after the session.



The fourth webinar “What are the current trends for the African EIDM ecosystem and AEN for the next ten years?” was held in the morning on the 20 September 2022.

The session was a panel discussion, with a moderator posing questions and facilitating a discussion initially amongst panelists

and then with the audience. The session was chaired by Siziwe Ngcwabe and moderated by Carina Van Rooyen, University of Johannesburg. Our panelists were Kirchuffs Atengble PACKS Africa, Ruth Stewart ACE, and Julian Bagyendera Provide and Equip. There is a recording of the session and a blog <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/learning-space/article/22/> posting of the webinar to encourage continued asynchronous discussions of the topic after the session.

A total of 237 participants attended the webinars see table below

DAY	WEBINAR SESSION	ATTENDEES
1	Looking back on the EIDM evidence ecosystem over the past ten years	63
1	Mutual learning and innovation in evidence-informed decision-making	54
2	What the lessons of the past years mean for the next 10 years	68
2	What are the current trends for the African EIDM ecosystem and AEN for the next ten years?	52
TOTAL		237

10.6. AFRICA talk session

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AFRICA talk session 1: AEN members sharing reflections in their context on the past 10 years of EIDM in Africa and share their experiences



Date: 19 September 2022
Time: 11:00-12:00 SAST

The first AFRICA talk session was led by four AEN members sharing reflections in their context on the past 10 years of EIDM in Africa and share their experiences, MS Gloria Anderson, Tanzania Enlightenment Development Innovation (TEDI): Tanzania, Mr. Ismael Kawooya, The Center for Rapid Evidence Synthesis (ACRES): Uganda, Mr. Rigobert Pambe, Effective Basic Services Africa: Cameroon and Mr. Lesedi Senamele Matlala, JET Service: South Africa

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AFRICA talk session 2: AEN members sharing reflections in their context on the next 10 years of EIDM in Africa and share their experiences



Date: 20 September 2022
Time: 12:45-13:15 SAST

The second AFRICA talk session was led by three AEN members sharing reflections in their context on the next 10 years of EIDM in Africa and share their experiences, Mr. Luvuyo Jalisa, Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS): South Africa, Ms. Agnes Mutonyi Wasike, Impact and Innovations Development Centre: Uganda and Ms. Sonny Mokganyetje Motlanthe, Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results,

Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA), Witwatersrand University: South Africa.

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AFRICA talk session 3 & 4:
AELA winner 2021 & AELA winners 2022



Date: 20 September 2022
Time: 11:45-12:45 SAST

Third and the fourth AFRICA talk session was dedicated to Africa Evidence Leadership award winner from 2021-2022. AELA winner 2021-2022. AELA winner 2021-2022. Ms. Diana Warira-Kenya, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL): Kenya. AELA winners 2022: Ms. Gloria Anderson, Tanzania Enlightenment

Development Innovation (TEDI): Tanzania, Prof Eucharia Oluchi Nwaichi, University of Port Harcourt: Nigeria and Dr. Temitope Olawunmi Sogbanmu, University of Lagos: Nigeria. As part of the award

winners received EVIDENCE 2022 in person delegate registration cost and participate in a AFRICA talk discussion during EVIDENCE 2022 in person. The aim of the discussion was to reflect on the work they do in the continent and share what the future looks like.

10.7. Story telling session

Story telling approach developed by E-Base Africa is one of the innovations that was shared during this session <https://portalapp.confsa.eventsair.com/VirtualAttendeePortal/evidence-2022/evidence-platform/> Story telling aims to increase access to public

The concept note for stories of change was developed in January 2019. The AEN intended to maintain the involvement of decision-makers and the profile of EIDM by disseminating information on achievements to date and future challenges. To do this, the AEN launched an initiative to gather stories of change from active members in the Network. The main aim was to identify, capture, and document significant Stories of Change (SoCs) that reflect the influence of AEN on either the personal and/or professional lives of a subset of AEN members, report new and meaningful collaborations between members that can be attributed in part or in full to AEN activities and report how the collated best available evidence on EIDM in Africa has shaped how they work. Stories of change by the Africa Evidence Network (AEN) members are available as a gallery of African EIDM Stories on the AEN website <https://www.africaevidencenetwork.org/en/eidm-in-africa/stories/>. The session aimed to showcase this innovation.

10.8. Exhibition session

Exhibitors for Evidence 2022 were handpicked and invited by the AEN, as well as those which requested to exhibit their organisations, in our dedicated exhibition space on the online platform. From this platform, exhibitors were able to upload communications materials, descriptions about themselves, and contact details. Exhibitors presented their work during the two allocated sessions. Exhibitors for Evidence 2022 were Tanzania Enlightenment Development Innovation (TEDI): Tanzania, Effective Basic Services Africa (eBASE Africa): Cameroon, IDinsight: Malawi, Provide and Equip Ltd: Uganda, On Think Tanks (OTT): United Kingdom, Africa Evidence Network (AEN): South Africa, Institute of Monitoring of Development Policy Program & Project (Le Barometre): Benin and Impact and Innovations Development Centre (IIDC): Uganda



10.9. Celebratory sessions

During these three sessions, we reflected and celebrated the 10 years of the AEN establishment and achievements made in the EIDM field in Africa.

- I. The use of evidence in Africa: understanding what works & how to measure it,
- II. **Celebratory messages from members and Partners.** This session was open to AEN members, partners and participants to share congratulation messages to the AEN for turning 10 years in 2022. Here are some of the messages received

"Wow! Congratulations AEN Leadership for championing Evidence generation and Evidence take up! What a milestone".

"Wow congratulations AEN for Keeping the EIDM light shining"!

"Happy 10 Years AEN"

"Next 10 years AEN be the hub for trusted and validate and verified evidence"

"I so appreciate all the learning that I have received from colleagues across Africa over the previous 10 years. I hardly knew anything about EIDM 10 years ago. I am looking forward to joining the AEN CoPS to not only share learnings, but be together in the learnings"

"Great work AEN, Thank you"

"Big congratulations"

"Thank you all for a fantastic Conference-I have learnt an enormous amount about networking, evidence, capacity building, understanding, shared learning, storytelling, data collection and much more"

"Way to go"

- iii. **Celebrating innovation in training: the case of Short Learning Programme (SLP) in Practices of EIDM:** Purpose of the session was for participants to get exposed to the SLP and hear experiences from learners. Secondary purpose: celebration of the SLP and awareness. The session illustrated in how learners had fun learning, sharing and creating relationships that have the potential not only to develop into great friendships but can link to communities of practice. In the session a video with insight from our ACE director as well as participants who have achieved certificates in the Short Learning Programme. Participants if the SLP shared the importance of EIDM, why they attended the course, how they experienced the course and how it benefited them in their different corners in the evidence ecosystem. The video ended with a quick overview of the learning programme and why we think it's such a great innovation. Online participants contributed to the session by doing asynchronous work using a google doc to respond to a question What would you like to see in terms of innovations in training for EIDM the next 10 years?

10.10. Country tours sessions



Lekgetho Makola the CEO of The Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria (Javett-UP) welcome the in-person participants in the venue



Siziwe Ngcwabe and Ruth Stewart welcome the participants to the country tours and to Africa. We took participants on a tour of evidence systems across our continent to enjoy a unique travel experience. The session was both in person and online. Africa is a vast and diverse continent with both challenges and innovative solutions. We

took participants around a selection of **10 countries around the continent and beyond (South Africa, Uganda, Malawi, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Benin, Ethiopia, Colombia and Brazil).**



Participants were guided in small groups around the continent and each participant had their travel documents (**AEN passports**) and notepad in hand. They took notes as they learned about each country and chance to ask questions from the evidence ambassadors from each country. AEN passports had to be stamped they transit to their next country. We use an African drum to signal time to move forwards to the next country. As participants journey around the continent and beyond they did not only learn about the art and science of the evidence ecosystems within each country but also experienced the art of Africa at The Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria (Javett-UP). We were steeped in the wisdom of our elders, and inspired by Pan-African creativity for the future. Awesome evidence ecosystems across Africa! Much to learn from one another.

The next session started to unpack lessons learn in the country tours. Participants online were divided into three groups to reflect together on what the future looks like for the evidence ecosystem in Africa. These included challenges, predicted future shifts, or recommendations using a google doc. Responses per question and group were brought together to reduce them to 3 key messages. Our in-person audience had the similar discussion, and both discussions were brought together.

11. **Going forward message** Ruth Stewart summarized the 3 key messages from both online and in-person audience and shared an overview with the audience in the closing remarks included **four key points**;

- I. Facing up to challenges
- II. Coherence in diversity
- III. Celebrating achievements
- IV. The future is brighter together

12. Celebratory dinner



The celebratory dinner was held at the **Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria (Javett-UP)**. All the participants were taken on a journey in the arts to experience national treasures such as The Mapungubwe Gold Collection, the AngloGold Ashanti Barbier-Mueller Gold of Africa Collection and all the amazing exhibitions that were available on the 21 September 2022

The **dinner aimed to celebrate ten years** since the establishment of the Africa Evidence Network. All our 82 participants from 29 countries were warmly welcomed by Laurenz Mahlanza-Langer and Promise Nduku. Ruth Stewart and Christopher Chibwana awarded the Africa Evidence Leadership Award to four winners from 2020-2022. Carina van Rooyen shared a closing message and then dinner was served and entertainment for the guests.



AELA winner 2020- Mr. Frejus Thoto, Actions pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable (ACED): Benin

AELA winner 2021- Ms. Diana Warira-Kenya, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL): Kenya

AELA winners 2022 -Ms. Gloria Anderson, Tanzania Enlightenment Development Innovation (TEDI): Tanzania, Prof Eucharia Oluchi Nwaichi, University of Port Harcourt: Nigeria and Dr. Temitope Olawunmi Sogbanmu, University of Lagos: Nigeria

Evidence 2022 was supported by:

