

Capacity building to produce useful evidence: Who sets the agenda and what needs to change?

Global Evidence Summit Satellite Session
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In recent years, there have been notable investments in building research capacities in low- and middle-income countries, in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, approaches to building capacity to produce and use evaluation evidence and evidence synthesis have been more sporadic, highly targeted and implemented toward accountability and internal or donor requirements, often not toward broader, learning and decision-making objectives.

Do we need a revolution in thinking, methods and implementation with regards to how we design and implement capacity building for evidence producers?

Session sponsors agree that it is time to challenge our assumptions of how evidence capacity-building agendas are set. We are inviting colleagues working on evaluation and synthesis evidence use to join us for a constructive dialogue about what needs to change to improve capacity building in these areas, with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.

We will kick off our facilitated discussions with a panel that engages us around these questions:

- Who sets capacity building agendas and what impact does this have on the nature of the capacity building that is delivered?
- Is what we do evidence-informed?
- Are our adult learning pedagogies evidence-based and informed by knowledge of the evidence production and use contexts?
- How can partnerships between producers and users enable more useful capacity building?
- How can we be more responsive to known needs and current critiques from recipients and training providers?
- What is structural and what can we be part of improving: revolution or reform?

The facilitators will encourage the audience to engage in the discussions. In small groups, participants will share their experiences and reflections about what they know from experience just won't work (what makes them 'see red'), what is working and not and what needs to change. The final part of the session will be dedicated to identifying lessons shared and discussing ways forward for capacity building.

Please join us and contribute

We welcome providers and recipients of individual-level capacity building, especially those with experience in determining needs in evidence production (evaluations and synthesis) and use. The audience will have some direct experience with and/or responsibility for capacity building and intermediate to advanced knowledge of capacity-building methods and design.