THE AFRICA LEEPS PARTNERSHIP: LEARNING TOGETHER TO ADVANCE EVIDENCE AND EQUITY IN POLICYMAKING TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

PROGRESS REPORT

OCTOBER 2024 THROUGH MARCH 2025

Introduction

The Africa LEEPS partnership is making substantial progress in strengthening the evidence ecosystems across the African continent. Following a foundational first year focused on diagnostic assessment to understand the evidence ecosystem's needs and strategic partnership building, this reporting period (October 2024 – March 2025) showcases a clear progression towards building and sustaining structures and processes that help governments consistently use evidence in policy- and practice-level decisions.

This report provides a snapshot of the partnership's progress over the last six months, despite partner organizations' challenges in navigating unpredictable policy processes and the time-intensive nature of policy engagement. Africa LEEPS partners continue to engage closely with government ministries, parliamentarians, and other key stakeholders through demand-led and tailored capacity-building initiatives. These include training programs for Kenya's Ministries of Health and Environment, a newly ISO certified training program for entry-to-senior-level professionals, and practical mentorship programs for emerging researchers and knowledge translation professionals. These efforts foster a gradual yet meaningful transformation of skills and abilities to find, interpret, synthesize, and use evidence in decision making. Gender equity remains a central focus, with activities ranging from specialized training sessions on integrating gender data into policy processes to scholarship programs supporting women leaders in knowledge translation. The efforts aim to address gender by increasing the representation of women in evidence ecosystems and ensuring the consideration of gender-relevant data in policy formulation.

The development and ongoing refinement of innovative tools and resources—such as evidence briefs, helpdesks, a digital evidence platform leveraging AI, and methodological guides—underscores our commitment to enhancing the accessibility and usability of evidence for decision-makers. Our vision of building a culture of evidence use that advances people-centered policymaking and program implementation means that we are committed to embedding these approaches to help our government partners more consistently use evidence in decision-making processes.

The stories shared in this report exemplify how Africa LEEPS partners are drawing on their deep contextual knowledge and trusted relationships to navigate complex policy environments, creating pathways for evidence to inform decisions that affect millions of lives across Africa. As we near the end of our second year, we continue to explore the powerful potential of our collaborations and the advantage of strengthening evidence ecosystems on the African continent in partnership, together, embodying the widely known proverb "if you want to go faster go alone, if you want to go further, go together".

Progress (October 2024 - March 2025)

Africa LEEPS continues to advance evidence-informed decision-making, taking a gender equity lens, throughout the evidence ecosystem. Partnership activities during the last six months have focused on four interrelated areas that are essential to embedding and supporting consistent use of evidence in policy processes: Capacity strengthening for decision-makers, knowledge brokers, and researchers

- Capacity strengthening for decision makers, knowledge brokers, and researchers
- Capacity strengthening at the organization and institutional levels
- Improving access to quality and timely policy-relevant evidence that is contextually appropriate
- Learning and knowledge exchange at the partnership, regional, national, and subnational levels

Thematic priorities vary across the three initiatives in the partnership:

- The Centre d'Excellence Evidence Policy Action (EPA Centre), led by the African Center for Equitable Development (ACED) is supporting activities with a strong focus on gender mainstreaming, climate data integration, and leveraging technological innovations like AI and geographic information systems to enhance the use of evidence in policy processes.

- The East African Regional Evidence Synthesis Initiative (EARESI), led by the Centre for Rapid Evidence Synthesis (ACRES) is enabling collaborative stakeholder engagement, evidence briefs developed through Rapid Response Services, digital tools for evidence access, and capacity-building programs across health and energy sectors.

- The Alliance for Evidence and Equity in Policy-making in Africa (AEEPA), led by the African Institute for Policy Development (AFIDEP), continues strengthening evidence use in reproductive health and clean energy sectors while deepening institutional capacity for gender-responsive evidence-informed policymaking through targeted training, mentorship, and strategic technical support

This section presents selected examples drawn from across the three initiatives to highlight the activities they supported over the last six months (October 2024 – March 2025) to help government and civil society partners make progress in using evidence in policy and practice.

Technical Capacity Strengthening For Decision Makers, Knowledge Brokers, And Researchers

Building knowledge translation capabilities

The AEEPA team, in collaboration with Kenya's Federal Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Federal Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MoEP), facilitated two five-day training workshops and a two-day follow-up session between October and November 2024. These sessions enhanced the capacity of 49 mid-level policymakers in Kenya on evidence-informed policymaking (EIP), emphasizing rapid evidence synthesis and communication skills. Pre and post-test evaluations showed marked improvement in EIP knowledge and perceived skills, including a 9.6% increase in MoEP trainees' confidence in accessing research and a 37.7% reduction in reported capacity gaps. Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies (MakSWGS) co-facilitated the workshops to ensure gender and equity considerations were integrated in the training. While the sessions were a success, the team faced some challenges sustaining engagement due to the competing responsibilities of participants.

In Benin, ACED, through the EPA Centre, partnered with a network of parliamentarians at the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE), and a network of national and international experts in evidence-driven decision-making (le Baromètre and 3ie) to train parliamentarians in Cotonou on policy formulation, evaluation, and evidence use.

The EPA Centre team is also working with Niger's Ministry of Hydraulics, Sanitation and the Environment (MHAE) to update their national data collection strategy, ensuring more responsive data feedback loops for policymakers. This work shows that institutionalizing evidence-informed policymaking (EIP) requires more than regulatory reforms, it must address political, strategic, and operational dimensions. This includes securing high-level commitment, integrating EIP into national strategies, and strengthening systems and capacities for evidence use. The EPA Centre's support to the MHAE reinforced both the strategic framework and the ministry's operational capacity to use evidence effectively.

Integrating gender equity in policy processes

The EPA Centre hosted in-person training across seven countries (Benin, Burkina-Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) and a regional webinar to disseminate tools and practical guides on integrating gender into research and policymaking. The sessions provided a historical overview of gender representation in policy, introduced analytical tools (e.g., gender continuum tool for integrating gender in policy and programs, project cycle frameworks to facilitate mapping of entry points for integrating gender in policy and programs), and emphasized gender data integration in policy processes from both an academic and policy perspective.

Additionally, the Centre launched a fellowship program open to women in the evidence-to-policy ecosystems in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. It aims to build a pipeline of female leaders in knowledge translation to inform public policies. The program combines training, immersion, and mentorship components

The EPA Centre has also launched a co-learning program to strengthen the capacity of national statistical institutes in producing and using gender-sensitive evidence. Through experience sharing and innovative methodologies, participating institutions will improve how they collect, analyze, and apply gender data—ultimately enhancing the integration of equity considerations into public policy and promoting more inclusive governance.

Strengthening individual capacities to conduct EIP activities

EARESI launched its inaugural Evidence to Policy (E2P) entry-level training program for participants from Tanzania, Malawi, Ethiopia, and Uganda. The program, targeting knowledge translation professionals and policymakers, culminated in a webinar that facilitated the sharing of experiences from the entry-level training and previewed the mid- and advanced levels of the training program. The cohort supported four policy processes by developing Rapid Evidence Synthesis products with policymakers across sectors - education in Uganda, climate change and health in Malawi, health and women and gender in Tanzania - and are now planning dissemination activities to facilitate engagement and use of the evidence. This cross-sectoral approach demonstrates the E2P training program's application across multiple policy domains rather than focusing solely on clean energy or health sectors. This program attracted interest from a new set of countries not currently engaged in the partnership, including Tunisia, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The EPA Centre took part in the 7ᵉ Camp des évaluateurs émergents francophones (7th French-speaking emerging evaluators camp) in Parakou, Benin, in November 2024, where 54 participants from 9 countries explored themes including policy evaluation, digital transformation, and gender mainstreaming.

The Centre also began a collaboration with Research on the Non-Academic Effects of Research and its Determinants (RENARD) from the University of Montreal to offer RENARD's knowledge translation training, with both online and in-person sessions targeting the ACED and IPAR teams (as part of the EPA Centre) and members of Benin's Community of Practice. Participants were introduced to the fundamentals of knowledge translation, including key tools and concepts such as policy briefs and knowledge transfer plans. Knowledge transfer plans are particularly inclusive, as they are designed to systematically capture, share, and embed knowledge across diverse groups. This ensures that essential information is accessible to all stakeholders, regardless of their role, background, or level of expertise. The in-person session focused on applying these concepts to real-world cases from the West African context, helping to bridge theory with practice and making the training locally relevant. A broader rollout to other communities of practice is planned for the EPA 2025 forum (in September 2025).

The EPA Centre, through IPAR, organized a training session on artificial intelligence and evidence-based data, aimed at strengthening the capacities of researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners in integrating AI into data production and use to influence public policies and guide research.'

The EPA Centre also organized gender integration workshops in seven West African countries, reaching over 300 participants from government, civil society, research, and media. The sessions covered core gender concepts, practical tools, and participatory methods, with strong engagement from key ministries and national gender observatories. The initiative strengthened technical capacity and fostered regional collaboration toward more gender-responsive, evidence-informed policymaking.

Additionally, to support individuals in advancing EIP, the EPA Centre developed two technical guides—on artificial intelligence for evidence production and GIS for decision-making—which are set to be finalized and shared through regional webinars from April through June 2025. The need to develop the two technical guides emerged from requests made by countries during the diagnostic phase conducted during the mapping of the Evidence Policy System. Specifically, these needs were expressed by key stakeholders during national workshops and interviews with representatives from strategic institutions during the mapping. All the capacity gaps identified through this process were consolidated into a capacity-building plan, which now guides the implementation of their capacity-building activities.

As part of its commitment to promoting gender integration in public policies and research, the EPA Centre has conducted, through ACED and IPAR, capacity-building workshops in seven countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. These sessions brought together over 300 participants, including representatives from government ministries, civil society organizations, research institutions, media, and think tanks. Each country-level training was tailored to local contexts but shared a common structure: introducing key gender concepts, practical tools for integrating gender into policies and research, and participatory methods such as case studies and group work. Notably, ministries responsible for planning, environment, social affairs, and statistics were actively involved, alongside national gender observatories and youth-led organizations.

This broad and inclusive mobilization reflects a growing regional momentum toward more equitable and evidence-informed policymaking. ACED and IPAR initiative has not only strengthened technical capacities but also fostered vibrant communities of practice committed to advancing gender equality across West Africa.

Organizational and Institutional Capacity Strengthening

Strengthening systems to promote consistent use of evidence in policy and practice

In collaboration with Côte d'Ivoire's Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Ecological Transition, through the National Climate Change Program (PNCC), the EPA Centre supported the development of a methodological guide for the planning, collection, and evaluation of climate data. This tool is designed to enhance the use of climate data in sectoral policy formulation, reinforcing the role of evidence-based decision-making in the national climate change response. EARESI partner organizations continue to explore joint initiatives that aim to increase the impact of EARESI across the region. Notably, efforts are underway to support institutions like the Malawi-Liverpool-Wellcome Programme (MLW) and the Center for Reforms, Innovation, Health Policies, and Implementation Research (CeRIHI) to evolve into differentiated Evidence Centers, deepening their work and responsibilities to go beyond implementing Rapid Response Services to deliver timely, policy-relevant evidence.

AEEPA continues to support health sector efforts to promote the consistent use of data for informed decision-making within Kenya's Ministry of Health's Reproductive Health Department and the Ministry of Energy's Renewable Energy Department. A collaborative workshop is being co-facilitated with reproductive health stakeholders in Baringo County to review progress on the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) scorecard actions identified during the November 2024 review. While the RMNCAH scorecard process is ideally government-funded, development partners currently support its implementation in most counties. To promote sustainability and institutionalization in Baringo, technical support will highlight best practices from counties that have improved performance monitoring and accountability through the scorecard with domestic financing.

In the energy sector, AEEPA is planning a workshop with clean energy stakeholders to update the Kenya Carbon Emission Reduction Tool (KCERT 2050) with new data. KCERT 2050—an integrated model of energy demand, supply, emissions, and land use—will inform evidence-based energy policy and investment decisions. Developed locally on the framework of the UK 2050 Calculator—a global model for informing energy transitions, the tool supports Kenya's long-term energy security planning. AEEPA's technical support will include stakeholder mapping and advocacy strategies required to secure government funding for the tool's use.

Strengthening systems to embed gender and equity considerations in policy systems

Over the past six months, the EPA Centre has expanded its engagement with gender observatories across the region. This includes support for Niger's Observatoire National pour la Promotion du Genre (ONPG), Benin's Observatoire de la Famille, de la Femme et de l'Enfant, Senegal's Observatoire National de la Parité, Côte d'Ivoire's Observatoire National sur l'Égalité de Genre (ONEG), and national departments in charge of gender in Togo and Burkina Faso in strengthening institutional mechanisms to track and promote gender equality across different policy domains.

The EPA Centre also formalized a new partnership with the National Observatory for Gender Promotion in Niger through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), paving the way for diagnostic assessments of the implementation of the national gender policy ahead of a review of the gender promotion law. The main aim of the MoU is to strengthen the strategic monitoring, production, mobilization, and dissemination of gender data to inform decision-making processes in Niger.

In Mali, the EPA Centre is working with the Agence de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (AEDD, or Environment and Sustainable Development Agency) to support the integration of environmental and social dimensions into public policy. Through a partnership with Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), they support efforts to address women's rights and inclusion. Finally, ongoing support to the Institut National de la Statistique (INSAT, or National Institute of Statistics) and the Direction Nationale de la Planification du Développement (DNPD, or National Directorate of Development Planning) aims to enhance inclusive planning and statistical data systems, in alignment with national development priorities.

Improving Access to Evidence

Partners are improving access to evidence through a combination of institutional mechanisms such as help desks and digital platforms that ensure timely, policy-relevant insights, targeted capacity building equipping actors to produce and apply evidence effectively, as well as strategic communication, including evidence briefs, webinars, etc., to enhance visibility and uptake of research. These mechanisms create structured, sustainable systems to connect policymakers and researchers.

Help desks for ongoing policy support

- With support from ACRES, through EARESI, the National Renewable Energy Platform under Uganda's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has established an embedded help desk mechanism for ongoing support. The Platform has significantly improved ongoing communication with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, enabling more timely and effective responses to policy-related queries. Within just two months, the collaboration has addressed five key policy questions, including one focused on regulatory frameworks for clean energy use, which will directly inform a bill currently being prepared for presentation to Uganda's Parliament.

- The EPA Centre maintains its helpdesk mechanism to provide timely and contextually relevant evidence to inform policy and research questions. The helpdesk recently evaluated Benin's progress in promoting women's rights and gender equality, thirty years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This report is currently being finalized at the request of the Ministry of Social Action and Microfinance.

Production and dissemination of policy-relevant evidence

- AEEPA has facilitated the development of eight evidence briefs—seven produced by the cohort trained in EIP from the Ministry of Health's Department of Reproductive Health, and one developed by the cohort trained from the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's Renewable Energy Department. AEEPA is currently working closely with the authors to finalize, publish, and disseminate these evidence products, which aim to support evidence-informed decision-making within their respective sectors.

- The ARIN fellows who were trained by AEEPA in April 2024 successfully produced five evidence briefs and developed tailored communication strategies to enhance the dissemination of their work. Two briefs were disseminated through the ARIN Weekly Friday Reviews webinar series in early 2025. The first, focused on Effective Interventions for the Protection of Survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Kenya, was discussed on 28 February 2025 and attended by 86 participants (42 women/ 44 men). This was accompanied by an op-ed published in the Daily Nation and NationAfrica (24–25 February), with further outreach via ARIN's LinkedIn page. The second brief, on Enhancing Public Accountability Committees (PAC), was presented on 28 March 2025 to an audience of 61 participants, including 24 women and 37 men. To ensure the quality and visibility of this work, Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies (MakSWGS) reviewed the evidence briefs and participated as a keynote speaker at one of the two dedicated dialogues organized for their dissemination.

- Through EARESI, MLW, in partnership with the Clean Energy Department under Malawi's Ministry of Energy and the Climate and Health Department under Malawi's Ministry of Health, hosted a hybrid webinar titled "Insights into Malawi's Policy Priorities for the Clean Energy and Climate & Health Sectors." The event was co-designed with Malawi's Ministry of Energy, which played a central role in shaping the agenda and stakeholder participation. In addition, MLW facilitated a Delphi workshop in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and the Department of Climate Change and Health. This process resulted in the development of the first three rapid-response evidence briefs, tailored to inform ministry-level decision-making on emerging policy priorities.

- The EARESI team, led by ACRES, has completed the first phase in the development of the Digital Evidence Base, an AI-powered platform designed to streamline access to evidence through rapid evidence synthesis, relevant references, and integration of local data and evidence. The next phase will be led by MLW through EARESI and will include stakeholder engagement and user testing to ensure the platform meets the practical needs of decision-makers.

- Through EARESI, ACRES, in collaboration with the Earth Rights Initiative (ERI), has developed an evidence map examining the effects of natural resource degradation in low- and middle-income countries. The initial draft was presented to ERI and its advisory group, for use in strengthening advocacy efforts—particularly in areas previously lacking data. The map is intended to support climate justice litigation and policy dialogue, including use in case proceedings and deliberations with the Ministry of Water and Environment and Parliament. As part of its broader dissemination strategy, the evidence map will also be integrated into the Digital Evidence Base, expanding its accessibility and impact.

- The EPHI team, through EARESI, convened a policy dialogue with key stakeholders—including the Ministry of Health, Regional Health Bureaus, UNICEF, and WHO—to discuss findings from a rapid review on the role of social media in improving adolescent and youth access to sexual and reproductive health services in low- and middle-income countries. Stakeholders validated the findings from the evidence brief and emphasized cross-sector collaboration, recommending engagement with IT experts, media, and the Ministry of Education to strengthen digital health strategies. EPHI, as part of EARESI, is now expanding consultations to identify broader reproductive health priorities, promoting a more inclusive and evidence-informed policy process.

Learning and Knowledge Exchange

Facilitating learning and exchange at national and regional levels

The EPA Centre continues to play a pivotal role in enhancing the use of evidence in policymaking by convening multi-stakeholder dialogues across different countries. In Benin, the Centre partnered with the Direction Générale de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation and the École des Sciences et Techniques de Conservation et de Transformation des Produits Agricoles to host a one-day workshop on nutrition and food security, fostering collaboration between researchers, decision-makers, and local communities to promote domestic resource mobilization and national entrepreneurship. In Burkina Faso, a knowledge-sharing event co-organized with CEDRES (Centre d'Étude de Documentation et de Recherche Économique et Sociale) of the Université Thomas Sankara addressed critical issues including climate shocks, land security, decentralized taxation, and digital finance.

At the regional level, the EPA Centre convened the Evidence-Policy-Action 2024 Forum, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders for interactive sessions and workshops aimed at strengthening evidence ecosystems. The Centre also co-organized the Transforming Evidence Network (TEN) 2024 Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, bringing global partners together to discuss evidence-informed policymaking. Through strategic alignment between the EPA Forum and the TEN Conference, the EPA Centre ensured continuity of dialogue on the pressing challenges of evidence mobilization and use in public policy, reinforcing both regional and global learning.

Learning across initiatives and organizations at the partnership level

The Africa LEEPS project annual meeting in Abidjan (4-8 November 2024) was instrumental in helping the three Africa LEEPS initiatives collectively reflect on their activities, specifically how to harness the collective strengths in the partnership to go further together. Partner organizations reflected on their work and journey in strengthening the use of evidence in different contexts—both challenges and opportunities—to refine the partnership's shared vision as we near the end of two years of foundation building.

R4D facilitated discussion and learning exchanges in the partnership's three cross-cutting working groups on MEL, Gender, and Communications. The MEL Working Group focused on prioritizing learning outputs from the learning agenda and will focus on the development of a MEL Framework & Indicator Guide as a key resource to support partners across the partnership in the coming months. The Gender Working Group met on an ad hoc basis to inform a resource for mainstreaming gender in policymaking that will be led by Makerere's School of Women and Gender Studies. The Communications Working Group met several times to discuss and review progress and findings from the ongoing scoping review aimed at understanding engagement and communication approaches that can increase the likelihood of evidence use in policy- and practice-level decisions. R4D also developed and shared guidance and good practices for the design and development of newsletters, based on demand and priorities shared in the Working Group.

Through our bi-annual survey, we learnt that partners value the LEEPS partnership and find the opportunities to meet and learn together beneficial:

- 85% of respondents felt that they were able to engage with and learn from other members during LEEPS partnership engagements.

- 88% of respondents believe partners successfully manage competing priorities across consortia and take collective actions that go beyond the individual agendas.

- Respondents shared ideas to strengthen the partnership, including sharing more case studies and real-life success stories, enhancing learning and trainings within and across consortia, organizing networking workshops and events, and technical backstopping for consortia members.

Key Milestones

October 2024

1 — Held Africa LEEPS convening in Abidjan, in addition to the EPA forum hosted by the EPA Centre (ACED-IPAR)

2 — Published five stories of change

3 — Launched external newsletter to 407 subscribers

4 — Coordinated quarterly partnership meeting to share early findings from rapid scoping of strategies for stakeholder engagement & evidence communication

5 — Published four stories of change to highlight progress in the partnership

6 — Conducted bi-annual partnership survey to take stock of the partnership's health

7 — Makerere University School of Women & Gender Studies begins development of a guide for integrating gender into policymaking processes

8 — LEEPS Partnership in Action video disseminated

March 2025

AFRICA LEEPS BY THE NUMBERS

182 — Researchers engaged (101 Male and 81 Female)

171 — Policymakers engaged (108 Male and 63 Female)

26 — Civil society + others engaged (15 Male and 11 Female)

13 — Publications

3 — Media coverage

4 — Conferences

28 — Dialogues

6 — Webinars

What we are Learning

To sustain engagement, training mentorship programs should be responsive and demand-led.

Following an AEEPA-led two-week virtual training in April 2024 for 51 Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN) fellows, AFIDEP reflected on their EIP mentorship program with ARIN fellows in early 2025 to see how they could make it more effective and efficient. They also surveyed participants to understand their challenges and needs. AFIDEP, as part of AEEPA, used the feedback they received to streamline the mentorship format by reducing meetings. While MoH and MoEP training participants expressed interest in the mentorship program, they noted that flexible formats were best suited to their demanding schedules. AFIDEP, as part of AEEPA, is also planning to share curated EIP resources and tools to support ongoing and asynchronous learning.

Institutional embedding requires strong organizational systems and processes, beyond individual capacity strengthening.
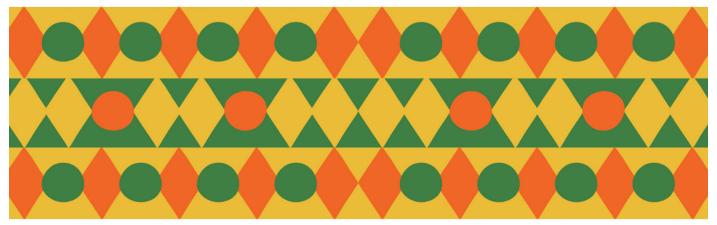
While training workshops and sensitization efforts continue to build the individual capability and awareness, the partnership is learning that embedding evidence use within institutions demands a more comprehensive approach. Africa LEEPS partners are now focusing on establishing service desks, helpdesk mechanisms, and methodological guides that create sustainable infrastructure for evidence use within government ministries. These efforts help move beyond individual champions to create systems that can withstand staff turnover and political transitions.

Political contexts significantly impact the pace and nature of evidence ecosystem strengthening.

Africa LEEPS partners are navigating diverse political environments that influence how evidence use can be supported. Partners are adapting by engaging with a wider range of stakeholders, including research institutions, statistical agencies, and civil society organizations that can advance evidence use even during periods of political uncertainty.

Regional and cross-country exchanges accelerate learning and adaptation.

The collaborative forums, conferences, and cross-country exchanges organized by the partnership are proving to be powerful accelerators of learning. Events like the EPA 2024 Forum in Abidjan, the Transforming Evidence Network conference in Cape Town, and the Africa LEEPS annual meeting in Abidjan have created spaces for sharing innovations across contexts. These exchanges are helping partners identify common challenges, adapt successful approaches from one setting to another, and build a stronger collective voice for evidence-informed decision making across Africa. Importantly, these gatherings also strengthen the sense of community among partners, fostering deeper relationships, shared identity, and a collective vision that transcends individual organizational boundaries.

Upcoming Priorities

As Africa LEEPS nears the end of its second year, the partnership's three regional initiatives will continue to advance capacity-strengthening activities and support government and civil society partners in building systems and processes to embed evidence use in decision making. They will facilitate and strengthen learning and exchange at the country and regional levels and come together as a partnership to co-create tools and resources to accelerate evidence use in Africa.

Upcoming priorities for the coming months include:

- Continued refinement of training and mentorship support on evidence-informed, gender-responsive policymaking and implementation for evidence producers, translators, and users, including development of competency frameworks

- Ongoing policy engagement support, meeting evidence actors where they are, with timely, demand-driven support and evidence to address priority needs

- Co-creating timely and contextually relevant evidence products for evidence users

- Strengthening organizational structures and processes to promote consistent use of evidence, including finalization of evidence maps, briefs, and other evidence products

- Building a sustainability plan for the partnership that considers how we want to sustain the strong evidence ecosystems we are building

- Identify new ways to harness the expertise in the partnership to extend the reach of our work in Sub-Saharan Africa

In the coming months, Africa LEEPS will also continue to prioritize knowledge exchange, peer learning, and documenting of lessons and good practices for wide sharing with evidence communities across Africa and other regions. Key priorities remain:

- Adaptively providing virtual spaces for partner organizations to connect, share experiences, and learn together, including ad hoc learning sessions and webinars to share lessons from the partnership's cross-cutting MEL, Gender, and Communications Working Groups

- Synthesizing and documenting stories of change and emerging good practices to highlight progress and lessons learned, including what we are understanding about measuring the impact of evidence on policy activities and how best to communicate evidence

- Co-creating shared tools, frameworks, and other resources to accelerate evidence use, drawing on experiences and lessons learned in the partnership, including:

  » Repository of indicators to inform EIP program design and measurement

  » Guide for integrating gender into policy processes, targeted to knowledge brokers

  » Scoping review of understanding engagement and communication approaches that can increase the likelihood of evidence use in policy- and practice-level decisions

  » Case studies highlighting evidence outputs and communication approaches for effectively conveying evidence to policymakers

  » Stories of Change to document different approaches to capacity strengthening for EIP

  » Launch of the Africa LEEPS website and hosting dialogues, webinars, and other events to share experiences and lessons

Appendix 1

Webinars

1. Sharing the experiences and insights of the pioneer entry-level cohort from the E2P training program (Empowering entry-level professionals to excel), EARESI

2. Insights into Malawi's Policy Priorities for the Clean Energy and Climate & Health Sectors, (Hybrid, Bingu International Convention Center), EARESI

3. Webinar on gender mainstreaming in policy and research, EPA Centre

4. Webinar on AI and evidence, EPA Centre

5. Effective Interventions for the Protection of Survivors of Gender-Based Violence in Kenya, AEEPA

6. Enhancing Public Accountability Committees (PAC), AEEPA

Briefs

1. Harnessing the Transformative Potential of Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable and Equitable Renewable Energy Systems, ARIN Fellow

2. Policy Brief: Strategy to enhance Food Security, Resilience, and Drought in ASAL Regions of Kenya, ARIN Fellow

3. Enhancing Public Accountability Committees (PACS) : Lessons from across Africa, ARIN Fellow

4. Effective Interventions In Protection For Survivors Of GBV In Kenya, ARIN Fellow

5. Economic Opportunities for the Energy Transition for African Women, ARIN Fellow

Blogs

1. Women in EIP: a program dedicated to strengthening the role of women and the inclusion of gender data in public policies, Rodrigue Castro Gbedomon & Fréjus Thoto

2. Evidence to Policy Training Programme Graduates Inaugural cohort, Bakari Ssettumba

Research Reports

1. Strengthening evidence ecosystems: A framework for developing players' capacities, Rodrigue Castro Gbedomon (ACED), Ariel Hardy HOUESSOU (ACED), Diatou N'Diaye (IPAR), Fréjus Thoto (ACED), Amadou Gueye (IPAR)

Stories of Change

1. Integrating Gender and Evidence-Based Practices in Healthcare Decision-Making, Sandra Y. Oketch, Henry Neondo, and Violet Murunga

2. Enhancing Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Africa, Sandra Y. Oketch, Henry Neondo, and Violet Murunga

3. Transforming Advocacy for Clean Energy Through the Use of Robust Evidence Syntheses and Emphasizing Equity In Policymaking, Sandra Y. Oketch, Henry Neondo, and Violet Murunga

4. From Disconnected Research to Practice Impact: The Transformative Training Journey to Enhance Equitable and Evidence-Informed Policymaking, Sandra Y. Oketch, Henry Neondo, and Violet Murunga

5. Bridging the Gap Between Research and Policy Through Promoting Evidence Use, Equity, and Inclusion, Sandra Y. Oketch, Henry Neondo, and Violet Murunga