

AFIDEP

African Institute for
Development Policy

Bridging Development Research,
Policy and Practice

Our Team

AFIDEP brings together a dedicated multidisciplinary team of scholars with extensive experience in various social sciences, public health, policy analysis, and Communication Science. The Institute's expertise is complemented by a network of Associate Fellows, who contribute to our work as well as strengthen the impact of their own work through AFIDEP's programmes and connections.

Partners

To enhance the scope and impact of our work, optimise synergies, and leverage resources, expertise, and experiences, we forge collaborative partnerships with national think tanks, regional economic blocs, international research organizations, civil society organizations, advocacy networks, professional associations, and academic institutions. We also work closely with local research and advocacy partners to ensure that knowledge translation is locally owned, driven, and sustained.

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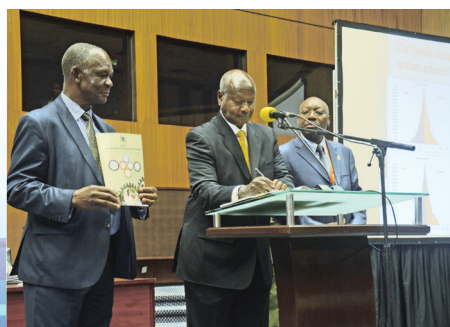
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Who We Are

Founded in 2009, the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) is an African-led, regional non-profit policy think tank that seeks to bridge the gaps between development research, policy and practice in Africa. Currently, AFIDEP's work focuses on the linkages between population change and sustainable development, and health systems strengthening in Africa.

AFIDEP was set up to promote use of research evidence in decision-making processes by addressing key barriers in knowledge translation and use. These barriers include fragmented research evidence; inappropriate packaging of research outputs; discordance between evidence needs of decision-makers and the research produced; weak capacity to translate and use research evidence; and politics and interests, among others.

Vision

Our vision is 'To make research evidence matter in African-driven development'.

Mission

Our mission is 'To translate and enable the utilisation of evidence in policy-making, primarily in the fields of population change and sustainable development, and health systems strengthening in Africa'.

Objectives

To realise our vision and mission, we have three overarching objectives:

- Synthesise and translate research evidence;
- Enable the utilisation of research evidence in decision-making; and
- Strengthen capacity in research evidence synthesis, translation and utilisation.

How We Bring About Change

The ultimate impact of our work is to contribute to the realisation of sustainable socio-economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. In line with our three objectives, we use the following strategies to strengthen the commitment and capacity of political leaders, policymakers, and programme managers in addressing Africa's development challenges.

1 Synthesis and Translation of Research Evidence

We generate new knowledge for application in decision-making processes through three main strategies:

- (i) Systematic reviews and review of systematic reviews to identify policy lessons from published and grey literature;

- (ii) Further analysis of secondary data to fill policy-oriented evidence gaps, with particular emphasis on policy scenario building; and

- (iii) Policy and program assessments to identify best practices and opportunities for addressing policy and program barriers of demand, access and use of various social services and enable countries to learn from each other.

2 Enabling the Utilisation of Research Evidence in Decision-Making

To enable the utilisation of research evidence in decision-making, we:

(i) Provide direct technical assistance to governments and development partners in development and appraisal of policies and strategies

We help decision-makers access and interpret and draw policy and programme lessons from local and regional research evidence. We go beyond the typical research dissemination model to entrench ourselves in policymaking processes, which enables us to provide direct technical assistance to government teams that design development policies and strategies.

(ii) Forge strategic partnerships with government institutions in developing and implementing our projects.

These close ties help to build trust, ensure that the work we do is geared towards meeting the evidence and capacity needs of the decision-makers, and increase the likelihood that the results are applied in decision-making processes. Our staff also participate in various technical working groups in the ministries of health and planning where they advocate for greater application of research evidence.

(iii) Enhance evidence use in regional decision-making platforms:

We work with various regional organisations and policy platforms to strengthen the evidence base guiding policy and programme responses to Africa's enduring development challenges, including the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Blocs, East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community, UN agencies (WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF), and the Partners in Population and Development-Africa Regional Office. For example, we work with the Partners in Population and Development-Africa Regional Office in convening annual meeting of the Network of African Parliamentary Committees for Health to enhance the technical capacity of parliamentarians in exercising their oversight and budget allocation roles.

(iv) Strengthen the African voice in global development discourses through our participation in global agenda setting expert panels and international meetings.

For example, we participate in various WHO expert panels, the FP2020 working groups and the Resource Mobilization and Awareness Working Group of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition.

3 Strengthen capacity in research evidence synthesis, translation and utilisation

We strengthen skills of policymakers in accessing, appraising and applying research evidence, and those of researchers in conducting systematic reviews and translation of research evidence, policy analysis, scenario building and forecasting, and effective communication. Our capacity building programme employs a range of strategies including knowledge transfer during collaboration, provision of technical assistance, internships and technical training workshops.

Our Areas of Focus

Population Change and Sustainable Development

Our work in this theme focuses on clarifying the implications of population change –including population growth, age structure changes, migration and urbanization – on Africa's development prospects. Our work on this theme also focuses on the demographic dividend and linkages between population, environment and development. We use the evidence on these issues to captivate and strengthen political will and policy responses to prioritize incorporation of population dynamics in development planning.

Health Systems Strengthening

Our work in this theme focuses on translating evidence and promoting its use in order to support health system strengthening. The World Health Organisation defines health systems strengthening as:

- (i) The process of identifying and implementing the changes in policy and practice in a country's health system such that the country can respond better to its health and health system challenges, and

- (ii) Any array of initiatives and strategies that improves one or more of the functions of the health system and that leads to better health through improvements in access, coverage, quality, or efficiency.

Our current areas of focus under this theme include:

1. Translating research and related evidence to inform policy formulation, resource allocation, programme design and evaluation, and scale-up of interventions, with particular focus on the following health issues:

- (a) Reproductive health (including child health, maternal health, adolescent SRH, family planning)
- (b) HIV/AIDS
- (c) Emerging diseases and health challenges

2. Strengthening health information systems as well as addressing institutional bottlenecks and individual capacity gaps in order to enable increased use of data and research evidence in decision-making.

