Assessing the Demand for a Global Evidence Network

Mapping Existing Initiatives and Understanding Network Lessons and Opportunities

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RESULTS FOR ALL

An Initiative of Results for America

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Purpose & Methodology

[Results for All](#)[1] is currently exploring the role that a global evidence[2] network or platform could play in helping government policymakers[3] share experiences and amplify solutions to advance the use of evidence across government policy and practice. To avoid potential duplication and overlap with existing initiatives, Results for All engaged in a comprehensive process of identifying, researching, and mapping active networks that have similar missions.

Findings: 50+ Networks for Peer Learning and Evidence Use in Government

Twenty networks explicitly target one sector, such as education or agriculture, with twelve of those working exclusively or primarily in health. Relatively few networks, only eight, take an institutional capacity approach, investing in and strengthening the skills, processes, and systems to produce and use evidence broadly across government, not specific to any sector. We also categorize networks by their target audience. Seven regional or global networks encompass or work with national parliaments to facilitate and promote evidence use, while others focus on supporting evidence

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[1] Results for All is a global initiative of [Results for America](#), a U.S. nongovernmental organization helping decision-makers at all levels of the U.S. government harness the power of evidence and data to solve the nation's greatest challenges. The mission of Results for America is to make investing in what works the "new normal," so that when policymakers make decisions, they start by seeking the best evidence and data available, then use what they find to get better results.

[2] We use a broad definition of evidence that includes statistical and administrative data, research evidence, evaluations, and citizen input.

[3] Defined as an official or nonelected staff member at any level in government with the ability to make budget, policy, or management decisions or influence the extent to which data and evidence are used. A policymaker can be a politician (e.g. head of state, governor, legislator, or political appointee), a bureaucrat with an administrative role in day-to-day policy- or program-related decisions, or a public-sector servant responsible for implementing programs.

producers and promoting their research findings. A handful engage civil servants or senior level policymakers in peer learning. The appendix contains a full list of networks with links and short descriptions of their members and reach, activities, missions, and funders.

8 Modes of Engaging Network Members

We identify and describe eight modes of engaging network members, which include: peer learning and exchange where members are expected to teach or provide technical assistance to other members; working groups to bring members together and create joint products on specific topics of common interest; independent chapters or nodes that emphasize action at the country or local level; and virtual networks allowing individuals to connect, share lessons, and collaborate as they wish. We feature nine concise case studies that highlight how particular networks excel at tailoring those modes of engagement according to their activities and missions.

13 Lessons on Network Organization, Engagement, and Measurement

Through our discussions with network leaders and members and a review of their publications and websites, we have distilled our learnings about networks into thirteen key lessons, which include: narratives must be rooted in local priorities; siloes present challenges and opportunities, separate tiers can make networks more relevant for diverse members; top-heavy networks can become disconnected; a narrow and achievable goal facilitates early success; travel is an incentive and a constraint; and more.

Implications for a Global Evidence Network

Finally, we match a select group of the most relevant networks against five criteria for a potential global evidence network: global in scope, with at least equal representation from the Global South; majority of members are government policymakers; broad institutional capacity approach to advancing evidence use across government; demand-side approach starts with policymakers and their challenges and needs related to evidence use; and broad definition of evidence to address policy needs. We find that while existing efforts are numerous and laudable, and opportunities for collaboration abound, we hypothesize that a newly established network premised on these criteria could add value to current initiatives.

Our remaining questions include:

- Could the network take an institutional capacity approach, or does it need to be grounded in a sector or theme to be more tangible, manageable, and measurable?
- What are the incentives for joining the network, both for policymakers and other partners?
- What narrative would make the network most compelling?
- What types of peer learning strategies would help the network best achieve its mission and provide value to members?

- What would success for the network look like and how would it be measured?
- Which policymakers and government offices would be ideal for a first cohort, and what is the criteria or process for joining?
- What types of strategies could help to ensure the network is financially stable?
- How would the network best collaborate with and complement current initiatives?

Purpose & Methodology

Results for All is currently exploring the role that a global evidence network or platform could play in helping government policymakers share experiences and amplify solutions to advance the use of evidence across government policy and practice. Among other activities, the network could:

- Facilitate networking, peer-to-peer learning, and exchanges between governments;
- Jointly develop standards, policies, frameworks, and other public tools and resources;
- Provide a platform for practical knowledge and short-term technical assistance to implement solutions; and
- Mobilize champions to promote and advocate for greater evidence use.

To avoid potential duplication and overlap with existing initiatives, Results for All engaged in a comprehensive process of identifying, researching, and mapping active networks that have similar missions.

Through this process, we intended to learn about different network approaches, explore where there may be overlap in missions and activities, and what gaps, if any, exist to better understand where additional support may be needed for government policymakers and their partners to advance evidence-informed policymaking. We plan to use findings from this mapping exercise to inform a strategy for a global evidence network, if indeed this network would fill a gap, complement existing efforts, or otherwise provide value given what already exists.

The following questions guided our review:
- What regional or global networks exist to support the use of evidence in government policy and practice?
- What networks exist to support peer learning among governments?
- What actors do these networks target, and who do they work with?
- What narratives do these networks use to create a shared mission among members, and to attract donor funding?
- What strategies and activities do these networks implement to carry out their missions?

- How are these networks structured, and who funds them?
- What do these findings mean for a potentially new global evidence network?

Methodology

We began our search for existing networks with a wide internet search using the key terms below.

- data policy network
- evidence policy network
- data government network
- evidence government network
- data policymaker network
- evidence policymaker network
- policymaker evaluation network
- government evaluation network
- policymaker learning network
- government learning network
- evidence-informed policymaking network
- evidence-informed decision making network

Search results were supplemented by networks found in previous work by Results for All, including a Global Landscape Review of 100+ government mechanisms to advance the use of data and evidence in policymaking. Additional networks were discovered through related reading and research, listed by respondents in an online survey to assess demand for a network, and recommended by policymakers, nongovernmental organizations, and networks via a snowball effect during several months of outreach, which included over fifty stakeholder consultations and interviews. This network mapping was meant to be comprehensive but not exhaustive; we sought to capture leading initiatives to accelerate data and evidence in government, but expected that even this thorough process would miss some initiatives, particularly as the search was conducted in English and primarily over the internet. To be included in the mapping exercise, networks discovered by the methodology described above needed to demonstrate an explicit focus on improving the production, sharing, or use of data and evidence to inform government policy and practice; have documentation or website content available; and include researchers, practitioners, or policymakers from more than one country. To learn about the resulting networks, we reviewed website materials and publications and, wherever possible, conducted interviews with network leaders and participants.

Our Experience with Networks

In the United States, Results for America established and runs several networks that facilitate peer learning and exchange between policymakers in different levels of government, as well as leaders of national nongovernmental organizations. We did not include these networks in our review as they are not global in reach, however their experiences, and the expertise Results for America has developed in convening networks and movements to advance evidence-informed policymaking, do contribute valuable lessons and help to inform our thinking around a global evidence network. Highlights from Results for America's domestic networks include:

Local Government Fellowship: Founded in 2014, the fellowship provides an advanced group of local government leaders in cities and counties across the country the knowledge and support to leverage data and evidence to tackle major policy challenges in areas such as crime, education, health, poverty, and energy. Fellows include city/county government chiefs of staff, deputy chiefs of staff, policy directors, and other senior local government officials. Now working with a second cohort from 16 cities and counties, Results for America helps fellows establish and implement a 2-to 3-year policy roadmap to improve outcomes on a specific challenge, and a partnership with an external research or academic institution to evaluate a major government-funded policy or program. In addition to monthly progress reports, fellows participate in four two-day, in-person convenings to learn and share new strategies and skills. The fellowship is valuable because it provides a space for government leaders to focus on something that matters to them, but which they have a hard time isolating and prioritizing in their busy day-to-day work. The network provides a safe space for them to step out of their routines to reflect, learn, analyze, and experiment with new approaches to evidence-based policymaking as it relates to an important local issue. In addition, fellows lead peer learning sessions in which they share both successes and failures; doing so helps them to hone in on the root cause of problems, which, in addition to the new ideas and insights provided by their peers, is valuable in and of itself.

State Education Fellowship: In 2017, Results for America began working with eighteen officials from nine state education agencies to understand and use their new authority, flexibility, and resources under recent education legislation to increase the amount and quality of evidence created and used by their school districts and schools. The fellowship is the first to bring together senior program and evaluation leaders from state education agencies into a single network focused on accelerating the generation and use of evidence to drive better outcomes for millions of students throughout the country. State education agencies have unique contexts, but are largely trying to accomplish similar objectives, and thus benefit from leaving their silos to share and develop common solutions, rather than reinventing the wheel. The agencies also benefit from implementing plans together so they can discuss and address challenges in real time. Lastly, being part of a peer network creates a sense of urgency and accountability that incentivizes agencies to follow through on their plans and report back to each other.

What Works Nonprofit Fellowship: Results for America launched the What Works Nonprofits network in 2016 to harness the collective experience, insights, and recommendations of a select group of chief executives from well-respected nongovernmental organizations committed to evidence-based solutions, to inform public policy and improve the impact of public investments. Over two years, fellows receive guidance and support from policy and communications experts to build and strengthen their organization's capacity to shape public policy at all levels of government; help develop and promote policy recommendations that shift government spending toward evidence-based, results-driven solutions; and participate in a community of peers committed to sharing best practices for scaling evidence-based interventions. Fellows convene in-person four times per year, sometimes in conjunction with the Results for America Local Government Fellows to strengthen relationships and collaboration between nonprofit and local government leaders. Fellows consistently place a high value on opportunities to build relationships with each other, with Results for America staff, and with experts and government leaders they are able to connect with through network resources and activities. Connections to government leaders help the nonprofit fellows advocate for greater evidence use in policymaking, showcasing their organizations' work in this space while advancing the evidence-informed policymaking movement nationally.

What Works Cities: Launched in 2015 by Bloomberg Philanthropies, What Works Cities is a national initiative to help 100 mid-sized American cities enhance their use of data and evidence to improve services, inform local decision-making, and engage residents. Results for America serves as the campaign manager and, together with a consortium of four expert partners, provides technical assistance to cities according to their priorities in areas such as open data, data governance, results-driven contracting, low-cost evaluations, and performance analytics. The initiative recently launched What Works Cities Certification, a program that recognizes and celebrates U.S. local governments that are leading the nation in the use of data and evidence to increase government effectiveness and improve services for residents. The program provides a rigorous benchmark against which cities can assess their use of data and evidence to ensure public dollars are well-spent, and be recognized for their progress. The What Works Cities network gives cities multiple ways to connect with each other both virtually and in person. Avenues include using an online platform to store and share resources; webinars and other online opportunities to learn and share experiences; a Slack instant messenger group to communicate with each other; in-person events and workshops to make and deepen connections; sub-groups for smaller cohorts for cities working on common challenges; and study tour opportunities for city staff to visit one another to learn about successful strategies in depth. These avenues help Results for America and city and technical partners deepen their work and impact in each city, and spread solutions across cities by emphasizing meaningful and productive relationships.

Findings: 50+ Networks for Peer Learning and Evidence Use in Government
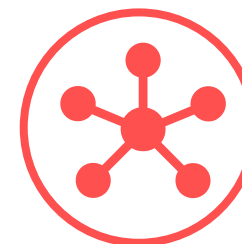
Results for All compiled information on over 50 networks related to its mission to use evidence to improve government policy and practice. We classified the networks by sector (or lack thereof) and target audience. Some of those networks are highlighted in this section; for a full list of networks with links and short descriptions of their members and reach, activities, missions, and funders, please consult the appendix.

Networks by Sector

We classified 38 networks according to a sector focus, or lack thereof, as listed in the appendix. Twenty networks explicitly target one sector, with twelve of those working exclusively or primarily in health. Six networks work evenly across multiple sectors. Relatively few networks, only eight, take an institutional capacity approach, investing in and strengthening the skills, processes, and systems to produce and use evidence broadly across government, not specific to any sector.

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- **Health:** A significant portion target the health sector, with objectives ranging from supporting the generation of health research, training and building the capacity of health researchers, translating evidence into health policy, engaging health ministries in peer learning and joint production of knowledge and policies, and sharing standards and guidelines for good practices in the health sector. Prominent examples include the WHO Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, the Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN), and Guidelines International Network (GIN).

- **Economics and finance:** The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), and the global Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) support and disseminate economic research, share successful approaches for improving public financial management, and promote a new poverty measurement for use by governments, respectively.

- **Education:** The most notable example from the education sector is the Evidence Informed Policy and Practice in Education in Europe (EIPPEE) network, which gathers evidence and other resources, brokers evidence to users, offers training courses and

research advisory services, and connects education policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in annual conferences and special interest groups. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) also provides a platform for policy dialogue among African education ministries and development agencies, to share ideas and experiences to catalyze reforms and promising practices.

- **Governance:** Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP), a global network of over 150 researchers and practitioners, forges partnerships and holds events and trainings to support the generation and dissemination of experimental research and evidence on governance, politics, and institutions.
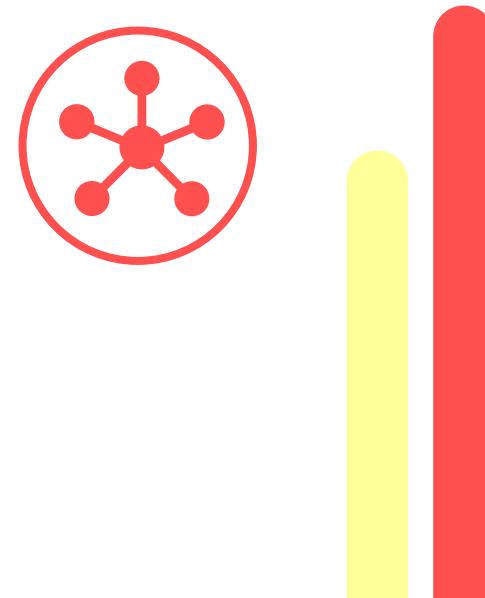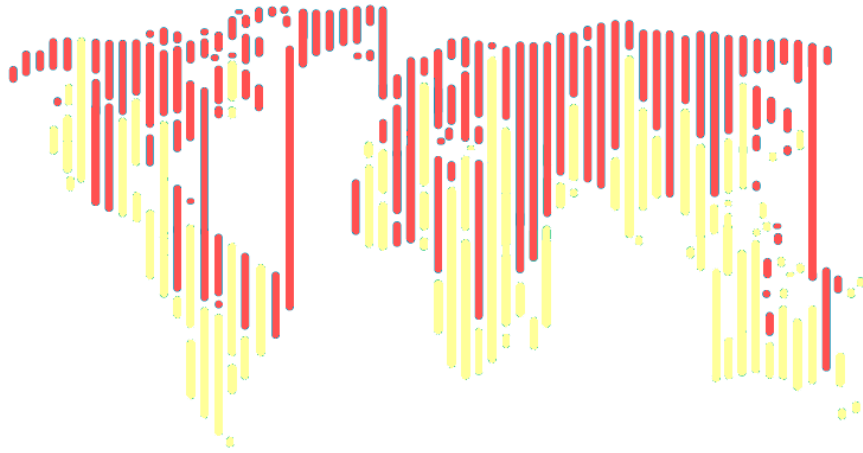
- **Agriculture:** The Malabo Montpellier Panel takes a similar approach in the agricultural sector. It engages seventeen international agriculture experts to publish technical reports and briefing papers on food security issues in Africa, participate in international conferences and workshops, and facilitate dialogue with governments, NGOs, and the private sector in the annual Malabo Montpellier Forum. Members of the Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) participate in collaborative research, training, regional policy dialogues, and communities of practice to coordinate and promote food, agriculture, and natural resource policies.

- **Multiple sectors:** Networks working to produce, synthesize, disseminate, and use evidence across multiple sectors include the Global Development Network (GDN), Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI), and Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT).

- **Institutional capacity approach:** Only a handful of networks focus on investing in and strengthening skills, processes, and systems to produce and use evidence in policy and practice broadly across government, not specific to any sector. Most of these networks include advocacy, training, and partnerships across countries and government offices. Examples include Nesta's Alliance for Useful Evidence based in the UK, the Evidence for Policy Community in the European Commission's Joint Research Center, Africa Evidence Network (AEN), International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA), and CIPPEC, operating mainly in Argentina; these networks are examined later in more detail.
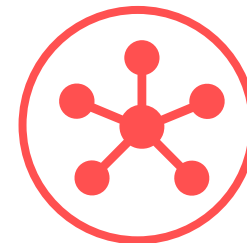
Networks by Target Audience

We also classified another nineteen networks according to five main target audience groups. Some networks mentioned above are also included here, but only appear once in Appendix A by what we consider their most distinguishing focus area.

- **Parliaments:** Seven regional or global networks encompass or work with national parliaments to facilitate and promote evidence use, the most relevant being the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE) and related regional nodes, such as the African Parliamentarians Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE).

- **Civil society:** Four networks, such as EvalPartners and the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), engage civil society groups and individuals in peer learning and advocacy around evidence use; like the parliamentarian networks, these tend to be focused on monitoring and evaluation.

- **Researchers:** The Global Development Network (GDN), Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI), Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA) and many others target researchers and evidence producers, tangentially engaging with policymakers to increase evidence uptake and impact policy change. These networks typically focus on producing evidence in one or multiple sectors, rather than taking an institutional capacity approach. An exception is the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA), which seeks a balance between scientists and policymakers.

- **Civil servants:** A separate group of networks aims to engage government leaders, public innovators, and civil servants in peer learning on evidence through a good governance or policy innovation framework. Apolitical, the Center for Public Impact, the Effective Institutions Platform, the Network of Innovators, and the Observatory of Public Sector Innovation are notable platforms that seek to inspire and promote peer exchange between civil servants in governments around the world. They do so by publishing and sharing content on innovations and solutions in the public sector, connecting members via their online platforms, and in some cases hosting in-person events. The Global Government Forum operates
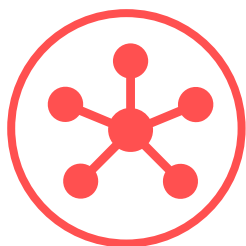
similarly, though it targets more senior level civil servants for a high profile annual summit.

- **Senior policymakers:** Other networks with involvement from or connections to senior leaders in the executive branch of government include the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT), African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), and the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN), all mentioned previously. The Twende Mbele partnership facilitates peer learning among leaders from national monitoring and evaluation agencies in six African countries, together with the World Bank's Anglophone Africa Center for Learning and Evaluation Results (CLEAR-AA) and the Independent Development Evaluation group of the African Development Bank. The Africa Cabinet Government Network (ACGN) provides formal and informal opportunities for collaboration among cabinet secretaries from fourteen African countries, with a focus on sharing solutions for institutionalizing evidence use in cabinet processes.
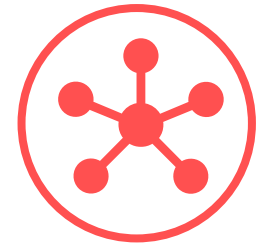
8 Modes of Engaging Network Members

Our research revealed that, while the networks reviewed all aim to promote dialogue and exchange between members, they each take different approaches to facilitating this engagement and interaction. We outline eight modes of engagement here; the next section presents nine network case studies that highlight these approaches and how networks have tailored them to their activities and missions.

- Several networks focus on **peer learning and exchange** where members are expected to **teach or provide technical assistance to other members**. This is best exemplified by the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN), where members exchange direct peer-to-peer technical assistance in poverty measurement, and the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), in which members exchange experiences in public financial management (PFM) reforms and strategies to finance and implement policy priorities.

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- CABRI has also piloted a new model of **expert coaching for country teams** where countries address locally nominated and complex PFM problems through experimentation and iteration. Peer learning and exchange between teams is not the explicit rationale for the approach, but teams nevertheless experience regular and structured interactions, and share lessons on what are generally common challenges. What Works Cities holds "office hours," comprising webinars or online forums designed to address common challenges and specific topics of interest to staff from participating cities.

- Some networks use **working groups** to bring members together and **create joint products** on specific topics of common interest. Members of the Joint Learning Network on Universal Health Coverage (JLN) and Guidelines International Network (GIN) jointly develop knowledge products, tools, and guidelines, while members of the Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT) translate evidence into plans and policies for approval by ministers.

- **Workshops and conferences** are often used to facilitate networking and **share and promote the uptake of research evidence**, as demonstrated by the Global Development Network (GDN), the Malabo Montpellier Forum, and the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC). What Works Cities and other networks convened by Results for America also use workshops to provide training and technical assistance to members, and establish deeper connections with the network community and expert partners.

- Other networks convene **subsets of their members** on particular **grants and projects**. Examples include the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, Knowledge Translation Network Africa, and Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP). Development projects that have convened informal networks of researchers to strengthen the production and quality of evidence and its uptake by policymakers include Evidence for HIV Prevention in Southern Africa (EHPSA), Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA), and Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA).

- Networks of **independent chapters or nodes** emphasize **action at the country or local level**, though bring members together to share lessons and report on their progress. Members of the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE) and Open Government Partnership (OGP) generally work on independent initiatives, but participation in the networks serves to connect them to peers and resources, and create incentives for them to stay engaged. The Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) brings together nodes from seventeen African countries, each one comprising researchers, farmer groups, businesses, media and civil society organizations, and government agencies, to coordinate policy research and dialogue.

- Other **umbrella organizations** like the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) and the Open Data for Development (OD4D) network provide platforms for a broad membership of stakeholders in the data landscape to interact and collaborate with each other based on shared interests and current activities. These networks play an important **coordination role** for members that want to collaborate with each other, and **advocate for the broader mission** that members have in common.

- Diffuse, **virtual networks** comprised mainly of individuals also allow members to connect, share lessons, and collaborate as they wish, but tend to serve the interests of individual members more than advancing a specific mission or goal. Apolitical, the Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI), and Network of Innovators host online platforms targeted for civil servants in government, allowing them to join for free, access content, and connect with each other. EvalPartners, the Outcome Mapping Learning Network (OMLN), and Evidence Based Policy in Development Network (EBPDN) function similarly but focus more on training and learning opportunities to enhance evaluation skills; members in the latter also share job postings. In general, these networks tend to have **larger memberships, and less formal connections between individuals**, rather than organizations.

9 Network Highlights

Our research has demonstrated that no two networks are alike: even those with similar membership bases or missions structure their activities and member interactions differently. Many networks have found creative ways to bring diverse members together to learn from each other and work on solutions to common challenges. In other networks, members address individual challenges through more independent action, but benefit from resources or advocacy movements housed under umbrella platforms. The networks that follow exemplify the modes of engagement we outlined in the last section, and excel at tailoring those strategies and approaches according to their activities and missions.

Peer exchange and country coaching: The Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative ([CABRI](#)) has implemented several notable models for peer exchange across finance and line ministries. The network [began](#) as an informal arrangement to create opportunities for African countries to share and learn from each other's experiences, especially from a country like South Africa that has had considerable success in public financial management (PFM) reforms, including substantially reducing public debt. Eleven African countries committed to sharing lessons in an initial Memorandum of Understanding in 2005, and CABRI became a legal international organization in 2009, with a formal agreement by six countries; official membership has now grown to fifteen member countries. In addition to its initial focus on PFM reforms, CABRI now works on value for money in health, water and sanitation, agriculture, and other sectors, bringing together health and finance ministries, for example, in cross-country policy dialogues to discuss how health priorities will be financed. CABRI disseminates case studies beforehand to facilitate dialogue, and members are also expected to prepare the experiences they will share. CABRI also pairs countries with common interests in budget transparency, participation, and accountability, to learn from each other and collaborate on strategies and plans. Besides the policy dialogues and country pairings, CABRI recently developed the Building PFM Capabilities program, in collaboration with the Harvard Center for International Development. The program provides countries with different tools to solve locally nominated PFM problems that were identified by the country teams, through an intensive coaching process using the Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) approach. Unlike traditional consultants, the CABRI coaches do not offer solutions, but rather engage and probe country teams via weekly assignments, phone calls every two weeks, and questions meant to help the country teams identify root causes and solutions to their problems. The country teams motivate each other and share lessons in final presentations, often noting how they feel encouraged and empowered by the process.

Working groups tailored to distinct levels of policymakers: The Pan-African Coalition for Transformation ([PACT](#)), convened by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), plans to work in eight sectors, including agriculture, extractives, and employment, with the potential to transform African economies. PACT is in the process of introducing several new sectors each year; one member country takes the lead on each sector, and is responsible for hosting meetings for the working group. Deputy Ministers and other technical staff will meet first to review the evidence and write strategies and policies, followed by separate working group meetings for Ministers to discuss political implications and sign off on the finished plans. Member countries finance their own travel to these meetings and participation in other network engagement; PACT offers no funding or travel assistance, ensuring that participation is entirely member-driven.

Working groups for collaborative problem solving: The Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage ([JLN](#)) is comprised of leaders from health ministries, health financing agencies, and other government institutions in 30 countries along with technical and funding partners. Through multilateral workshops, country exchanges, and virtual discussions, members co-develop knowledge products and tools in six technical areas.

Workshops and conferences for research uptake: The African Economic Research Consortium ([AERC](#)), a network of researchers, universities, and policymakers across Africa, combines policy-relevant economic research and postgraduate training to advance its goal of improving African economic management. AERC commissions thematic, comparative, and collaborative research, in addition to special workshops. Member institutions organize National Policy Workshops to present the results of AERC research to national policymakers, sometimes with support from AERC, sometimes self-financed. AERC also brings ministers, permanent secretaries, Central Bank governors, and other senior policymakers from different countries together in Senior Policy Seminars, where several papers on one topic such as industrialization are presented in a simplified manner for the policymakers, who discuss the findings and implications for their economic policy and management. AERC also supports collaborative Master's and PhD programs throughout the continent, with participating universities contributing differing numbers of courses and faculty. Many of these graduates go on to become top economists or Central Bank governors, reinforcing strong relationships between AERC and these institutions and promoting research uptake.

Projects pairing members for inter-regional research and learning: The DFID-funded Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA) aimed to share research evidence and lessons on Latin America's development with partners in Africa and Asia, part of DFID's efforts to close out its work in Latin America but ensure that its history in the region could inform engagement elsewhere. In Phase I (2010-2013), ELLA's Latin American partners conducted research on 21 themes and 80 topics, and ran six online-offline learning communities to share lessons with African and Asian counterparts. Recognizing that lessons could be shared between regions (two-directional) rather than strictly from one to another, Phase II (2014-2017) formed six pairs of Latin American and African research institutes to conduct comparative research on a topic of mutual interest. El Salvador's FundaUngo and Nigeria's Ibadan University paired up to research and share lessons on Community Based Crime Prevention, for example. Other topics included domestic violence, land tenure in pastoralist societies, and accountability of the executive to legislative bodies. ELLA offered the participating research institutes capacity building workshops meant to improve their research outputs, and supported research uptake by combining learning alliances, study tours, bursaries and networking for policymakers and practitioners in order to increase the likelihood of evidence use.

Independent reform efforts under one umbrella: The Open Government Partnership (OGP) provides a platform for over 70 participating countries and 15 subnational governments to self-assess and report on reform efforts, and work together to make their governments more transparent, accountable, and responsive to citizen needs. To join, countries must endorse a declaration of principles, submit an action plan, and adhere to regular independent reporting. Detailed requirements, guidelines, and deadlines keep members on track and accountable to each other; members can be removed for not fulfilling their duties.

An umbrella platform for coordination and advocacy: Launched in 2015 along with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) now encompasses approximately 300 organizations working across multiple sectors to enhance the production and use of data for sustainable development. Any organization can join the GPSDD via a simple form, gaining access to the general mailing list, updates from members, invitations to events and workshops, and information on how to get involved in the various workstreams. In addition to advocating for attention and funding for SDG data, the GPSDD secretariat plays a convening and brokering role, identifying gaps in data needs to monitor and achieve the SDGs and rallying members to fill them by working together. Members can also propose their own projects and look for collaborators. However, the GPSDD does not provide funding. Besides the advocacy and coordination component, managed by a secretariat of about 13 staff based in New York and Washington DC, small regional teams support the development of data roadmaps in target countries: Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Colombia, and the Philippines.

A network of independent nodes for parliaments: The African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE), founded in 2014 and hosted by the African Development Bank, encourages and enhances the capacity of parliamentarians to institutionalize evaluations in their oversight and policymaking functions, and bridges the gap between parliamentarians and evaluators. Members pay yearly fees depending on their category (founding, full, associate, affiliate, and development partner) and whether they join as individuals or institutions. All members can participate in training and networking opportunities, attend the Annual General Meetings, and elect the APNODE Executive Committee every two years; the Executive Committee meets virtually every two months. National chapters operate independently, providing additional resources and facilitating connections. The Uganda chapter, for example, collaborates with the Uganda evaluation association, the parliamentary evaluation committee, and the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) department in the Office of the Prime Minister, helping parliamentarians and partners to demand evaluations and access needed information. The chapters report on their activities to the Executive Committee every two months, and come together to share challenges and lessons during annual meetings.

A virtual platform going broad and deep: Apolitical began with content, telling stories of what's working in government and celebrating successes. The online platform it launched in June 2017 combines original content with journalism from other sources, packaged in visual case studies, compelling narratives, and short reads around topics of interest to members, donors, and investors. The majority of members are government civil servants from over 100 countries, and Apolitical's mission is to equip them with the inspiration, knowledge, and connections they need to improve the lives of citizens. In addition to accessing unlimited online content, members can view webinars, use discussion boards, and connect with each other using the member directory. Members can also use the "ask an analyst" service, making up to three free requests for information they cannot find on the site, which helps Apolitical administrators analyze trends and fill gaps in their content. Though Apolitical does events and convenings around specific topics funded by partners, its co-founder notes that in-person events cannot provide the volume and specificity of options that can be delivered online. Through its online platform, Apolitical allows for more frequent participation, greater scale, and ability to personalize and measure engagement.

13 Lessons for Network Organization, Engagement, and Measurement

Through our discussions with network leaders and members and a review of their publications and websites, we have distilled our learnings about networks into thirteen key lessons on organization, engagement, and measurement. Some lessons are more relevant to networks engaging government policymakers and dedicated to evidence use, though many can be applied to networks in general, regardless of mission or target audience. The anonymous quotes that come from interviews between September 2017 and February 2018.

Network Organization

#1. Narratives must be rooted in local priorities

- "Until now, open data in Africa has been driven by the transparency and accountability movement, but it needs to be linked to African priorities on using data for development. […] We must clearly connect open data to a policy agenda that has already been clearly articulated by policymakers"
- Compelling narratives help create a common identity and motivation among network members
- The Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT) engages senior African policymakers on issues of top concern: strategies to achieve economic growth
- "When you lay it in a generic way, policymakers will think it's too academic and unhelpful. If they see it in a really focused aspect that they're interested in, you'll engage with them"
- Networks with missions that are difficult to articulate, or that misalign with local needs, are unlikely to attract members or sustain engagement from busy policymakers
- "It has to have a story for people to be part of it"
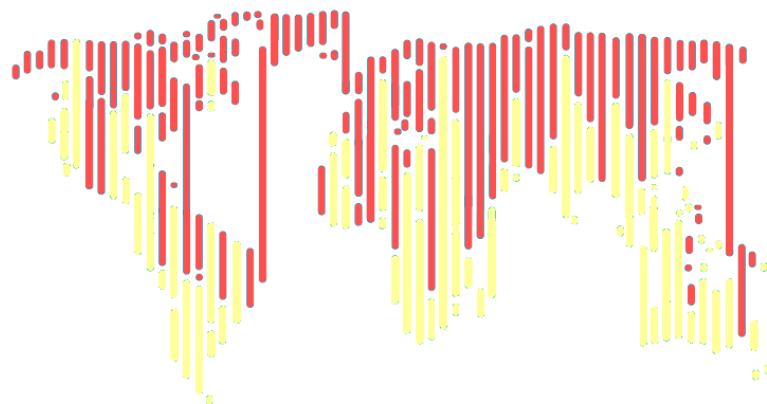
#2. Siloes present challenges and opportunities

- Facilitating connections and building bridges between separate communities is often what networks do best
- "State education agencies have unique contexts, but are largely trying to accomplish similar objectives, and benefit from leaving their silos to share and develop common solutions, rather than reinventing the wheel"
- The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) brokers partnerships between diverse organizations involved in using data to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. One member, CEPEI, brings together private firms, academic institutions, and national statistical offices to provide, analyze, and use data to advance SDG priorities in Colombia
- The Global Development Network (GDN) is experimenting with new approaches to increase

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interactions between researchers and policymakers, allowing the latter to influence the research questions and improve their ownership and uptake of the final products

- The Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA) project forged partnerships and initiated joint research between Latin American and African institutions
- Stakeholders expressed interest in networks that could foster additional learning across regions, and build relationships between executive and legislative branches

#3. Separate tiers can make networks more relevant for members

- The Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT) convenes separate meetings for technical staff, who review evidence and discuss strategies and policies, and their Ministers, who focus on political implications and feasibility
- "People pull rank; it's better to separate the Director Generals from the technical teams"
- Networks engaged in peer learning and exchange must be careful to assemble members who have similar contexts, capacities, and challenges so that lessons are applicable

#4. Top-heavy networks can become disconnected

- Global networks with large administrative secretariats outside of priority countries can be difficult to sustain financially
- "Networks shouldn't ever become 'global heavy, country light' or develop global standards that are expected to work in the country"
- Concentrating network structures and activities at the local level helps maintain relevance and facilitates measuring impact
- "It has become clear that for OD4D to stay relevant, it needs to be specific at the regional level, so AODN is needed to understand African priorities"

#5. A narrow and achievable goal facilitates early success

- Networks should be careful to limit their size and scope to something manageable and measurable
- "At the beginning, choose a theme to work around; it's easier to show the results and early victories to gain traction and trust. With the very broad, you have everything and you have nothing"
- Some degree of focus helps communicate network objectives and expectations with potential members and donors
- "Starting with a broad topic or question, everyone will talk about what's most important to them, but nothing common will come out of it"

#6. Gradual and organic evolution is best

- Networks do not need to have everything figured out from the start; experimental activities and iterative approaches can help refine the network mission and model over time
- "Think about network evolution in stages: you can start with a specific purpose and then grow, you don't have to think about long-term financial sustainability right away. Maybe at the beginning you start with a clear objective, maybe it generates one document and that's a success, go from there"

- Maintaining flexibility in the structure of the network and its future plans will allow members to take more ownership of its direction
- "Be sensitive in letting members drive what they want out of the group"
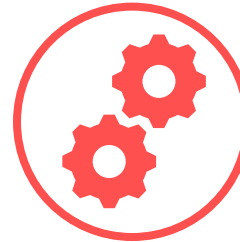
Network Engagement

#7. Policymakers are busy and need to see the benefit in participating

- Even the most interested and committed policymakers have trouble making time to engage in a network and interact with other network members
- Creating explicit incentives to join and stay engaged in the network is paramount
- "The Local Government Fellowship is valuable because it provides a space for government leaders to focus on something that matters to them, but which they have a hard time isolating and prioritizing in their busy day-to-day work"
- Network coordinators should be clear about the minimum participation expected of members, and be creative about rewarding the most active participants for their contributions
- "Policymakers have difficulty finding the time to participate, so network activities need to be very concrete and tied to what they want to learn and do in their agencies"
- Case clinics, where members can share their most pressing current challenges and ask others for ideas, can create tangible incentives and benefits to participating, and use time effectively

- Results for America used a similar "consultation" approach in a recent convening with U.S. State Education Agencies, and CABRI coaches teams from African budget and finance ministries; both approaches help participants to solve their self-identified current challenges
- The Harvard Kennedy School uses Executive Sessions to convene individuals with diverse viewpoints and constituencies to work together in a series of meetings to make progress toward jointly solving a complex problem
- Whatever the model, network members and participants must see the value in spending their time engaging with the network; it helps if doing so makes their day jobs easier
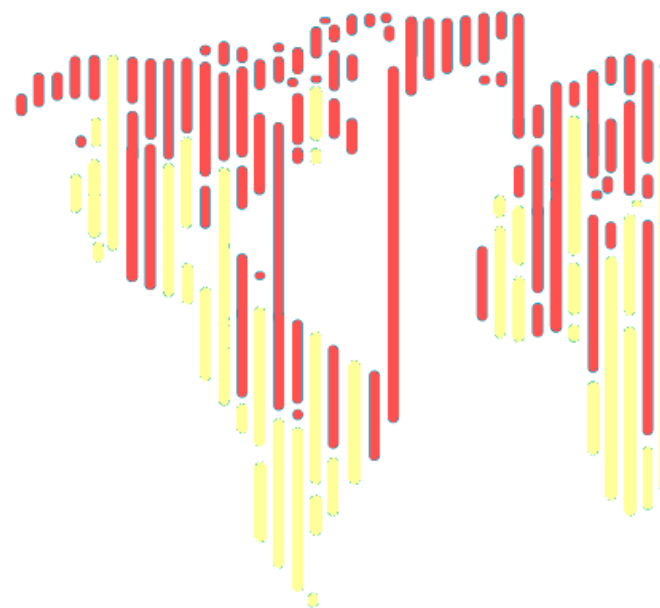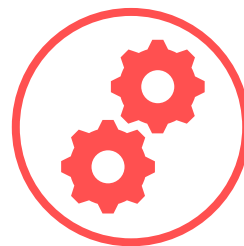
#8. Staff turnover is a major challenge

- Frequent rotation of policymakers, especially those in political and leadership roles, complicates long-term network activities and relationships
- Rotation also makes it difficult to target participants for trainings, since they may not use newly acquired skills once moving to a new role
- "Connecting policymakers and researchers might prove easier than a network solely for policymakers, since they rotate so often"
- A cohort model, where each institution or country sends a small team to participate in the network, rather than a network of disconnected individuals, has the potential to alleviate this challenge and foster in-country relationships that promote teamwork, sustain motivation, and amplify impact
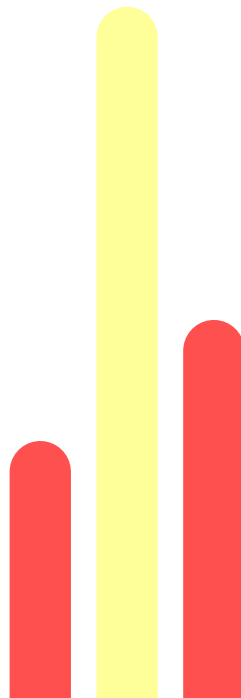
#9. Travel is an incentive and a constraint

- Several network coordinators and participants expressed that travel to events and international conferences gives members the visibility, recognition, learning, and connections they want
- But funding for travel was cited as a major constraint as well, and money could be spent on concrete in-country projects or trainings instead
- "There are so many of these events, and what you end up doing is creating professional conference goers. How do we not just trudge around the globe with enormous carbon footprints?"
- Using technology to convene network members virtually instead of or between in-person events can reduce travel costs, free up funds for other activities, and make member engagement more frequent, and more tailored
- "Events can be engaging, but can't get the specificity and volume of options that you can get online"

#10. High profile network leaders can help recruit members

- The Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) was launched and championed by the Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, enhancing its legitimacy and visibility

- The Collaborative African Budget Initiative (CABRI) was shaped by interest in learning from South Africa's budget reforms, shared widely by the Finance Minister
- Getting senior leaders in government on board is often essential to creating opportunities for junior to mid-level policymakers to participate in network activities
- "Having former local government officials lead the local government fellowship adds value to the program"

#11. Commitment is critical but typically uneven
- Shared challenges and motivations between committed leaders in South Africa, Uganda, and Benin catalyzed the Twende Mbele initiative
- Members of the Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT) pay their own way to working group meetings, ensuring that they are committed to actively participating once there
- Networks often have difficulty moving beyond a small cohort of committed champions to actively engage a wider set of members; one coordinator of a now defunct network confessed "we had hundreds of partners on paper, but only 30 active in practice"

- "You need to create the ladders: people self-select according to the levels of commitment they are able to make"

#12. Communication platforms abound: do not reinvent the wheel
- After training the first cohort of the Open Data Leaders Network, the coordinators at the Open Data Institute paid for an online space and asked members to create profiles. They found that members preferred using pre-existing and familiar platforms like WhatsApp to communicate
- The What Works Cities network uses a Slack channel, an online instant messenger tool, to provide real-time access to counterparts in other cities and WWC partners to strengthen work in data and evidence
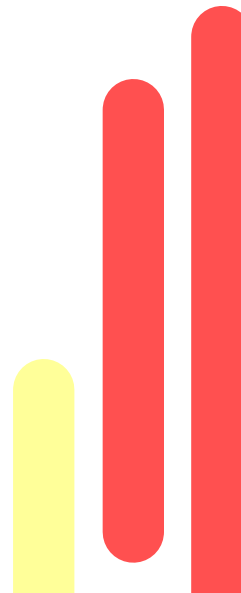
Network Measurement

#13. Success is very difficult to measure

- Networks often count outputs, like number of attendees at events and conferences, or frequency of logins on virtual platforms, to assess member engagement
- Networks of independent chapters or nodes are better suited to regularly report on their activities to a central entity
- Surveys and mapping tools can help determine which network members are connecting with each other, whether they engage in formal partnerships, and what they learn
- However, following up to determine the ultimate outcome, such as policies adopted or programs improved, requires significant time and resources by network coordinators and members
- Networks in which members co-produce guidelines and tools, such as the Joint Learning Network and Guidelines International Network, are able to easily assess those outputs, though adoption and use is still not guaranteed
- Peer learning and mentoring that is strongly aligned with current and priority challenges faced by network members is more likely to have a tangible impact;

CABRI's PDIA approach is a good example, and case clinics to recommend solutions to member problems or feedback on member initiatives also enable networks to identify how engagement does or does not advance desired outcomes

For additional reading on peer learning and network lessons, see:

- Fiona Smith, Brendan Harvey and William Gerry, "How to Create and Sustain Peer Networks for Open Data Leaders." Open Data Institute, 2016. https://theodi.org/method-report-peer-networks-for-open-data-leaders
- Stefan Nachuk, "Evolution of the Joint Learning Network." Rockefeller Foundation Blog, July 30, 2013. https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/blog/evolution-joint-learning-network/
- Ajoy Datta and Clara Richards, "A Light Touch Review of the Evidence-Based Policy in Development Network." Overseas Development Institute, July 2013. https://www.odi.org/publications/7609-light-touch-review-evidence-based-policy-development-network
- Matt Andrews and Nick Manning, "The EIP Peer-to-Peer Learning Guide." Effective Institutions Platform, 2016. https://www.effectiveinstitutions.org/en/our-approach/2

Implications for a Global Evidence Network

- Global in scope, with at least equal representation from the Global South
- Majority of members are government policymakers in the executive or legislative branches
- Broad institutional capacity approach to advancing evidence use across government, i.e. investing in skills, processes, and systems not limited to one specific sector
- Demand-side approach starts with policymakers and their challenges and needs related to evidence use, rather than supporting evidence production by the research community
- Promote a broad definition of evidence to address policy needs, one that encompasses administrative and statistical data, research, evaluations, and citizen input

We conducted this mapping exercise to identify and learn from existing networks dedicated to advancing the use of evidence in government practice. In addition, we meant to determine whether existing networks fulfilled the function and activities of interest to government policymakers surveyed and interviewed, or whether a new global evidence network should be formed in an attempt to satisfy this gap. Our criteria included:

As shown in the appendix, most networks mapped focus on generating or using evidence to inform government policy in one sector, especially health. The table below shows how a select group of the most relevant networks, excluding those specific to one sector, match against our criteria.

	Global scope, ≥ ½ from Global South	Majority of members are policymakers	Demand-side approach to evidence	Institutional capacity approach to evidence	Promote broad definition of evidence
Africa Evidence Network			✓	✓	✓
Alliance for Useful Evidence			✓	✓	✓
CIPPEC			✓	✓	✓
International Network for Government Science Advice	✓		✓	✓	
European Commission Joint Research Center		✓	✓	✓	✓
Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation	✓	✓	✓	✓	
African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Eval.		✓	✓	✓	
Inter-Parliamentary Union	✓	✓			
Africa Cabinet Government Network		✓	✓	✓	✓
Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative		✓	✓	✓	✓
Pan-African Coalition for Transformation		✓	✓	✓	✓
Twende Mbele		✓	✓	✓	
Effective Institutions Platform		✓	✓	✓	
Observatory of Public Sector Innovation		✓	✓		
Apolitical	✓	✓	✓		
Center for Public Impact		✓	✓		
Global Government Forum	✓	✓	✓		
Global Development Network	✓			✓	✓
Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative	✓			✓	✓
Evidence and Lessons from Latin America	✓			✓	✓
European Social Network		✓	✓	✓	

Nearly half of the networks shown in the above table are global in scope and have significant representation from the Global South, the first criterion. The Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA) network, Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI), Global Development Network (GDN), and Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE) are led from the Global South, while Apolitical and INGSA are dedicated to growing their membership there, the latter actively supporting new chapters in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The Evidence for Policy Community in the European Commission's Joint Research Center recently held a training with participation from African policymakers and plans more global engagement in the future.

A number of networks comprise mainly policymakers, and several, such as the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE), Africa Cabinet Government Network (ACGN), Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), and Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT), engage senior leaders in government and address their evidence needs and challenges (a demand-side approach) in a variety of sectors and systems across government (an institutional approach), fulfilling the second, third, and fourth criteria.

Networks like the Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, Apolitical, and Center for Public Impact support government capacity building as well as peer learning in the public sector. They utilize a demand-side approach by focusing on the needs of government policymakers and equipping them with the skills and solutions they need to succeed, but their central mission is not to overcome challenges to the use of evidence by investing in institutional capacity (the fourth criteria). Nevertheless, these groups present promising opportunities for collaboration, tying evidence use into a broader good governance agenda.

(APNODE) present promising platforms to engage parliaments in evaluation use, but do not mention other forms of evidence, and have limited collaboration with executive branch agencies. While the range of networks identified in this mapping exercise cover statistical or administrative data, research, and evaluations, fewer have an explicit focus on using or facilitating the production of citizen input to inform policy and practice, though some may be growing in this direction.

Through our network mapping and analysis exercise we found a diversity of networks advancing evidence use in government policy and practice, which shed light on promising approaches to organizing networks, engaging members, and measuring success. However, while positive efforts abound to produce and disseminate evidence, promote its uptake, and share lessons within regions, we did not find an active network or exchange platform that fulfills all five of our criteria, namely one dedicated to policymakers in governments from the Global North and South that takes a demand-side and institutional capacity approach to sharing lessons to promote the use of a broad range of evidence. These findings confirm the demand that Results for All is hearing from policymakers, nongovernmental organizations, and funding partners, and bolster our interest in further exploring a global evidence network.

Less than half of the networks fulfill the fifth criteria, to use and promote a broad definition of evidence. The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) and the Alliance for Useful Evidence are among the leaders in this regard. AEN recently launched the Africa Evidence Leadership Award to highlight the growing status of evidence amongst decision makers in Africa, and showcase the work of evidence champions. The eligibility for the award clearly states that evidence includes monitoring and evaluation, impact evaluations, evidence synthesis, and data and knowledge management. Unlike AEN, many of the networks mapped focus exclusively on evaluations, or open data and transparency issues. For example, the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE) and related regional groups such as the African Parliamentarians Network on Development Evaluation

Our remaining questions include:

- Could the network take an institutional capacity approach, or does it need to be grounded in a sector or theme to be more tangible, manageable, and measurable?
- What are the incentives for joining the network, both for policymakers and other partners?
- What narrative would make the network most compelling?
- What types of peer learning strategies would help the network best achieve its mission and provide value to members?

- What would success for the network look like and how would it be measured?
- Which policymakers and government offices would be ideal for a first cohort, and what is the criteria or process for joining?
- What types of strategies could help to ensure the network is financially stable?
- How would the network best collaborate with and complement current initiatives?

Appendix A: The Networks

Networks by Sector or Theme

Networks specific to using evidence in the health sector			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders[4]**
Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED)	Research institutions and councils, ministries, civil society and the media; global	Support, technical expertise, tools, and peer exchange to help countries strengthen health research and innovation for addressing global health challenges	Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, European Commission, Irish Aid, Pfizer, WHO, World Bank, and more
WHO Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research	Academic and research institutions, governments, UN agencies, WHO partners; global	Grants and projects bringing decision-makers and researchers together to commission health systems research that is responsive to country needs	NORAD, SIDA, DFID, South African Medical Research Council, Gates Foundation, GAVI, IDRC, UNICEF, United Nations Foundation, and USAID
EVIPNet	Policymakers, researchers, and civil society in country teams from 36 low and middle-income countries	Evidence briefs, rapid syntheses, policy dialogues, and capacity building to support systematic use of health research evidence in policymaking	WHO
REACH	Policymakers and university and civil society researchers in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania	A forum to strengthen policymaker ability to access, synthesize, package, and communicate	WHO Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, IDRC, and Swiss Tropical Institute

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[4] Includes past and present donors, as shown on websites last accessed in February 2018 and informed through interviews. For a list of funder acronyms, see Appendix B.

		evidence for health policy and practice	
SURE Collaboration	Teams of researchers and policymakers in seven African countries, supported by research teams in three European countries and Canada	Research production, knowledge access and translation, policy dialogues, and capacity building to support evidence use in African health policy	European Commission
Learning Engaging and Advocating for Policy and Systems Research Forum (LEAP)	Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, other WHO initiatives, global health networks, and foundations	Coordinate a sharing of lessons learned on policy and systems knowledge to promote health systems research and its use in decision making	WHO Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, SIDA, NORAD, and World Bank
GEMNet-Health	Nine universities, research centers, and public health institutes; global	Collaboration and peer-to-peer support to ensure access to quality M&E, training, and research for global health programs	USAID and PEPFAR
Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN)	Ministries of health, health financing agencies, and other key government institutions, plus international and local partners; global	Share experiences and co-develop new tools, guides, and resources that address practical challenges of health systems reform to achieve universal health coverage	Gates Foundation, World Bank, Rockefeller Foundation, and GIZ
Guidelines International Network	Medical universities, associations, research institutes, and insurance providers	Collaboration in development of clinical health guidelines and their adaptation and implementation to improve methodology and quality	Not available

Knowledge Translation Network Africa	A network of eight research centers across Africa	Small grants to build knowledge translation capacity for health systems	Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research
Population and Poverty Research Network	A network of researchers and institutions in the US, UK, Norway, Netherlands, France, and Africa	Research funding to strengthen evidence on how population and reproductive health affect economic outcomes in LMICs	Hewlett Foundation
Evidence Informed Decision Making in Health and Nutrition	Universities in Ghana, South Africa, Ethiopia, and Benin, coordinated by Belgium's Institute of Tropical Medicine	Systematic reviews, case studies, training, and events to support evidence-informed policy in health and nutrition	Institute of Tropical Medicine

Networks specific to using evidence in economics or finance			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)	Researchers, universities, and policymakers across Africa	Economic research, policy workshops and dialogue, training, and capacity building to inform African economic and Central Bank policies	DFID, DANIDA, NORAD, Gates Foundation, SIDA, USAID, World Bank, AfDB, ACBF, several African Central Banks, and more
Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI)	15 African governments through their Ministry of finance, planning, and budgeting	Peer learning and exchange, Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) approach, and advocacy for public financial management and reform	AfDB, Global Fund, GIZ, Gates Foundation, DFID, New Venture Fund, Hewlett Foundation, and SECO
Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN)	Over 60 countries and organizations focused on multidimensional poverty	Peer-to-peer technical, statistical, and policy support through meetings and exchanges to improve poverty eradication policies	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and member contributions

Networks specific to using evidence in education			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
Evidence Informed Policy and Practice in Education in Europe (EIPPEE)	Universities, government education commissions, NGOs, and individuals throughout Europe	Online communication, annual conferences, training and consultancy services to create, broker, and use evidence in education policy in Europe	European Commission
Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)	A forum for African ministries of education and partner development agencies, hosted by the African Development Bank	Policy forums, working groups, and technical or sub-regional ministerial meetings to catalyze education reforms and encourage exchanges between education ministries and between them and development agencies	Steering Committee membership fees from education ministries and development partners, in addition to funding from other development agencies

Networks specific to using evidence in governance and politics topics			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP)	155 researchers and practitioners working on good governance in global development	Through small grants and partnerships, generate and disseminate rigorous social science evidence on politics, governance, and institutions	Hewlett Foundation and DFID

Networks specific to using evidence in agriculture			
Name	Members & Reach	Activities & Mission	
Malabo Montpellier Forum	17 agriculture experts from Europe and Africa, and key stakeholders	Publish technical reports and briefing papers, share knowledge, and hold policy	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and AfDB

		dialogues and conferences to accelerate progress towards food and nutritional security in Africa	
Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)	17 African country nodes, each comprising researchers, farmer groups, businesses, media and civil society organizations, and government agencies	Collaborative research and dissemination, training, and technical support to improve and coordinate policy research and dialogue and recommend strategies for promoting food, agriculture, and natural resources sectors	University of Bonn Center for Development Research, GALVmed, Australian Center for International Agricultural Research, Helvetas, Gates Foundation, FAO, European Commission, ACBF, SIDA, IDRC, and more

Networks dedicated to producing, sharing, or using evidence in multiple sectors			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
Global Development Network (GDN)	Global academic and research institutes, plus 12,500 individual researchers in LMICs	Resources, networking, training, and mentoring to improve local social science research to advance global development	ACBF, AfDB, ADB, Gates Foundation, DFAT, DFID, European Commission, GIZ, JICA, United Nations, Hewlett Foundation, and many more
Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI)	37 university and research centers from 24 LMICs	Workshops and webinars to build researcher skills in systematic reviews and evidence synthesis	Cochrane, Campbell Collaboration, Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, American Institutes for Research, EPPI-Centre, 3ie, Collaboration for Environmental Evidence, and the Joanna Briggs Institute

Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT)	Policymakers, donors, civil society and private sector partners in Africa	Provide information and support to governments as they design and implement economic transformation policies and programs in a variety of sectors	The Hewlett, Ford, Gates, and MasterCard Foundations, World Bank, JICA, USAID, and the Government of the Netherlands support ACET
Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA)	15 research and think tank partners, mainly in Latin America and Africa	Inter-regional comparative research and South-South learning and exchange to facilitate a sharing of policy experiences on a broad range of sustainable development topics, focused on the rural economy, environmental concerns, and governance systems	DFID
European Social Network	120 social welfare agencies and regulators, research centers, and practitioners across Europe	Research, projects, seminars, conferences, and evaluation frameworks to inform social services in Europe	European Union Program for Employment and Social Innovation
World Bank Open Learning Campus	Development practitioners, partners, stakeholders, and policymakers worldwide	Online lectures, webinars, and other materials; facilitated and self-paced training courses; and online communities of practice to learn, connect with others, and share knowledge on a wide range of development solutions	World Bank

Networks focused on issues of open data in government			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD)	Over 200 data producers and users from government, civil society, academia, businesses, and donors	Mobilize stakeholders, foster collective action, lead global advocacy, and support individual countries' open data roadmaps to support the SDGs	Hewlett Foundation, Ford Foundation, IDRC, World Bank, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, PEPFAR, and MCC
Open Government Partnership (OGP)	Over 70 countries and 15 subnational governments committed to open government and transparency; global	A platform for government and civil society reformers to make commitments, verify progress, and participate in working groups to advance government transparency	Hewlett Foundation, Omidyar Network, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundation, USAID, and more, including member country contributions
Open Data for Development (OD4D)	Six regional networks responsible for research, training, and open data use, including the African Open Data Network (AODN)	Advocacy and organizing for promoting and standardizing open data, and measuring the state of open data globally	IDRC, DFID, Global Affairs Canada, and World Bank
Open Data Leaders Network (ODLN)	Each year, a small cohort of open data leaders from around the world	Week-long training, peer learning, and networking class at UK Open Data Institute	IDRC and European Commission

Networks with an explicit focus on evidence-informed policymaking regardless of sector			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
Alliance for Useful Evidence	Any individual, focus on the UK	Advocacy, research, events, and training to promote evidence-informed decision making, mainly in the UK	Big Lottery Fund, Nesta, Economic and Social Research Council, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, European Commission,

			Carnegie UK Trust, Wellcome Trust, and What Works Center for Wellbeing
Evidence for Policy Community, European Commission Joint Research Center	Researchers and policymakers, mainly in Europe, though some engagement with Africa	Discussion forum, events, training, and knowledge centers to link science and policy	European Commission
CIPPEC / VIPPAL	Nonprofits and provincial and national governments, mainly Argentina but some links to other Latin American countries	Training, coaching, and connecting nonprofits and governments, building NGO policy influence and government M&E capacity to improve policy and programs	Not available
Africa Evidence Network (AEN)	Over 1,300 individuals broadly working in M&E and evidence use in Africa	Workshops, conferences, research, evidence maps, and a leadership award to support production and use of evidence in Africa	Africa Centre for Evidence at the University of Johannesburg, and Hewlett Foundation
Africa Cabinet Governance Network (ACGN)	14 African cabinets	Capacity building, exchanges, and assistance with procedural reforms to help member governments incorporate evidence in decision making	DFID, DFAT, and $10,000 annual membership fee from member cabinets
Twende Mbele	M&E agency leaders from six African countries, plus CLEAR Anglophone Africa and the African Development Bank	Peer learning and exchange to strengthen evaluations and promote use of findings in member governments	DFID and Hewlett Foundation
International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA)	Principally scientists and policymakers, chapters in	Workshops, conferences, tools, and guidance to build skills of science advice	IDRC, International Council for Science, Wellcome Trust, and UNESCO, in

	Asia, Africa, and Latin America	practitioners and promote science-policy dialogue to improve public policy	addition to [workshop partners](#)
[Evidence Based Policy in Development Network (EBPDN)](#)	Any individual, global	Open forum to share trainings, job opportunities, and resources on evidence use	Formerly DFID, now run by volunteers

Networks by Target Audience

Networks engaging parliaments in peer learning and evidence use			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
[Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE)](#)	Umbrella group for similar regional networks (below), led by 10 parliamentarians from around the world	Peer exchange and capacity building around National Evaluation Plans, advocacy for parliament, and support for parliamentarians to build and use M&E skills	Not available, though partners include Inter-Parliamentary Union, UN Women and UNICEF Evaluation Offices, United Nations Evaluation Group, AfDB, and [more](#)
[Parliamentarians Forum for Development Evaluation of South Asia (PFDE)](#)	Parliamentarians from Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka	Dialogue, skill building, and peer support on national evaluation policies	EvalPartners
[African Parliamentarians Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE)](#)	Current and former parliamentarians, evaluation associations, and development partners	Advocacy, networking, and capacity development to advance evaluation use in African parliaments	AfDB, Gates Foundation, UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women, CLEAR, and annual member contributions from individuals ($150-250) and institutions ($5,000)
[Parliamentarians Forum of Latin America and Caribbean (PELAC)](#)	Parliamentarians from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia,	In development; will focus on the SDGs	Not available

	Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay and Uruguay		
African Center for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA)	Parliaments from 20 African countries	A platform for knowledge exchange, training, research, and technical support for institutional reform in national and sub-national legislatures	Not available
Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)	178 member parliaments	Practical assistance, advice, peer learning, and guidelines for institutional strengthening in member parliaments	Member contributions (rates set by Governing Council) and external funding and income derived from investments
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) - Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section	90 parliamentary libraries and other institutions worldwide	Assistance and support in the development of parliamentary libraries and research services, and programs and regional networks for parliamentary collaboration	Not available

Networks engaging public innovators or civil servants in peer learning and evidence use			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
Apolitical	Individuals from over 100 countries, the majority in government	Original and partner media content and directory to inspire, connect, and share stories and lessons between civil servants around the world	European Union Horizon 2020, in addition to impact investors in Europe, North America, and Asia
Center for Public Impact (CPI)	Government leaders convened in masterclasses, roundtables, and events	Peer learning, masterclasses, case studies, and events on topics such as legitimacy,	Boston Consulting Group

		citizen engagement, and AI, to strengthen the performance and impact of governments around the world	
Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI)	Civil servants from OECD countries, public innovation experts and academics	Online platform to provide practical advice on how to make innovations work and facilitate a sharing of lessons and co-creation of solutions in the public sector	European Commission and 8 OECD member countries
Global Government Forum (GGF)	Media content reaches 320,000 civil servants around the world	Online news and interviews with government leaders to facilitate a sharing of experiences and lessons learned; yearly summits convene 20-25 senior policymakers to discuss common challenges	Not available
Effective Institutions Platform (EIP)	35 countries, in addition to development banks and think tanks	Peer learning and knowledge sharing on public sector management and reform	USAID, GIZ, DFID, European Union, and OECD
Government Innovators Network	Membership unclear; convened by Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for Governance	Media content, awards, and online community of practice to inspire and share ideas and government innovations	Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for Governance
Network of Innovators	Open government and open data professionals, initiated by New York University's GovLab	Online platform to discuss open data and government and connect with other users	Not available

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) - Government Libraries Section	Government libraries and national associations worldwide	Assistance and support to government libraries and research services	Not available

Networks engaging civil society in peer learning and evidence use			
Name	**Members & Reach**	**Activities & Mission**	**Funders**
International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE)	National and regional evaluation associations around the world	Training, webinars, toolkits, peer exchange, and an online forum to strengthen evaluation skills and foster connections between members	Previously, W. K. Kellogg Foundation
EvalPartners	National and regional evaluation associations around the world	Interactive web platform to share knowledge and resources on country-led M&E systems	DevInfo, UN Women, UNDP, ILO, IDRC, Rockfeller Foundation, BetterEvaluation, Agencia Brasileira de Avaliacao, and more
African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)	Over 45 national evaluation associations and individual evaluators across Africa	Support evaluations and a sharing of African perspectives, and facilitate capacity building and networking between evaluators, policymakers, researchers, and the development community	USAID, SIDA, Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and member contributions: 1-3 year subscriptions for individuals ($50-120), national associations ($200-500), others ($500-1,200)
Outcome Mapping Learning Network (OMLN)	Individuals and M&E and development organizations	Informal online network run and funded by members to build skills in outcome mapping evaluation approaches	Previously funded by IDRC, now sustained by suggested annual member donations (individuals $50-500, organizations $1,000)

Appendix B: List of Funder Acronyms and Network Names

Funders

3ie: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation

ACBF: African Capacity Building Foundation

ADB: Asian Development Bank

AfDB: African Development Bank

CLEAR: Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results

DANIDA: Danish Development Cooperation, Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DFAT: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

DFID: Department for International Development, United Kingdom

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GAVI: Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization

GIZ: German Corporation for International Cooperation

IDRC: International Development Research Center, Canada

ILO: International Labor Organization

JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency

MCC: Millennium Challenge Corporation, United States

NORAD: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PEPFAR: U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

SECO: State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Switzerland

SIDA: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WHO: World Health Organization

Networks

Africa Cabinet Governance Network (ACGN)

Africa Evidence Network (AEN)

African Center for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA)

African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)

African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)

African Parliamentarians Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE)

Alliance for Useful Evidence

Apolitical

Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)

Center for Public Impact (CPI)

CIPPEC / VIPPAL

Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI)

Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED)

Effective Institutions Platform (EIP)

Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA)

European Social Network

EvalPartners

Evidence Based Policy in Development Network (EBPDN)

Evidence for Policy Community, European Commission Joint Research Center

Evidence Informed Decision Making in Health and Nutrition

Evidence Informed Policy and Practice in Education in Europe (EIPPEE)

Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP)

EVIPNet

Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)

GEMNet-Health

Global Development Network (GDN)

Global Evidence Synthesis Initiative (GESI)

Global Government Forum (GGF)

Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE)

Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD)

Government Innovators Network

Guidelines International Network

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) - Government Libraries Section

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) - Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section

International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA)

International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE)

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN)

Knowledge Translation Network Africa

Malabo Montpellier Forum

Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN)

Network of Innovators

Learning Engaging and Advocating for Policy and Systems Research Forum (LEAP)

Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI)

Open Data for Development (OD4D)

Open Data Leaders Network (ODLN)

Open Government Partnership (OGP)

Outcome Mapping Learning Network (OMLN)

Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT)

Parliamentarians Forum for Development Evaluation of South Asia (PFDE)

Parliamentarians Forum of Latin America and Caribbean (PELAC)

Population and Poverty Research Network

REACH

SURE Collaboration

Twende Mbele

WHO Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research

World Bank Open Learning Campus