8th Africa Evaluation Association (AfrEA) Conference in Munyonyo, Uganda

The AfrEA conference brings together 600+ delegates from governments, international non-governmental organisations, evaluation associations, academia, civil society and the private sector.

The AfrEA Conference provides a unique forum for evaluation researchers, practitioners and policy makers from across the world to share new ideas, approaches and experiences relating to the knowledge, skills and practice of evaluation in the continent.

The theme of ‘Evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): The conference opportunities and Challenges for Africa’ is structured to cover a broad array of issues on evaluation related to the SDGs and with relevance to the African continent. The diverse composition of the conference provides a space for a wide variety of stakeholders in development, humanitarian work and others to share experiences.

Conference Structure
The conference structured around 19 strands and an array of panels, round tables, workshops and plenary sessions, all structured around the 17 SDGs. With format of two-day pre-conference workshops and three-day parallel sessions, panel discussions, strands comprising workshops, papers, roundtables and poster sessions.

The African Gender and Development Evaluators Network (AGDEN) will co-organise one of the 19 strands at the 8th AfrEA conference; the strand on Gender Equity and Equality focused Evaluations. The acting AfrEA president, Ms. Adeline Sibanda was optimistic about the outcome of the conference.

“We hope you will find the conference insightful and that it will contribute to strengthening the capacity of our constituency, evaluation associations, evaluators, commissioners and users of evaluation”
Ms Sibanda said on behalf of the AfrEA Board.

AGDEN's Journey to the conference
Long before the conference started, AGDEN was made a co-organiser of the gender and equity strand, which is one of the 19 thematic strands. Strand organizers and managers were expected to plan the activities and organise strand presentations.

In November 2015, during the Africa and Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA), AGDEN was made the effective representative for the conference in Vietnam EvalGender+ at the AfrEA conference. EvalGender is one of the global networks created in November 2015 in Kathmandu, Nepal, to accelerate the implementation of the global evaluation agenda 2020 and assure the attainment of gender equality and equity through evaluation. AGDEN is the only gender equality thematic group member of AfrEA.
AGDEN's participation was not guaranteed at the time. It was only until late February 2017 when the Ford Foundation (East Africa) agreed to support the network to attend and participate at the conference.

Under the Foundation’s Global Learning Fund administered by IIE, AGDEN brought 19 participants from 6 African countries to Munyonyo. The grant covers travel, meals, visa, conference and workshop (1.5) registration fees. The travel grant allowed each participant to pay for and attend 1 full day workshop and a half day workshop.

AGDEN participation will ensure that issues of gender and human rights evaluation are given the prominence they deserve at the conference. AGDEN, whose key mandate is to mainstream gender and human rights principles into development programmes, has lined up key activities at the conference to amplify the need for effective gender and rights based participatory monitoring and evaluation, with a view to enhancing accountability, social justice and equity in African development.

The network is expected to play a critical role in repositioning and advancing the cause of gender responsive and human rights based evaluation in the context of global socio-economic development and particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Florence Etta, the Vice chair of AGDEN, who was instrumental in securing and managing the grant, expressed her gratitude saying it helped keep gender and human rights evaluation on the conference agenda.

AGDEN grantees also expressed gratitude for the support saying their participation would help blaze the trail of gender responsive and human rights evaluation in the continent. They are expected to take an active part in the two workshops provided by UNWomea and AGDEN is a co-sponsor.

Photo line up: L-R Micheal Bullut (Kenya), Alfred Odour, Bintou Nimaga (Mali), Ousseni Kinda (Burkina Faso), Tracey Kandeya (Zimbabwe)
AGDEN in Action at the AfrEA Conference

The highlight of AGDEN's participation at the conference was a one-day workshop on Gender and Equity Responsive Evaluation in the SDG Era which attracted 44 participants, one of the most heavily attended.

The 8th AfrEA conference provided a perfect opportunity for AGDEN to continue changing the complexion of monitoring and evaluation in the continent. The highlight of AGDEN's participation at the conference was a one day workshop on Gender and Equity Responsive Evaluation in the SDG Era which attracted 44 participants, 20 more than expected; a clear indication of interest in this subject.

The aim of the workshop was to expose the complexity of integrating gender and equity in SDGs. Improve understanding and knowledge of the linkages across SDGs, the human rights and gender equality dimensions and the evaluation theory and frameworks that apply. It was facilitated by three gender and evaluation experts, Dr. Florence Etta, Cecilia Manyame and Grace Okonji. The workshop was highly participatory allowing for interactive discussions, questions and answers.

The workshop was designed for beginners to respond to the global Agenda 2030 (SDG's) and the imperative of its ethical mandate of 'No one left behind' which is premised on gender and equity focused development.

AGDEN's rationale for this workshop was based on the need to impart knowledge and information about the SDGs and the importance of evaluating them from gender and equity perspective. An evaluation of the workshop by participants revealed that the workshop was in-depth; provided an understanding of SDGs and enhanced knowledge of the subject of evaluations in the context of gender and human right. The workshop provided a better understanding of the need for gender responsive M&E.

Apart from the workshop, AGDEN also participated in other key conference events. First, an AGDEN sponsored participant presented findings from a child-led study conducted in some parts of Africa, Asia and Middle East to assess children’s perceived level of safety within their households, communities and in schools.

AGDEN members also chaired two sessions in the gender strand. Two AGDEN members were key presenters at the ‘unearting and engaging the partner array’ - Town Crier Session, and ‘the South-South Peer-to-Peer Project’ at the Gender and Equity Responsive Evaluation was also a AGDEN co-convenor, facilitator and discussant at the regional consultation on equity focused and gender responsive national evaluation policies and systems in Africa.

The AGDEN Election Committee 2017 on Saturday June 17th announced results of AGDEN’s first virtual elections. The following AGDEN members who won constitute the Board of Management of the Network; Chair, Madri Jansen van Rensburg (South Africa); Vice Chair, Bintou Nimaga (Mali); Treasurer, Cecilia Manyame (Zimbabwe); Anglophone Secretary, Grace Okonji (Kenya); Francophone Secretary, Dieynaba Ndiaye (Senegal); Regional Representative East Africa, Immakulata Komba (Tanzania); Regional Representative Central Africa, Cecile Ebobisse (Cameroon); Regional Representative West Africa, Abigail Abandoh-Sam (Ghana).
AGDEN Members reflect on the AfrEA conference

AGDEN members and conference participants share their experiences about the continental event!

It was bigger and better

AfrEA 8 was bigger and better and offered many opportunities for networking for gender discourse possibilities, collaborations with regard to future and continued sharing of experiences and resource mobilisation as there was a range of organisations and entities that could work with AGDEN. The topics were well researched and prepared. However, there was not enough time for presentations and discussions.

An opportunity to revitalise AGDEN

This 8th AfrEA conference was an opportunity to revitalise AGDEN and strengthen the confidence of the members on its capacity of management and mobilisation. The meeting was an opportunity to physically know the AGDEN members, to communicate better and to inquire on the realisations and the programmes of our NGO. AGDEN played an important role as VOPES in particular within the framework of the SDG. The AGDEN AGM allowed us to renew the confidence of the members and to renew the necessity of reviewing the constitution of AGDEN.

It was a great honour to participate

It was a great honor to have had the opportunity of participating in the 8th AfrEA Conference. The gender equity workshop hosted by AGDEN set the tone for the week for me because when you understand M&E from the realities of often marginalized groups then you begin to see how important it is in all spaces, disciplines etc. As someone new to M&E work vocabulary etc. a gender entry point was the best way to simplify M&E. Bringing experts in M&E at national, international and non-profit organisations, the conference provided a unique space to understand M&E in multiple disciplines, different levels of actors including academics, researchers, practitioners and policy makers. This enriched the knowledge and discussions from the presentations as they were based on real life experiences. The presentations were also relatable and friendly for those not within the M&E community of practice.
I am motivated, exposed and schooled

The 8th international conference organised by the African Evaluation Association offered me a better insight into evaluation and engendering the assessment of the 17 sustainable development goals. Before the conference, the conference gave me a pedestal to meet and interact with diverse people who have similar career interests or are further much ahead of me. I am indeed motivated, exposed and schooled on what other institutions are doing towards achieving SDGs.

I enjoyed the conference

It was very hard to select one session out of a choice of a variety of super interesting topics being discussed by many talented presenters; it was the most diverse conference I have ever been to. I was very impressed with the variety of topics and the presenters from all over the world. There was also a great opportunity to meet with EvalGender group where we discussed how we can promote gender into some of the international standards for evaluations. I was very impressed with the energy in all AGDEN Members during my interaction with them. Also, it needs to be highlighted that AGDEN is very lucky to have the leadership of Ms Florence Etta who is knowledgeable on matters relating to gender and equity and human rights in relation to M&E.

Highlights of the 8th AfrEA Conference

Ms Christine Guwatudde Kintu, the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister; AfrEA President, Adeline Sibanda; Ugandan Prime Minister Hon. Dr Ruhakana Rugunda; First Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Leader of Government Business, Moses Ali; Hon Grace Kwiuchwiny, Minister of State for Northern Uganda Rehabilitation; UEA President, Rosetti Nabbumba.

Uganda’s Prime Minister opened the Conference

The AfrEA Conference was officially opened by Hon. Dr Ruhakana Rugunda the Prime Minister of Uganda on Tuesday 28 March, 2017 during a cocktail party hosted by the association.


This publication has been printed with support from the Ford Foundation, East Africa; the views do not reflect the Foundation’s official policies.
African governments have begun to integrate the SDGs in national development agendas. It is critical that these governments put in place measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the SDGs right at the start of the process. “It is encouraging to see the overwhelming support we received from national governments and parliamentarians across the globe, said Adeline Sibanda, President of AfrEA in her opening address.

**AfrEA’s New Board Elected Inaugurated**

A new AfrEA board was elected inaugurated during the 8th AfrEA conference. Members of the board include President, Adeline Sibanda Vice President, Samuel Kouakou; Regional representatives North Africa, Fatima Rabboz; Central Africa, Urbain Tsala; East Africa, Rosetti, Nabbumba; Southern Africa, Candice Morkel; and West Africa, Abdoul Aziz Kane. The position of the Treasurer was unfilled at the time. AfrEA also adopted a new Constitution during the 1st conference.

**Gender Responsive National Evaluation Policies - Consultation**

The Africa Regional Consultation on Equity-Focused and Gender Responsive National Evaluation Policies (NEPs) and Systems was held on 28th March. Close to 80 delegates representing parliaments, governments, VOPES and development partners mainly from Africa attended the consultation.

Twenty-Six African countries were represented in the consultation. The main objective of the initiative was to promote national evaluation policies and systems in the Africa region.

---

**Conference in pictures**

[Images of conference attendees and activities]
EvalPartners Global Forum III

The EvalPartners 3rd Global Forum will be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan from 25-28 April 2017.

The theme of the Global Forum is “Transforming our world through evaluation: engagement and partnership for the better world we want”.

The 3rd Global Evaluation Forum will be organized by EvalPartners, the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the Kyrgyz M&E Network, and the Eurasian Evaluation Network.

The IDEAS Global Assembly will be held between December 4-8, 2017, in Guanajuato, Mexico.

IDEAS Global Assembly

Under the theme ‘Evaluation of the sustainable development goals: Transforming life through global and regional partnerships’, the Assembly will focus on:

- Approaches and methodologies for monitoring and evaluation;
- Use of evidence from the monitoring and evaluation systems;
- Roles of evaluation networks and associations;
- Evaluation agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the past conferences, gender and equity-focus has been a central cross-cutting theme; this time, it will be even greater, given the emphasis of equity-focus in the SDGs as well as the clarion call for “Leaving no one behind”.

Contact us

Africa Gender and Development Evaluators Network,
P.O. Box 14285-00800, West-lands, C/o Department of Sociology, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Editorial Board

Managing Editor: Dr Florence Etta
Editor: Alfred Oduor
Editorial Assistant: Rachel Sittoni