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Chairperson of the Africa Evidence Network

[@RuthS3](#) [@ACE_UJ](#) [@Africa_Evidence](#)

Turning 'Evidence for Development' on its Head

Wednesday 30th October 2019

13:45 – 15:00 GMT

Room LG80, Keppel Street, WC1E 7HT, London

A 50 minute lecture followed by a 25 minute Q&A session

If you are following online and have questions

please email cedil@lshtm.ac.uk

or tweet us on [@CEDILProgramme](#)

To inspire us



Conflicts of interest (aka who I am)

- I am an African and a European
- I am first a foremost a public servant
- I believe in evidence
- I have a strong sense of justice
- I rely on external funding
- I am on the CEDIL Board
- My team has received CEDIL funding



Goals in this lecture

- To reduce poverty and inequality through increased use of evidence in decision-making
- To challenge us
- To explore what this means for us
- To present some research that we've been doing to turn this on its head



THIS UPSIDE-DOWN MAP WILL CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THE WORLD!

To challenge us

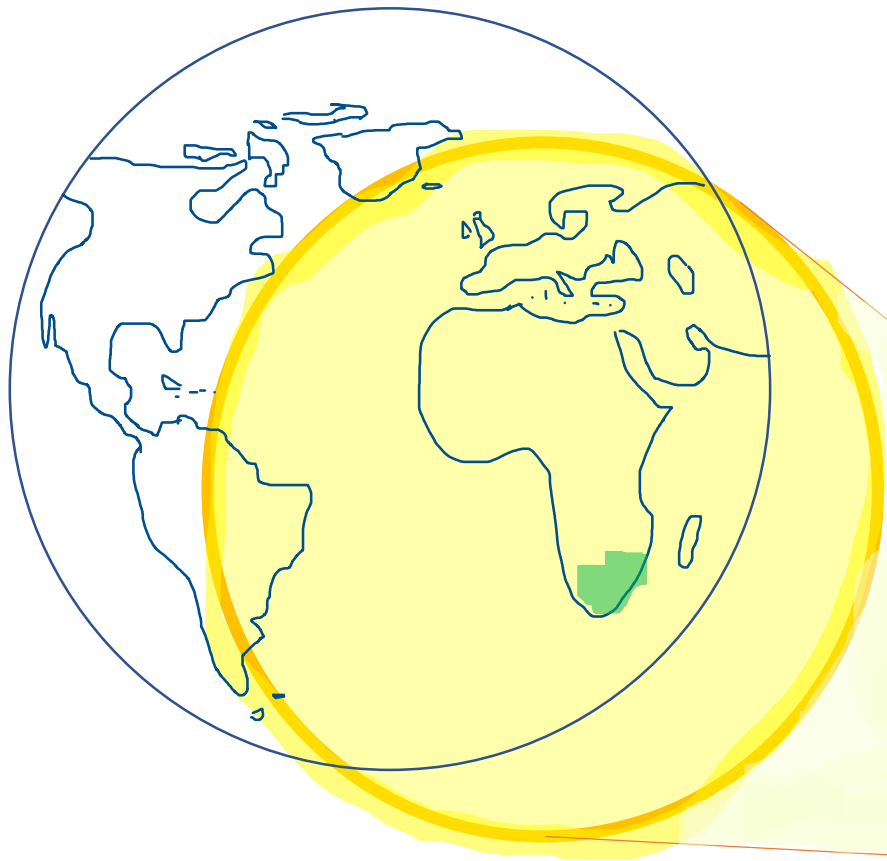


I am part of a lost generation
And I refuse to believe that
I can change the world
I realise this may be a shock but
“Happiness comes from within”
Is a lie, and
“Money will make me happy”
So in 30 years I will tell my children
They are not the most important thing in my life
My employer will know that
I have my priorities straight because
Work
Is more important than
Family
I tell you this
Once upon a time
Families stayed together

30 years from now I will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of my divorce

But this will not be true in my era
This is a quick fix society
Experts tell me
I do not concede that
I will live in a country of my own making
In the future
Environmental destruction will be the norm
No longer can it be said that
My peers and I care about this earth
It will be evident that
My generation is apathetic and lethargic
It is foolish to presume that
There is hope

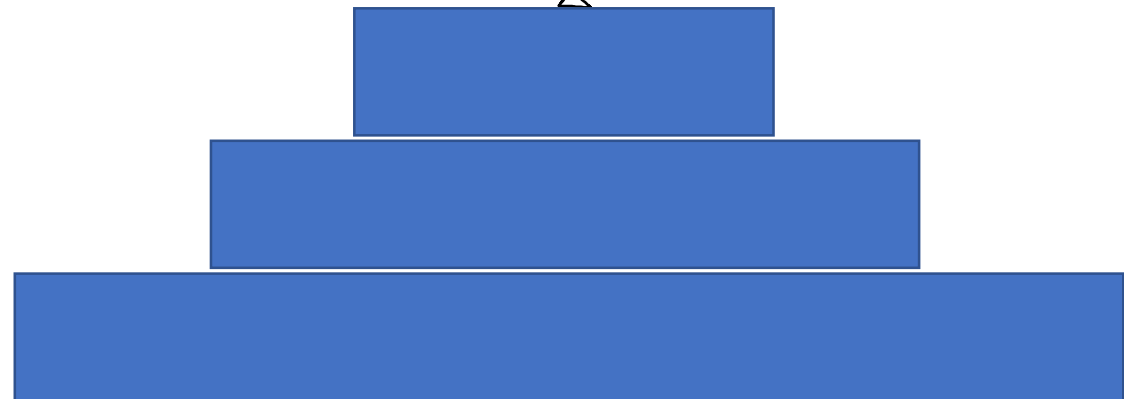
And all of this will come true unless we choose to reverse it.

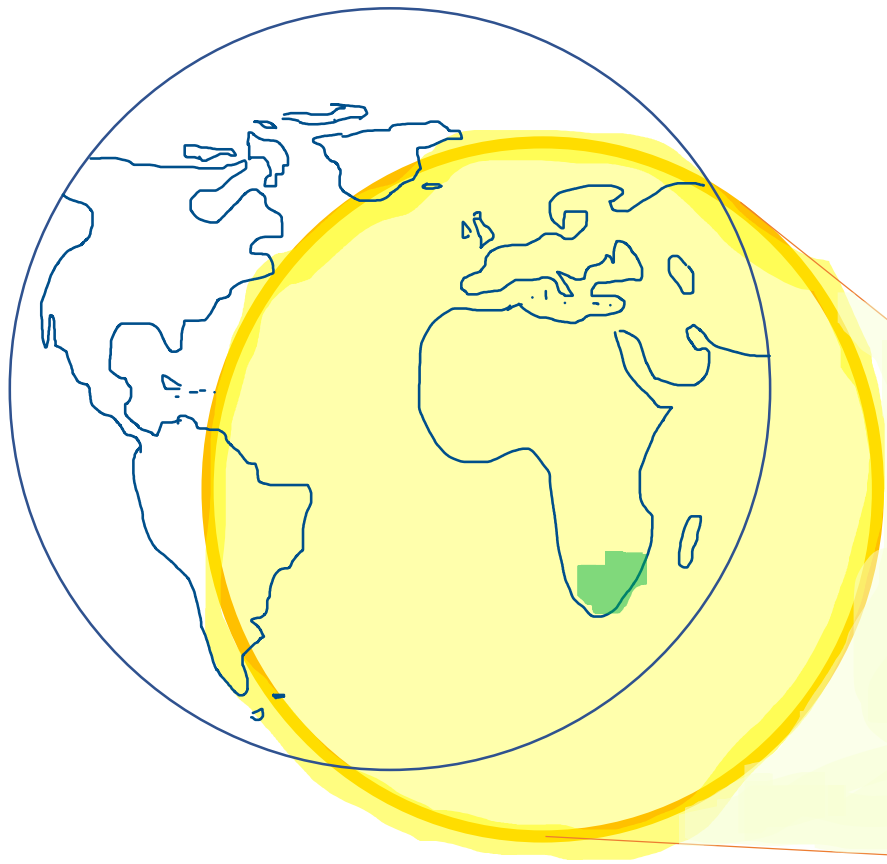


How do we see the evidence world?

What are the building blocks that shape our perspective?

What if we change our lens?





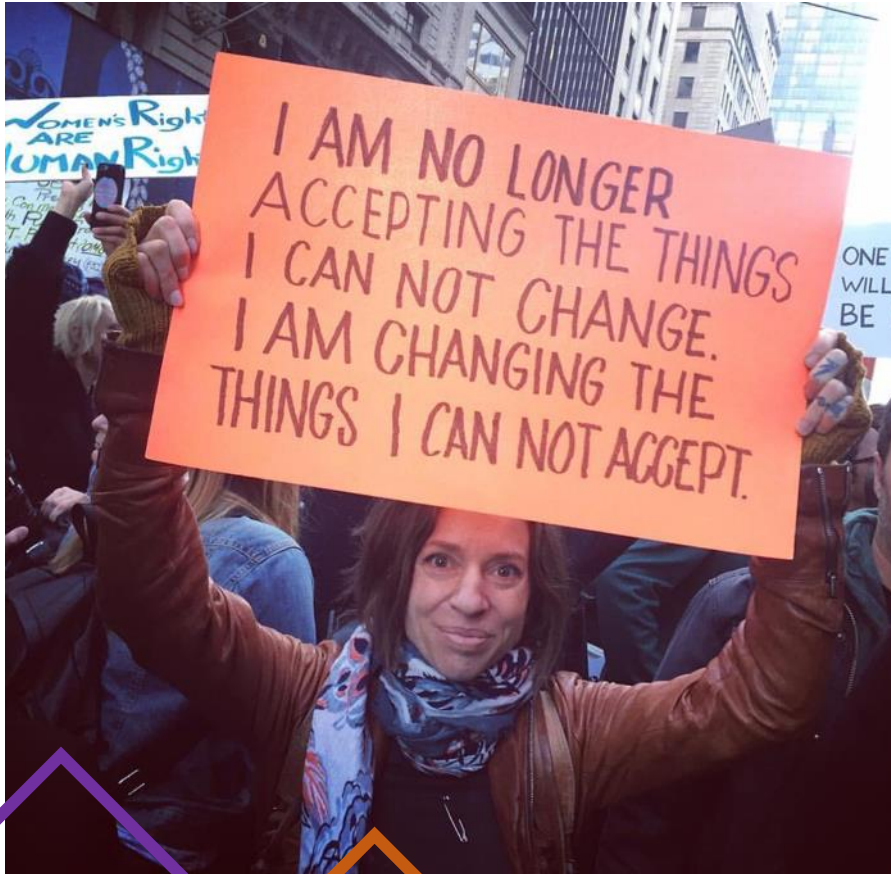
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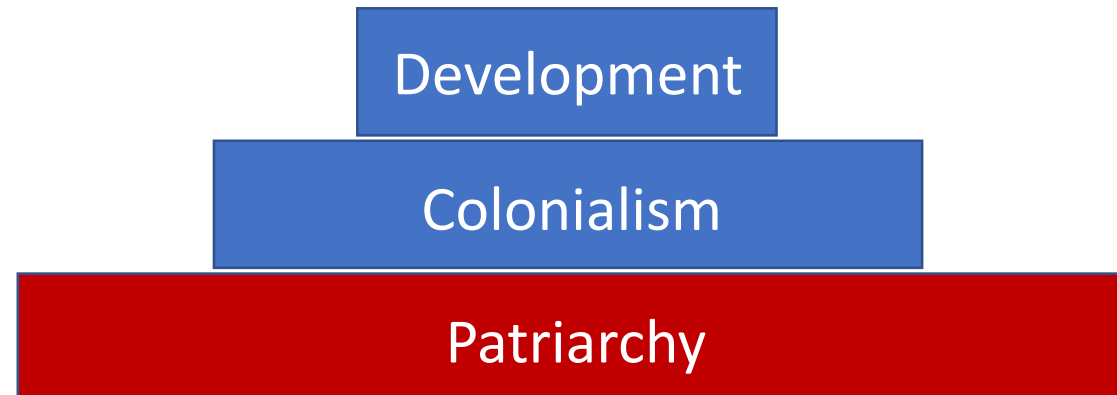
What if we change
our lens?



These building blocks have largely been debunked



19th Century onwards: Waves of Feminist movements
Campaigns around gender and science
Women leaders in evidence specialisms and evidence institutions
Even have women winning Nobel prizes for their contributions to our shared mission



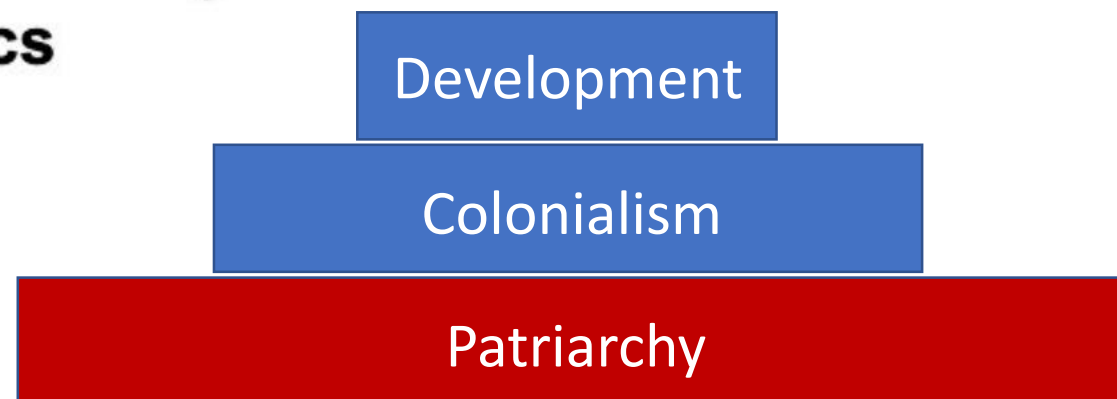
These building blocks have largely been debunked... and yet they persist?



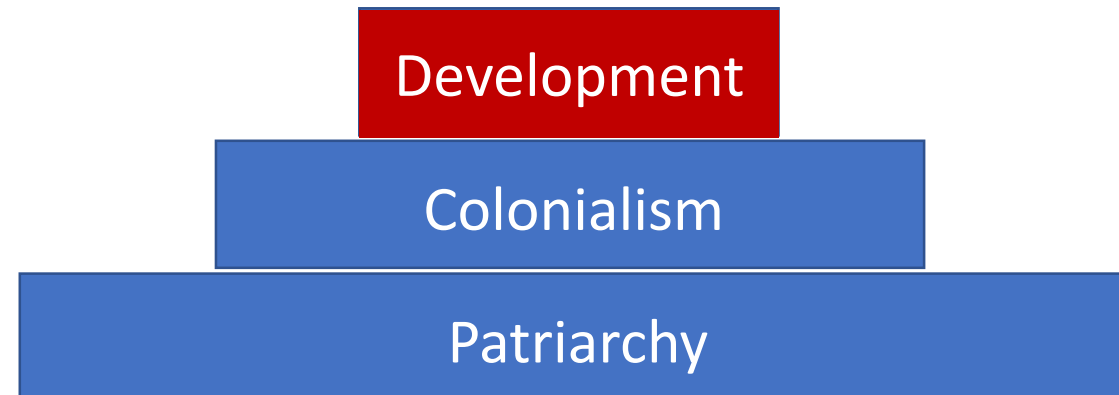
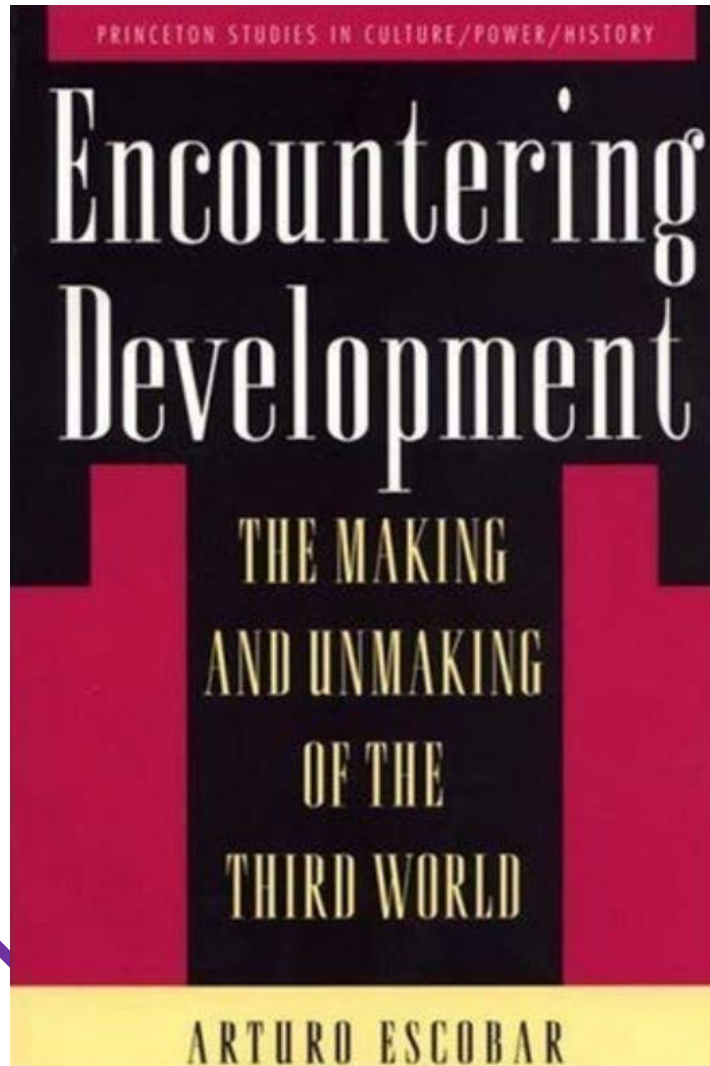
Indian-American MIT Prof Abhijit Banerjee and wife wins Nobel in Economics

“Invisibility and evidence: Time’s up for evidence that doesn’t consider gendered drivers of inequality”

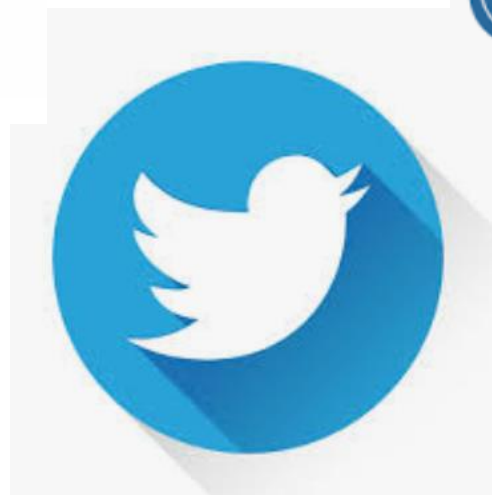
3ie Satellite Session at Evidence 2018



These building blocks have largely been debunked



These building blocks have largely been debunked... and yet they persist



Development

Colonialism

Patriarchy

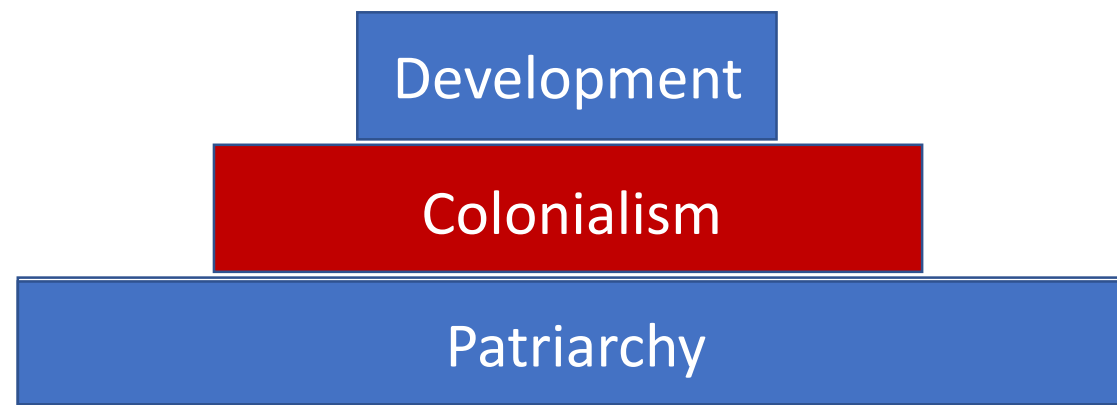
Post-Development – and evidence partnerships

Caught between a rock and a hard place: navigating global research partnerships in the global South as an indigenous researcher

Chisomo Kalinga  

“There is great potential in these large pots of money to lead to fruitful multi-country collaborations. However, more work needs to be done to understand that ‘risk assessment’ must include an understanding of the consequences of the uneven power dynamics which are created and reinforced by the global North/South power dynamic that systematically keeps African scholars in a position of submission.”

These building blocks have largely been debunked



It infiltrates so much of how we view the evidence world

Who was the first person to circumnavigate the earth?



Who was Christopher Columbus?



Decoloniality – more than thinking differently



“By decoloniality it is meant... the dismantling of relations to power and conceptions of knowledge that foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geo-political hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world.”

Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2006:117)

Decoloniality – more than thinking differently



“The de-colonial turn involves interventions at the level of power, knowledge, and being through varied actions of decolonisation ...”

Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007:262)

Decoloniality – more than thinking differently

I paraphrase him:

I attempt to transcend my privilege “through my commitment, tying my fate to this continent, this country, our revolution”.

Mbembe (2005)



Decoloniality – more than thinking differently

Decoloniality has two sides:

“A critique of ... the endless production of theories that are based on European traditions (that) are produced nearly always by Europeans or Euro-American men”

“The second is an attempt at imagining what the alternative to this model could look like.”

Mbembe (2005)

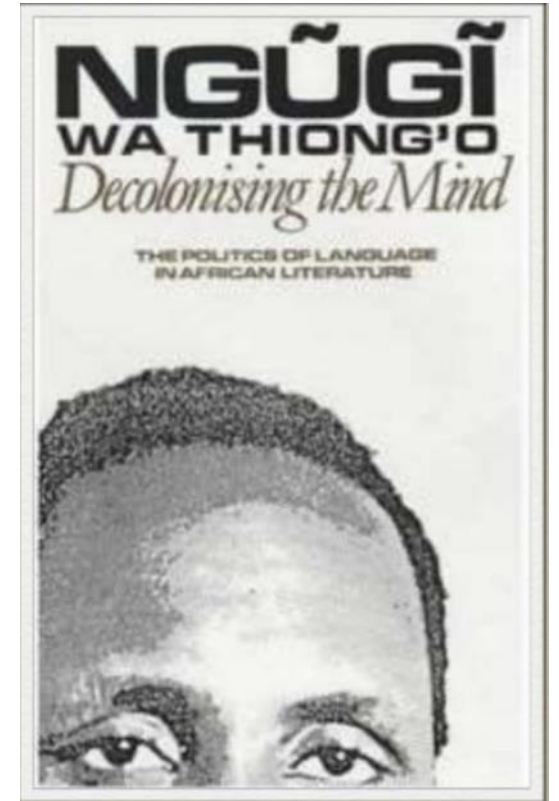


Decoloniality – Decentering and recentering



**“For Ngugi wa Thiong’o
decolonisation is a project not about
replacing, rejecting or closing out,
but about “defining clearly what the
centre is.”**

decentering and recentering



Mbembe reflecting on Ngugi wa Thiong’o

Source: <http://www.unisa.ac.za/chs/news/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/DSCN22201.jpg>

To explore what this means for us



Picture source: www.adventureincluded.co.za

What all this means for us



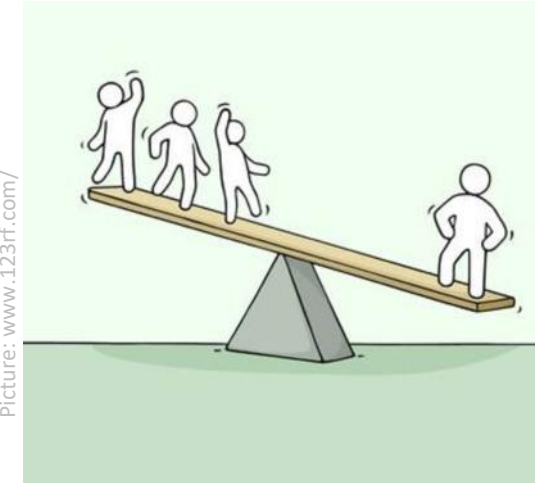
Picture: www.dreamstime.com



Picture: <http://mysteryreadersinc.blogspot.com>



Picture: www.shutterstock.com



Picture: www.123rf.com/

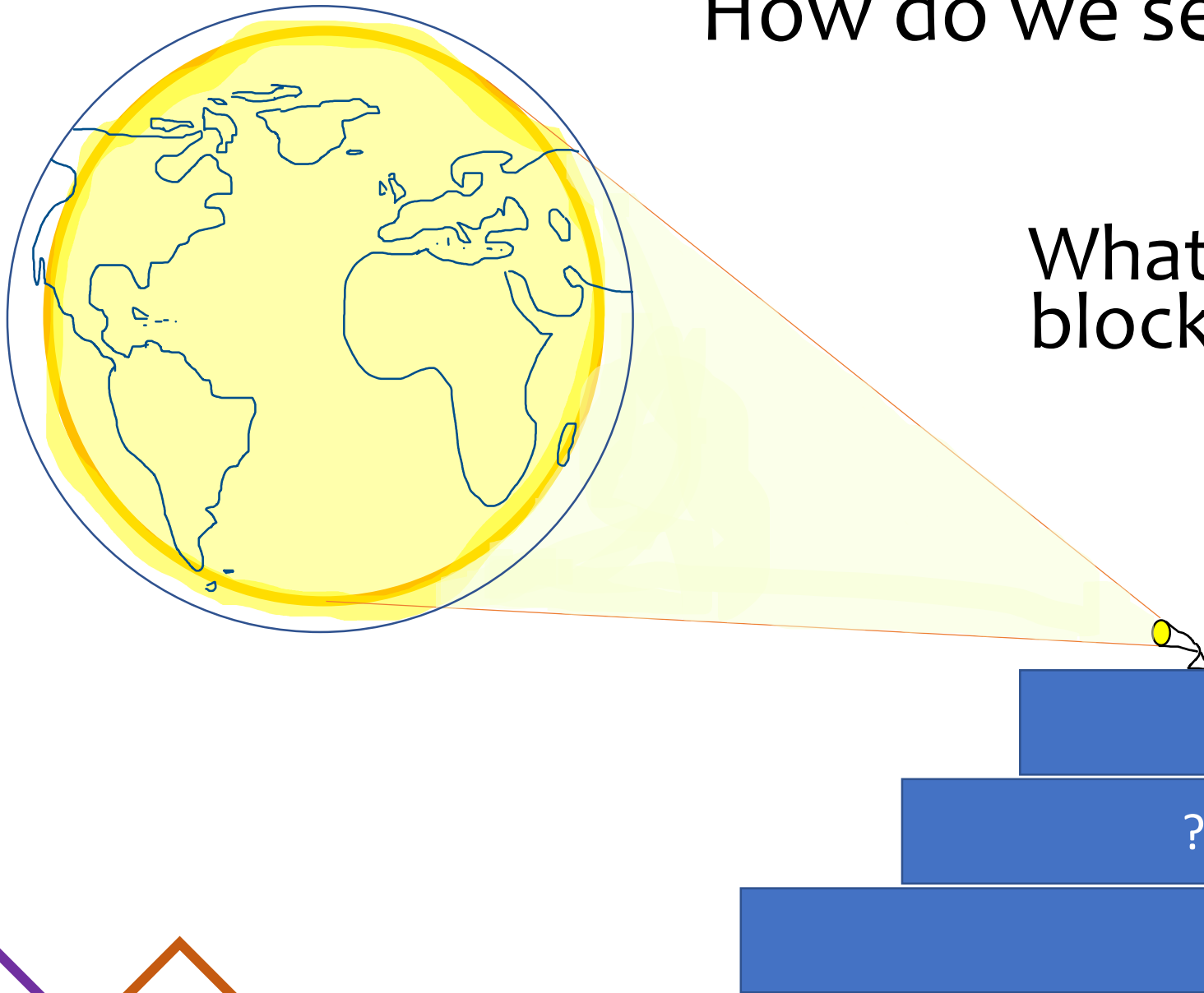


Picture: www.governwell.net/

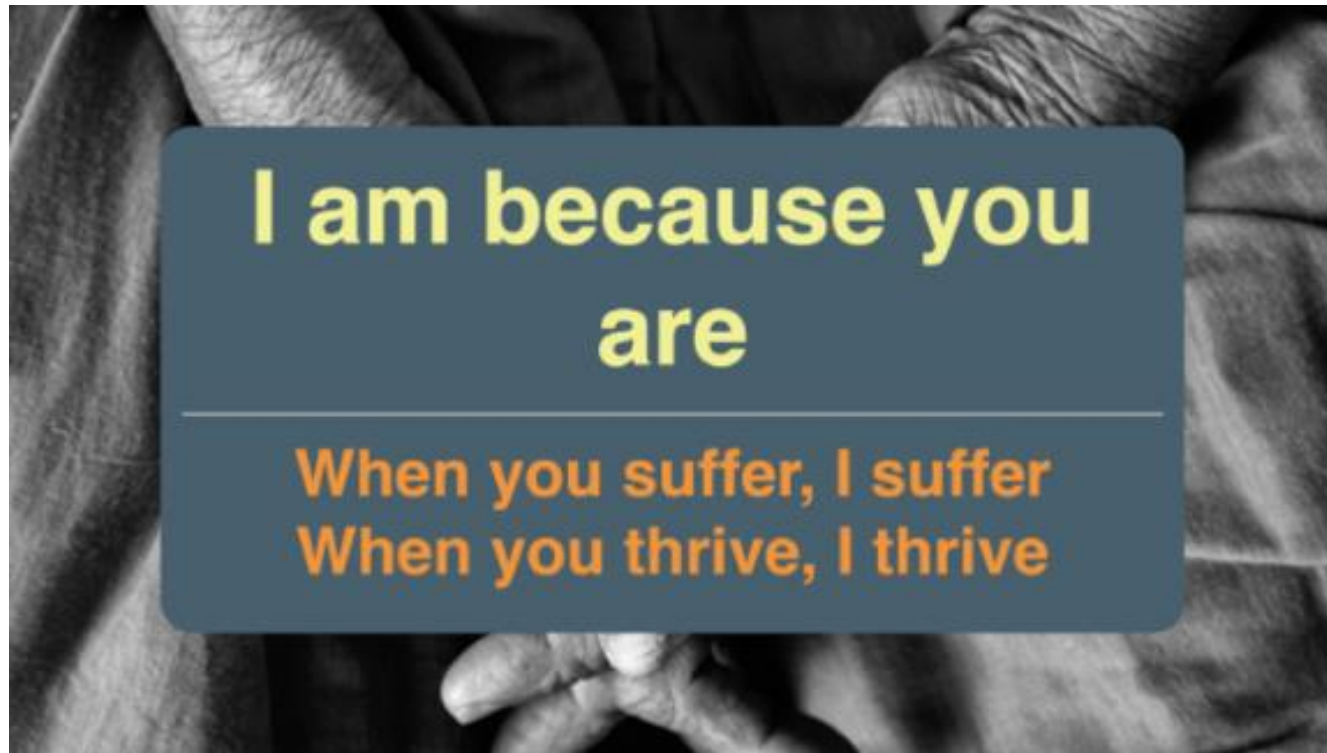
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What if we change our lens?



There is an alternative way of being that we are drawing on... UBUNTU

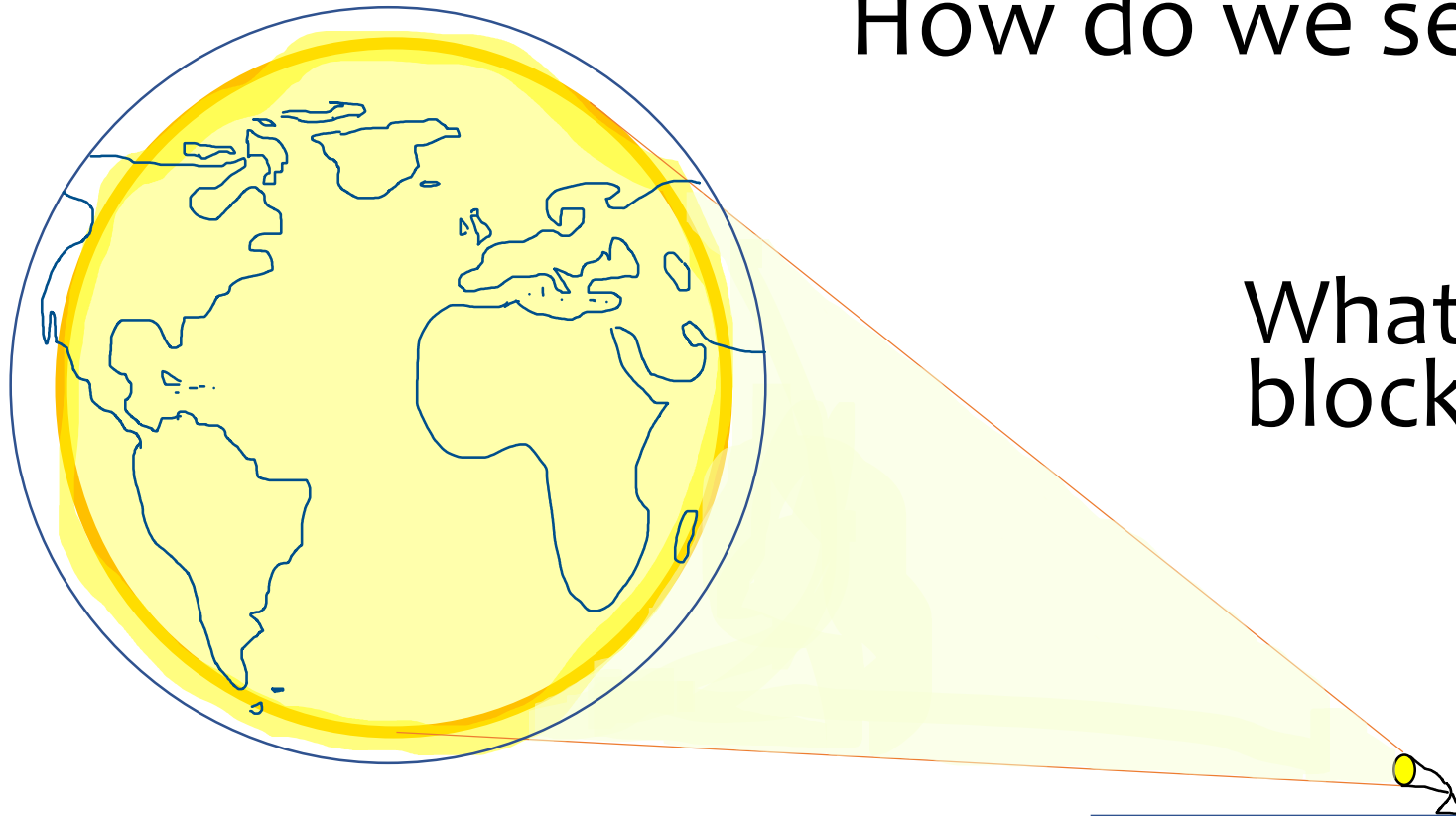


Picture: <https://blog.chef.io/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Screen-Shot-2017-01-09-at-11.24.59-AM.png>

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Ubuntu

We need an Ubuntu Revolution



To present what we've been doing to turn this
on its head



How are we responding to these challenges



Only together can evidence-informed decision-making become reality.

Picture: Africa Evidence Network



What are we doing to change the lens?

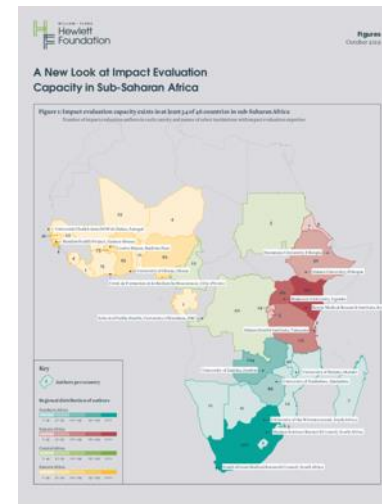
1. Mapping the ecosystem

- EIDM organizations
- EIDM social networks



2. Understanding capacity in Africa:

- Systematic Reviews
- Impact Evaluations



3. Fostering collaborations

- Networking
- Spotlighting / celebrating



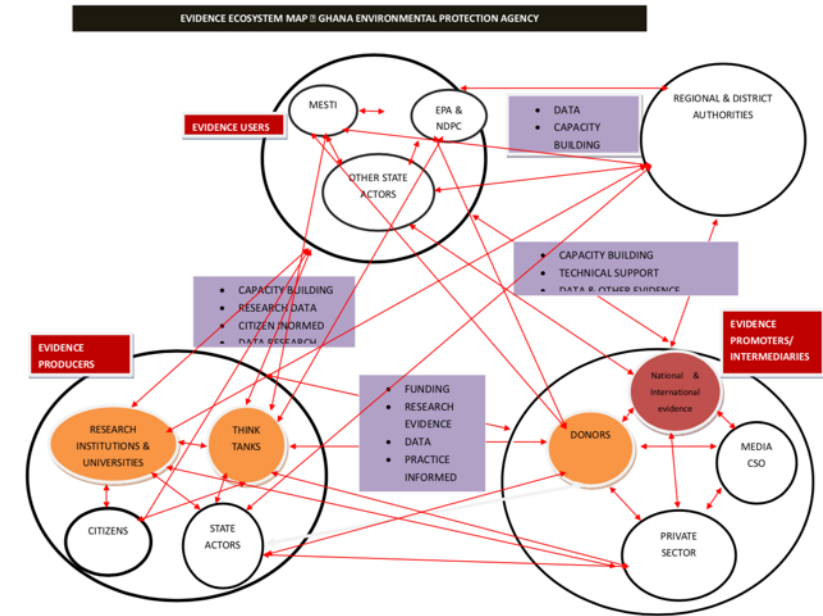
1. Mapping the African evidence ecosystem

EIDM organisations



- 150 EIDM organisations in Africa

EIDM networks



- 40 ecosystem maps from across Africa

Picture: Africa Evidence Network Landscape Map Series: Sampong 2018: Evidence ecosystem of the Ghanaian Environmental Protection Agency

The African evidence ecosystem

Picture: Ana Andreu Mendez/UNU-FLORES
www.flores.unu.edu



- Networks and relationships are a key
- Capacity support is often provided by external partners
- Institutionalisation is only advanced where systems are demand-led
- More still to learn

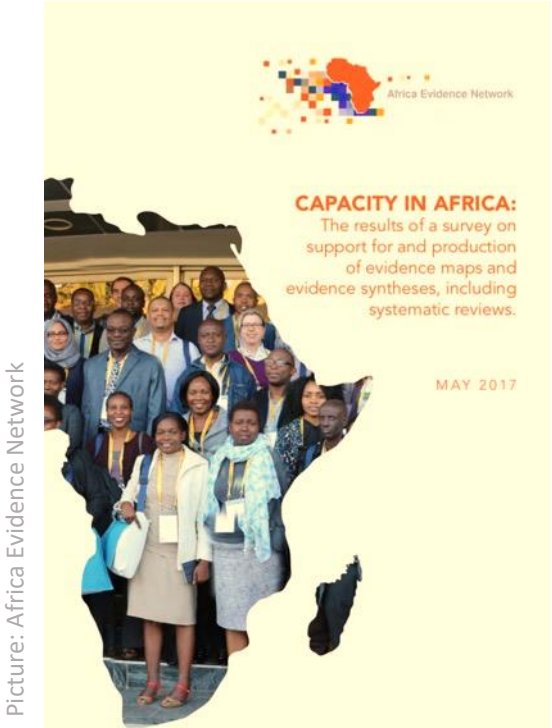
- Cross-sectoral
- Govts play a significant role
- Donors play a role



Picture: www.earthlifeexpeditions.com

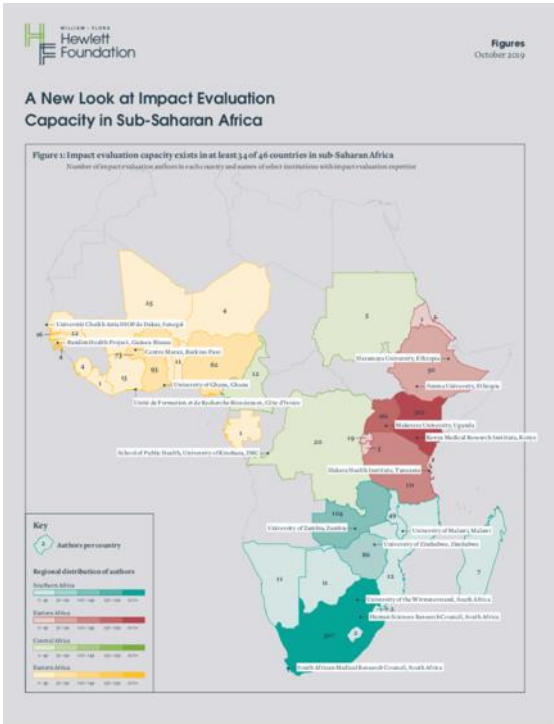
2. Capacity in Africa

Systematic reviews, other evidence syntheses, and evidence maps



Picture: Africa Evidence Network

Impact evaluations



Picture: Africa Centre for Evidence

Capacity in Africa – what we've learnt

- Far exceeds previous understanding
- Centers of excellence emerging
- Funding important but not the most important thing
- Mentoring and opportunities to collaborate are key
- Profile / a voice make a difference
- Don't underestimate capacity
- Capacity sharing is much more appropriate than capacity building
- Partner with us as equals – don't patronize us
- Get to know us – don't use us



Photo: Evidence 2020 Report, AEN

3. Fostering collaborations



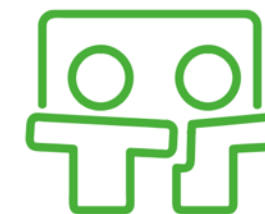
*Only together can evidence-
informed decision-making
become reality.*

@Africa_Evidence
#AfricaLovesEvidence
#AfricaEvidenceWeek

Twitter analytics for **#AfricaEvidenceWeek**

Highlight numbers for the weeks*
leading up to, including, and after
Africa Evidence Week.

Contributors
399



Reach
1,218,633



Impressions
4,651,218



Tweets
2,493



*Analytics collected for hashtag use from 20 August until
19 September

If you want to know about innovative methods

Africa Centre for Systematic
Reviews and Knowledge
Translation



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

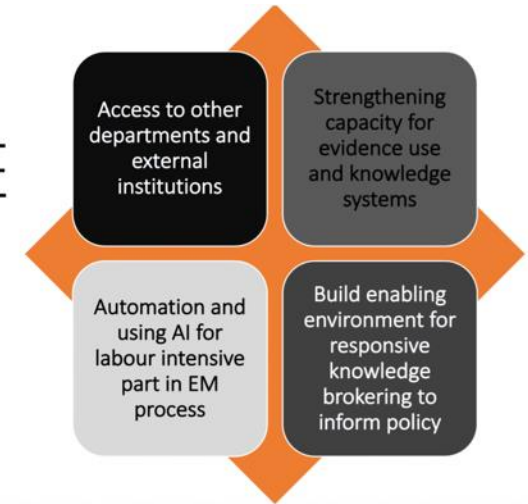


@RRS_Makchs

If you want to know about innovative methods



THE
FUTURE



If you want to know about innovative methods



<http://www.aihps.ebsu.edu.ng>

If you want to know about innovative methods



@PACKS_Africa

If you want to know about innovative methods



@ebase_africa

If you want to know about innovative methods

Africa Evidence Week 2019
Date: 13th September
Time: 09am to 01pm

Venue
Mzumbe University
Dar es Salaam Campus College

Keynote Speaker
Gloria Anderson
Founder & Executive Director
TEDI Tanzania.

PANEL SPEAKERS

 Jonathan N. Mnyele Minister of Education - MUSE	 Immaculate Kyemanywa Moderator	 Odumary Peter Educator	 Nasirali Samson Managing Director - Bella Africa
 Dr Nelson Amari	 Sigrida Walmer The Royal Norwegian Society for Development - Tanzania	 Kabini Eilward Secretary General - YUNA	 Binta Mwangi Founder - Agrisubul Tanzania

TEDI

Tanzania Enlightenment
Development Innovations

Learn Today Lead Tomorrow



@teditanzania

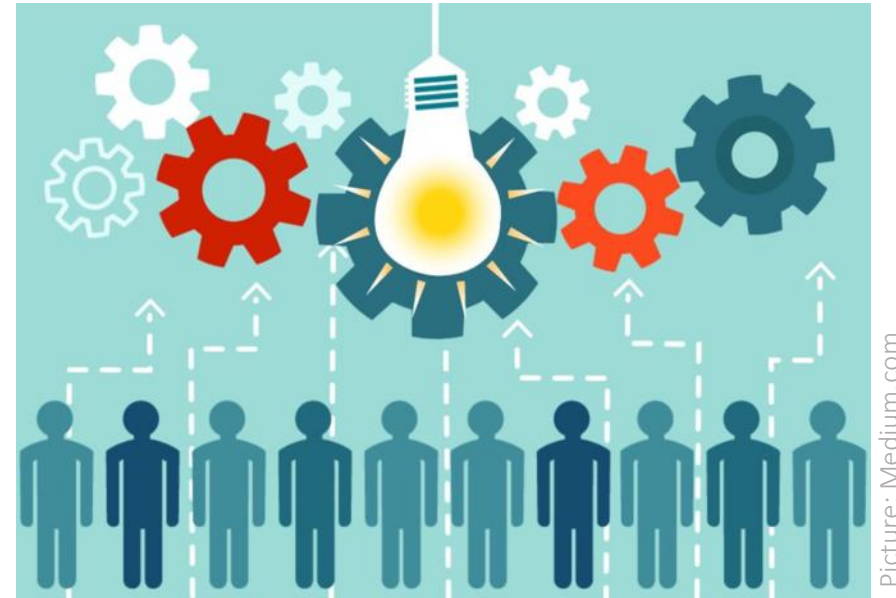
If you want to know about innovative methods



@ACEDbenin

African innovations are necessary, routine and inspirational (but tend to be underestimated / ignored)

Innovation comes from crises, from stress points



And these innovations thrive in an ecosystem underpinned by Ubuntu

What all this continues to mean for all of us



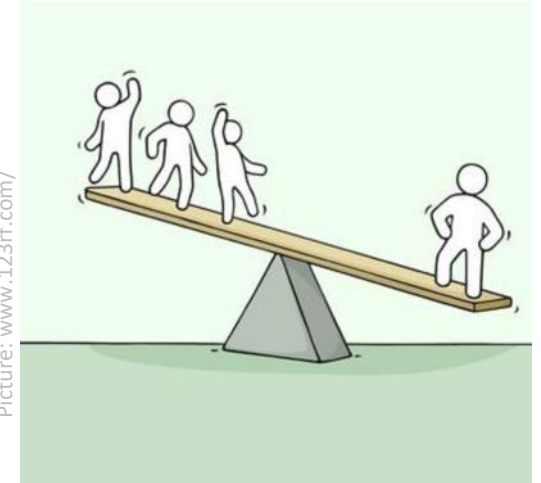
Picture: www.dreamstime.com



Picture: <http://mysteryreadersinc.blogspot.com>



Picture: www.shutterstock.com



Picture: www.123rf.com/



Picture: www.governwell.net/

Let's build an evidence ecosystem that tackles poverty and inequality together, and on a level footing

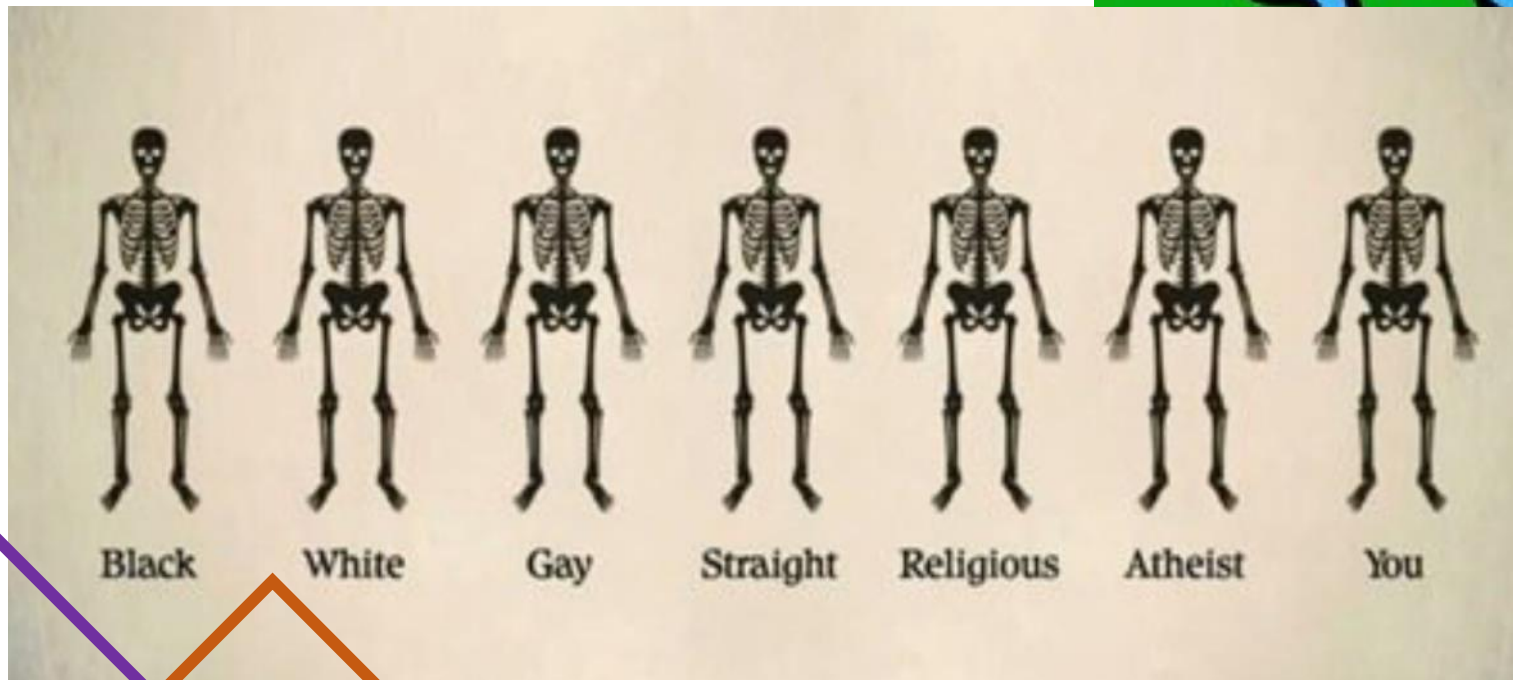
Picture: <https://vseosvita.ua/>



We are the
master of our fate

We are the
captain of our
soul

Picture: jamesmsama.com



Thank you



Ruth Stewart
Africa Centre for Evidence



www.africacentreforevidence.org



@RuthS3
@ACE_UJ



Questions? Email ruths@uj.ac.za



Working together to make
evidence-informed
decision-making a reality



UNIVERSITY
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