

CEGA/Berkeley on cultivating the next generation of East African researchers

We had a blog post reflecting on the recent East Africa Evidence Summit and [five ways to make evidence useful for policy makers](#). Over on the [Berkeley blog](#), Alexandra Orsola-Vidal and CEGA's East Africa Social Science Translation (EASST) Collaborative focus on a different lesson, building up local research and researchers:

For all the organizations that participated in the Summit, this notion is clear: nourishing the next generation of African researchers is a priority. “In my experience,” says Fitsum Mulugeta, one of the first fellows to participate in the program, “the EASST Network promotes and fosters true collaboration. We, African researchers, bring our experience and deeper understanding of the region to the table while US researchers bring their technical skills, experience and network so that we can jointly come up with a more rigorous research output both for academic goals and to better inform policy.”

She gives several concrete steps on how they're doing that:

- **Leverage local researchers.** Some of the most rigorous, well thought-out evaluations have been a product of partnerships between international experts and local researchers. It is important to leverage local expertise to address the existing demand for strong evaluations. EASST is working towards identifying and empowering local talent to ensure this need is satisfied.
- **Build capacity at the local and institutional level.** Given the absence or limited availability of local capacity, EASST has developed a capacity building program to ensure local researchers can take a leading role conducting rigorous impact evaluations. This involves the continued provision of trainings drawing upon the expertise of international and local partners, strengthening partnerships and platforms for collaboration with experienced faculty, and affording opportunities for networking and idea exchange.
- **Develop and disseminate curriculum and results.** Educational materials available through international organizations such as CEGA, IPA and the World Bank need to be available for East African institutions. The multilateral development of a rigorous evaluation curriculum can lead to a positive trickle down effect, whereby the next generation of researchers and policymakers will be equipped to evaluate programs.

- **Strengthen collaboration through a shared vision and streamlined resources.**

Partnerships and forums that enable researchers to connect with policymakers have led to the implementation of effective, evidence-based policies on the ground. EASST will continue efforts to sustain partnerships with interested stakeholders on the ground and maintain dialogues across disciplines to ensure research and policy continue to complement one another on the ground.

Read the full post [here](#).

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