



**Optimising the Role of Data, Evidence, and  
Innovations in Africa's Efforts to Create Wealth,  
Empower Citizens, and Foster Responsive  
Governance**

May 6-8, 2025, Nairobi, Kenya



## A Pivotal Event for Development

The Evidence for Development (Evi4Dev) Conference is a pivotal biennial event aimed at enhancing the integration of scientific research, other types of data and innovations into Africa's development efforts. Taking place May 6–8, 2025, this inaugural conference serves as a platform for key stakeholders—including policymakers, researchers, and practitioners—to engage in meaningful dialogue about the role of science, technology, and innovation (STI) and evidence-informed policymaking (EIP) in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

Recent reports highlight that while African countries have made strides toward the SDGs and Agenda 2063, significant challenges remain. Alarmingly, projections indicate that without targeted interventions, millions may continue to live in extreme poverty by 2030 and beyond. The Evi4Dev Conference seeks to address these pressing issues by fostering collaboration among diverse actors in the STI and EIP ecosystems. By centring discussions around critical topics such as wealth creation, infrastructure development, food security, education, and health, the conference aims to generate actionable commitments that will drive progress in these areas.

The overarching theme of the conference—"Optimising the Role of Data, Evidence, and Innovations in Africa's Efforts to Create Wealth, Empower Citizens, and Foster Responsive Governance"—reflects a commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind in Africa's development journey. Through a series of plenary sessions, panel discussions, and workshops, participants will explore best practices and innovative solutions that can be implemented across various sectors to enhance governance, equity, and inclusion.

This event not only represents a convergence of thought leaders, but also embodies a commitment to transforming how evidence is utilised in policymaking across the continent. As Africa navigates its development challenges, the Evi4Dev Conference stands as a beacon for fostering sustainable growth through informed decision-making and collaborative action.

The Conference is convened by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), Science for Africa (SFA) Foundation, and African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), in partnership with leading institutions in the science, data, research, and innovations space in Africa and beyond.

### Conference Goal

The Evi4Dev Conference provides a platform for sustained engagement of science, technology and innovation (STI) and evidence-informed policymaking (EIP) actors requisite for centring STI and EIP practice in Africa's development efforts. The key STI and EIP actors convened by the Evi4Dev Conference include policymakers in government Agencies, government officials and parliamentarians, researchers (based in universities, research institutes and think tanks), policy implementers and practitioners, knowledge brokers, civil society, media, development partners, and private sector representatives.

### Objectives and Outcomes

The main objective of the Evi4Dev Conference is to convene policymakers, STI and EIP experts, funders, and practitioners working in different development fields to deliberate the status of STI and EIP, identify and commit to critical actions needed in order to centre data, evidence, and innovations in Agenda 2063 implementation efforts.

**Specific objectives that the conference seeks to achieve include, to:**



Generate and sustain commitment and actions needed by governments and other development actors to put data, evidence, and innovations at the centre of Agenda 2063 implementation efforts



Foster strategic relationships and interdisciplinary collaboration among government agencies and key stakeholders in the STI and EIP ecosystems



Nurture STI and EIP champions across different development sectors in Africa, including young and emerging STI and EIP leaders and champions



Build and share knowledge on experiences, lessons, and best practices on what works in centring STI and EIP in development efforts in the different contexts of the continent

The expected outcomes of the conference include:



- 1 Heightened commitments and actions by governments, funders, and other development actors to put STI and EIP at the centre of Africa's development (including increased investments, improved programme performance, etc.)
- 2 A strong STI and EIP communities of practice driving development progress in Africa

## A Programme Centred on Data and Innovation Through Collaboration

The programme includes sessions and workshops examining innovative, evidence-based solutions to accelerate progress towards the realisation of Agenda 2063.

### Day 1: Generation & translation of scientific research and innovations for the realisation of Agenda 2063

7:15-8:15 am

Registration

8:30 am

#### Opening ceremony

- Opening remarks
- Youth in innovation chat: The role of youth in Africa's innovation ecosystem
- Keynote address
- Official remarks by the Government of Kenya

8:30 am

Photo and health break

8:30 am

#### PLENARY SESSIONS

**Plenary 1:** Ministers high-level panel on integrating the Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) 2034 into national development agendas

**Plenary 2:** Science leadership: Bridging the gap between science and policy

1:30 pm

Lunch

2:30 pm

#### PARALLEL SESSIONS

- Research and innovation for wealth creation to realise Agenda 2063
- Using digital infrastructure to tackle Africa's challenges
- Innovations to enhance food production and food security
- Innovations in education to achieve Agenda 2063: Research and inclusion
- Digital innovations for healthcare delivery
- Achieving responsible and high-performing AI using ethics of AI tools

3:45pm

Health break

4:15pm

**Plenary 3:** Harnessing AI and digital innovations to accelerate Agenda 2063 progress

6:00-7:30pm

AFIDEP Strategy 2030 launch: Cocktail

## Day 2: Strengthening evidence-informed policymaking in Africa for the realisation of Agenda 2063

7:15-8:15 am	Registration
7:15 am	<p><b>SIDE SESSIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● From data to action: Developing evidence-based advocacy campaigns</li><li>● Commercialisation of research and innovations through public-private partnerships</li><li>● Closed session by the SFA Foundation</li></ul>
8:30 am	<p><b>PLENARY SESSIONS</b></p> <p>Plenary 4: Optimising domestic financing for development in Africa</p>
10:30 am	Health break
11:00 am	<p><b>PARALLEL SESSIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Research and innovation for wealth creation to realise Agenda 2063 – II</li><li>● Innovations to achieve Africa's energy infrastructure goals for Agenda 2063</li><li>● Using evidence to inform educational policy for development</li><li>● Innovative vector control: Shaping Africa's next frontier in malaria elimination and public health resilience</li><li>● Advancing inclusive development in Africa: Experiences and best practices for integrating gender in evidence-informed policymaking processes</li><li>● Centring equity and inclusion in accelerating progress towards the realisation of Agenda 2063 goals</li></ul>
12:10 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Advancing regional evidence-informed policymaking practice in Africa</li><li>● Strengthening national gender observatories: Building inclusive data ecosystems for policy impact in West Africa</li><li>● Building a robust research and innovation ecosystem for sustainable development</li><li>● Strengthening STI capacity for emergency preparedness in health crises</li><li>● Advancing maternal and child health: Innovations, evidence, and impact</li></ul>
1:30 pm	Lunch
2:30 pm	<p><b>PLENARY SESSIONS</b></p> <p>Plenary 5: The central place of citizen evidence in accelerating Africa's Agenda 2063 progress</p>
3:55 pm	<p><b>PARALLEL SESSIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Youth panel</li><li>● Utilising STI indicators for informed science policy decision making</li><li>● Harnessing evidence for an inclusive green and digital future of work in Africa</li><li>● Sustaining investments in Africa's population and demographic dividend in the context of a changing global funding landscape</li><li>● Enhancing food production for realisation of Agenda 2063 goals</li><li>● Innovations in business development for wealth creation</li></ul>

6:00-9:00pm

Kenyan Night (Dinner and Entertainment)

### Day 3: Science, technology & innovation (STI) governance – Domestication of the STI Strategy for Africa (STISA) 2034

8:30 am	Guest lecture: The role of science, technology and innovation in Africa's development
8:40 am	<b>PLENARY SESSIONS</b> <b>Plenary 6:</b> The status of innovation in Africa: Where did we succeed, where did we fail? <b>Plenary 7:</b> Empowering African R&D: Practical pathways to resilience and impact - solutions from emerging leaders
11:10 am	Health break
11:40 am	<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Aligning national and regional STI policies with STISA 2034: Leveraging APET's expertise in strategy, regulation, and implementation of STISA 2034</li><li>● Sustainable financing for primary health care: Strategies and innovations</li><li>● Innovative financing mechanisms for STISA 2034 implementation</li><li>● Institutionalising evidence-informed policymaking: Lessons across contexts to help Africa realise its development goals</li><li>● Beyond protection: Enabling equitable and trusted data ecosystems in Africa background and rationale</li></ul>
12:55 pm	<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The role of AI, big data, and digital platforms in strengthening STI governance: Who owns the words? Governance of African language data in the age of AI</li><li>● Transforming health systems for realisation of Agenda 2063 Goals</li><li>● Leveraging digital infrastructure for realisation of Africa's Agenda 2063 goals</li><li>● Transforming education systems for realisation of Agenda 2063 goals</li><li>● Status of innovation in Africa and how this is contributing to acceleration and progress towards the realisation of Agenda 2063</li></ul>
1:55 pm	Lunch
3:00 pm	<b>PLENARY SESSIONS</b> <b>Plenary 8:</b> Guest lecture: Vaccine preventable diseases programme <b>Plenary 9:</b> Beyond COVID-19: Sustaining Africa's genomic surveillance gains <b>Plenary 10:</b> Reframing Africa's STI financing amid current global geopolitical shifts
5:30 pm	Closing ceremony Presided over by AUDA-NEPAD and the Government of Kenya <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reflections from conference delegates</li><li>● Closing remarks</li></ul>
5:40 pm	End of Conference



## A Convening of Key Actors in Development

At the Evi4Dev Conference, key actors across the STI and EIP landscape will discuss evidence-backed innovations that can turn Africa's current tide and propel it forward towards inclusive and equitable socioeconomic transformation.

### Government ministers including:

- Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba, Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kenya
- Hon. Dr. Jessie Kabwila, Minister of Higher Education, Malawi
- Hon. Sarjoh Aziz-Kamara, Deputy Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Sierra Leone
- Hon. Ferdinand Manira
- Hon. Prof. Dr. Naveen G. El-Autouny, Member of Egypt Senate

### Leaders of regional science, technology, and innovation agencies and/or programmes including:

- Prof. Brando Okolo, Senior Advisor, Science, Technology and Innovation, AUDA-NEPAD
- Prof. Emer. Abubakar Sani Sambo, President of the Nigerian Academy of Science and Member of the AU High Level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET)
- Prof. Berhanu Abegaz, Former Executive Director of the African Academy of Sciences and Member of APET
- Dr William Wasswa, Lecturer and Department Head at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) and Member of APET
- Prof. Tatien Masharabu, Principal Officer–Innovation, Technology Acquisition and Development, East African Science & Technology Commission (EASTECO)
- Mr Reaboka Morakabi, Senior Programme Officer, Science, Technology and Innovation, SADC Secretariat
- Mr Deo Kamweya, Chief Resource Mobilization & International Cooperation, COMESA

### Leaders of national science, technology and innovation agencies and/or programmes including:

- Dr Martin Ongol, Ag. Executive Secretary, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology
- Prof. Alex Ario, Director General, Ugandan National Public Health Institute/President, African National Public Health Institutes
- Prof. Zacharie Miburo, Permanent Executive Secretary, National Commission for Science,

Technology and Innovation (SEP/CNSTI), Burundi

- Ms Gift Kadzamira, Director General, National Commission for Science and Technology Malawi
- Ms Foureratou Issoufou, Permanent Secretary, National Observatory for the Promotion of Gender (ONPG), Niger
- Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda, Vice Chancellor, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)
- Prof. Isabella Oyier, Head, Biosciences Department, KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Program
- Ms Marie Madeleine Wanemanegre, Director General, Promotion of Women and Gender in Burkina Faso
- Prof. Macpherson Mallewa, Vice Chancellor, Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Malawi
- Prof. Nicki Tiffin, Deputy Director, South African National Bioinformatics Institute (SANBI)

### Youth innovators – Winners of the continental AI and robotics competition including:

- Ms Angela Waithera
- Mr Richmond Yeboah Appau-Siaw
- Mr Yohan Chepe

### Leaders of the key non-governmental institutions driving STI and EIP including:

- Dr Eliya M. Zulu, Executive Director, African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP)
- Dr Tom Kariuki, Chief Executive Officer, Science for Africa (SFA) Foundation
- Prof. Tom Migun Ogada, Executive Director, African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
- Dr Joseph Asunka, Executive Director, Afrobarometer
- Dr Frejus Thoto, Executive Director, African Center for Equitable Development (ACED)
- Dr Fiona Moejes, Chief Executive Officer, The Mawazo Institute
- Dr Joanes Atela, Executive Director, Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN)
- Ms Caroline Mbindyo, CEO, Amref Health Innovations

- Prof. Victor Murinde, Executive Director, African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)
- Prof. John Ele-Ojo Ataguba, Executive Director, African Health Economics and Policy Association (AfHEA)
- Mr Kwame Owino, CEO, Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA Kenya)
- Ms Siziwe Ngcwabe, Director and Co-Chair, Africa Evidence Network (AEN)
- Prof. Temitope Sogbanmu, Senior Lecturer at the University of Lagos and Founder, Evidence Use in Environmental Policymaking in Nigeria (EUEPiN)
- Prof. Collen Masimirembwa, President & CEO, African Institute of Biomedical Science & Technology

**Private sector leaders including:**

- Mr Matthew Grollnek, Lead, Employability and the Future of Work, Mastercard Foundation
- Mr Fargani Tambeayuk, Director of Public Policy for Francophone SSA and Head of SSA Cluster on Innovation and Connectivity, Meta

- Mr Abdelaziz Saidu, Senior Engineer, Cisco Africa
- Dr Shikoh Gitau, CEO and Founder, Qhala
- Dr Yaw Bediako, Co-founder and CEO, Yemaachi Biotech
- Ms Wanjiku Jean Munyaka, Partner Development Manager, Microsoft Tech
- Dr Robert Karanja, Co-founder and Chief Innovations Officer, Villgro Africa
- Ms Daisy Isiaho, Co-founder and Chief Product Officer, Zuri Health – Kenya

**Leading scientists who will present conference issue-framing papers:**

- Dr Prince Oguguo et al. presenting on “Creating Wealth Our Own Way: Status and Directions for Research and Innovation for Wealth Creation in Africa”
- Dr Tom Kwanya et al. presenting on “Realigning Africa’s Research Priorities and Ecosystem to Transform Education, Innovation, Productivity, and Wealth Creation”
- Prof. Amos Njuguna et al. on “Empowering Youth and Women through Small and Medium Enterprise Development: Leveraging Data, Evidence, and Innovation for Inclusive Wealth Creation in Africa”

## CONVENERS



**AUDA-NEPAD**  
AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



## PARTNERS



## Evidence for Development Conference

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#Evi4Dev2025