



**Evidence to Action**

Accra, Ghana

**2026**

**9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
EVIDENCE  
TO ACTION  
CONFERENCE  
CONFERENCE BRIEF**

**“REIMAGINING THE EVIDENCE-INFORMED  
POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING ECOSYSTEM  
IN AFRICA”**

Accra, Ghana | Hybrid

June 22-26, 2026

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 9th Evidence to Action Conference and Exhibition (E2A 2026) brought together stakeholders in the public and private sectors to explore practical solutions for strengthening evidence-informed policy, decision making, and sustainable development across Africa. Throughout the conference, participants examined how stronger institutions, strategic partnerships, innovation, and local leadership can accelerate the translation of evidence into meaningful development outcomes.

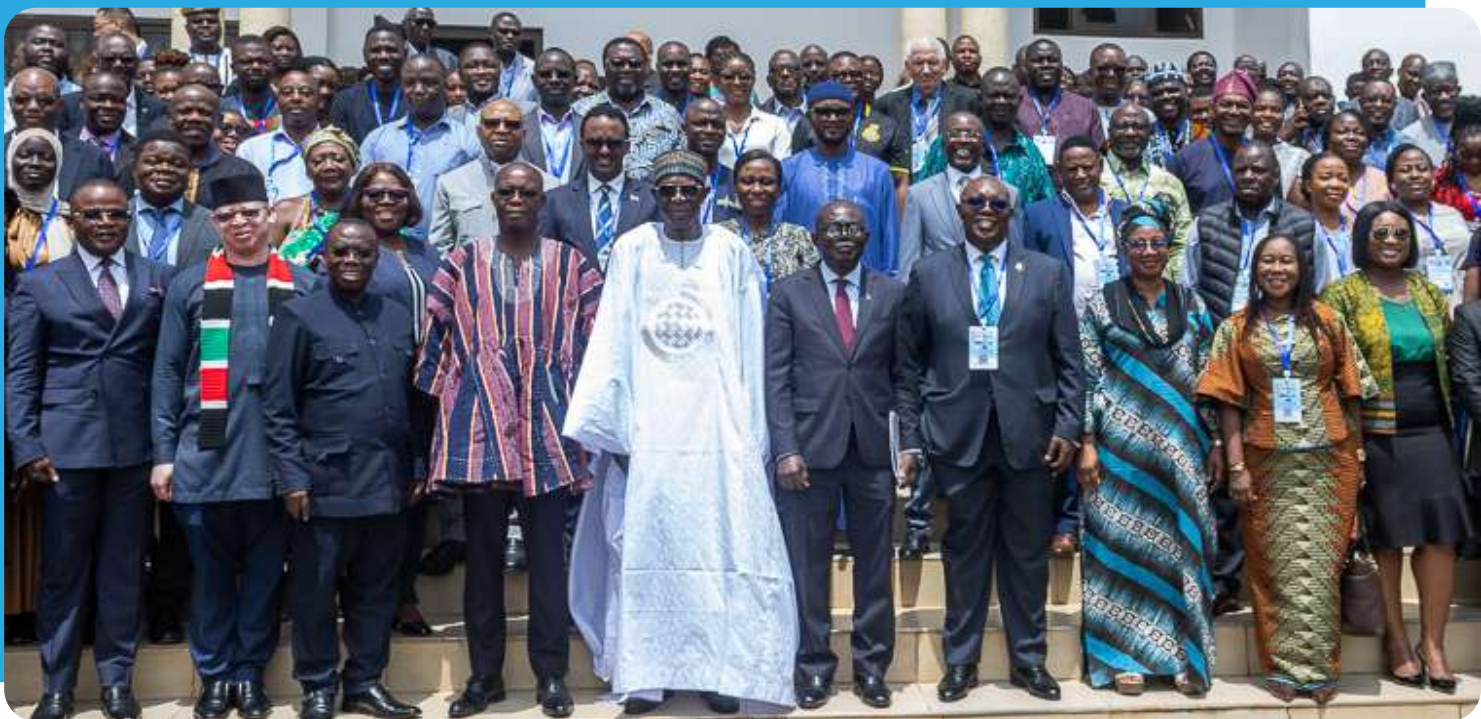
The conference reaffirmed that Africa's growing capacity to generate evidence must be matched by stronger systems that enable its consistent use in policy and practice. Participants emphasized the importance of institutionalizing evidence use, investing in digital innovation and monitoring systems, strengthening collaboration across sectors, and ensuring that citizen participation and local knowledge remain central to decision-making. The discussions concluded with a shared commitment to advancing partnerships, building resilient evidence ecosystems, and transforming research into action that improves lives and livelihoods across the continent.

This report presents a synthesis of the key discussions, emerging themes, and recommendations from the conference. It captures the collective insights generated across the various sessions and highlights priority actions for strengthening evidence-informed decision-making and accelerating sustainable development across Africa.

## ABOUT E2A 2026

The 9th Evidence to Action Conference and Exhibition (E2A 2026) was held from 22–26 June 2026 in Accra, Ghana, under the theme “Reimagining the Evidence-Informed Policy and Decision-Making Ecosystem in Africa”. E2A 2026 was jointly organized by the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED), the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR), and the Research and Evaluation Center (REC), together with regional and international partners.

Bringing together policymakers, researchers, development practitioners, civil society organizations, academia, funders, and private sector representatives from across Africa and beyond, E2A 2026 fostered dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration around the practical use of evidence to inform policy and improve development outcomes. The conference featured keynote addresses, roundtable discussions, interactive laboratory sessions, exhibitions, networking events, and pre-conference side events designed to bridge the gap between evidence generation and real-world impact.



# E2A 2026 AT A GLANCE

The E2A 2026 Conference was delivered over five days, comprising two days of pre-conference side events (22 to 23 June 2026) and a three-day main conference (24 to 26 June 2026) held at the ISSER Conference Hall, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra. The programme combined keynote addresses, high-level roundtable discussions, interactive laboratory sessions, innovation showcases, and networking opportunities to facilitate knowledge exchange and strengthen evidence-informed policymaking across Africa.

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**500+**  
PARTICIPANTS

50+  
VIRTUAL

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**29**  
COUNTRIES

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**194**  
INSTITUTIONS

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**47**  
ABSTRACTS  
SELECTED

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**10**  
SIDE EVENTS

LED BY  
**6**  
ORGANIZATIONS

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**5**  
INTERACTIVE  
LABORATORIES

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# MAIN CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



## **Prof. Robert Darko Osei**

**Director, Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER)**

On behalf of the University of Ghana, Prof. Robert Darko Osei, Director of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) and Prof Felix Asante, Pro Vice-Chancellor, welcomed participants, reaffirming the university's commitment to advancing research and fostering partnerships that support evidence-informed development.



## **Dr. David Sarfo Ameyaw**

**President and CEO, International Center for Evaluation and Development (ICED)**

Dr. David Sarfo Ameyaw officially opened E2A 2026 by highlighting the urgency of strengthening Africa's evidence ecosystem and calling for stronger institutions, partnerships, and practical pathways to translate evidence into action at scale.



## **Prof. Fadel Ndiame**

**Executive Director, Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR)**

Prof. Fadel Ndiame framed the pre-conference side event around identifying what has worked, for whom, and under what conditions, emphasizing the need for locally grounded, Africa-led evidence systems that translate learning into action.



### **GOODWILL MESSAGES**

The ceremony featured goodwill messages by representatives from The Gambia, Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon, Somalia, and Tanzania. Among them, Hon. Sen. (Dr.) Isaac Mwaura (Kenya), challenged participants to move beyond generating evidence towards ensuring that evidence influences policy, leadership, and public trust.



### **GUEST OF HONOR ADDRESS**

The Guest of Honour address was delivered by Hon. Bernard Ahiafor, First Deputy Speaker for the Parliament of Ghana, on behalf of Hon. Alban S.K. Bagbin, Speaker of the Parliament of Ghana. His speech highlighted the need for evidence that is timely, policy relevant, clearly communicated, and trusted by decision makers, noting that research much align with the realities and pace of government decision-making.



### **SPECIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

A special keynote address from the Office of the President, delivered by Shamima Muslim on behalf of Chief of Staff Julius Debrah, highlighted the need to bridge the gaps between research and government decision-making through timely, accessible, trusted evidence and stronger, sustained engagement between researchers and policymakers.



The true measure of the Evidence to Action Conference will be the policies that change the ecosystem [and] improve it, and the lives that are transformed as a result of what we commit to here.

—Hon. Bernard Ahiafor, First Deputy Speaker for the Parliament of Ghana



## Day 1: Africa Evidence Ecosystem “What has worked, where and for whom?”

The opening day of E2A 2026 set the stage for discussions on strengthening Africa’s evidence ecosystem. Across the keynote and roundtable sessions, participants emphasized that translating evidence into action requires stronger institutions, effective knowledge translation, and sustained collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.

### Key Messages

- Strengthen institutional systems that embed evidence into policymaking and governance.
- Foster trusted partnerships that connect evidence producers with decision-makers.
- Communicate evidence in timely, accessible, and policy-relevant ways to support action.



## Day 2: Transforming Systems for Evidence “How & why it works”

Day 2 focused on practical strategies for closing the gap between research and policy. Across the keynote and roundtable discussions, participants emphasized that evidence achieves impact when it is co-created with decision-makers, communicated strategically, and embedded within institutional processes that support long-term use.

### Key Messages

- Design research around policy needs and engage stakeholders throughout the evidence journey.
- Communicate evidence in accessible, decision-oriented formats that support timely action.
- Strengthen institutional ownership and incentives to sustain evidence use beyond individual projects.

## Day 3: What Must Change: Africa-Led Evidence to Action “Transformation, Institutionalization, Scaling”

Day 3 challenged participants to move beyond project-based approaches toward sustainable, Africa-led evidence ecosystems. The keynote and roundtable emphasized institutionalizing evidence use, strengthening domestic ownership and financing, and ensuring that research is co-created with communities and policymakers to drive long-term development impact.

### Key Messages

- Shift from short-term, donor-driven projects to sustainable, Africa-led evidence ecosystems.
- Institutionalize evidence use within governance and parliamentary processes to ensure continuity.
- Strengthen domestic investment in research, statistics, and monitoring systems while reducing donor dependence.
- Bridge the gap between evidence producers, policymakers, and communities by packaging evidence for action and embedding citizen voices in decision-making.



# INTERACTIVE LABORATORY SESSIONS

The Interactive Laboratories formed the technical core of the E2A 2026 Conference, providing structured platforms for critical reflection, peer learning, and collaborative problem-solving around evidence-informed policymaking. From 127 abstracts submitted, an independent review committee selected 47 abstracts through a rigorous assessment process based on agreed criteria, including relevance, quality, innovation, and potential policy impact. These were presented on the first day across five thematic laboratories. Each laboratory brought together participants with expertise in the respective thematic area, enabling focused discussions among researchers, policymakers, practitioners, development partners, civil society organizations, and private sector actors.

## 1. Government & Parliamentary

The Government and Parliamentary Interactive Laboratory brought together parliamentarians, government officials, policymakers, researchers, and development practitioners to explore practical approaches to strengthening evidence-informed policymaking, legislation, budgeting, and parliamentary oversight. Through experiences from across Africa, participants examined how evidence can be better integrated into government systems to improve public decision-making.



### Evidence In Practice

- **Kenya:** Lessons from recent legislation illustrated how limited public engagement and weak evidence uptake can undermine policy implementation.
- **Regional:** PASGR's Utafiti Sera model, demonstrated how long-term collaboration among researchers, policymakers, parliamentarians, and civil society strengthens evidence use across multiple African countries.
- **Continental reach:** Afrobarometer showed how citizen-generated evidence and comparative research can support more responsive governance and policymaking.



### What We Learned

- Evidence is most influential when supported by political commitment, trusted partnerships, institutional capacity, and effective communication.
- Embedding evidence within parliamentary structures and research services strengthens long-term evidence use.
- Understanding political context and engaging citizens are critical for translating evidence into policy.



### Priority Actions

- Strengthen partnerships between parliament, government, research institutions, and civil society.
- Embed evidence use within parliamentary committees and legislative processes.
- Build the capacity of Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff to interpret and apply evidence.
- Improve the communication of evidence to meet policymakers' needs.
- Strengthen citizen participation and institutional platforms that promote continuous dialogue between researchers and policymakers.



The idea behind the Utafiti Sera approach is to shift from short-term projects to sustained flexible relationships in policy making.

— Emmanuel Remi Aiyede, University of Ibadan



## 2. Financing & Investment

The Financing and Investment Interactive Laboratory brought together policymakers, financial institutions, researchers, investors, development partners, and private sector representatives to explore how evidence can strengthen financing decisions, financial inclusion, investment, and resource allocation for sustainable development.



### Evidence In Practice

- **Ghana's digital finance sector:** Research from the ReFinD Research Network informed the development of Ghana's digital credit policy by identifying gaps in access, gender disparities, and borrower behaviour, helping shape more inclusive financial regulation.
- **Northern Nigeria's food system:** Evidence highlighted how weak market systems—not low agricultural production—drive food insecurity, reinforcing the need for investment in storage, logistics, and market infrastructure.



### What We Learned

- Evidence is most effective when it responds to practical policy and investment needs and is supported by strong partnerships.
- There is a need for stronger knowledge management systems, context-specific adaptation of successful models, and increased investment in data systems to support evidence-informed financing decisions.
- Funding decisions must deliberately “build the middle” by directing investment toward decentralised storage, cold chains, and market infrastructure.
- Humanitarian assistance can be made to “work twice” by using relief funds to stimulate local production



### Priority Actions

- Strengthen partnerships between researchers, financial institutions, governments, and investors.
- Invest in integrated data and knowledge management systems to support financing decisions.
- Promote digital innovations that improve financial inclusion and accountability.
- Strengthen evidence generation for agricultural markets and sustainable investment.
- Adapt successful financing models to local contexts before scaling them.



#### CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS



“ We shouldn't just focus on providing food aid; we should scale beyond food aid into actually developing the food system so that it is more sustainable.

— Doreen Selorm Kufoalor, IFPRI



### 3. Implementation and Civil Society

The Implementation and Civil Society Interactive Laboratory brought together civil society organizations, implementing partners, government officials, researchers, development practitioners, and community representatives to examine how evidence can strengthen programme implementation, adaptive management, citizen engagement, and accountability. Discussions centred on practical experiences of translating evidence into action to improve development outcomes.



#### Evidence In Practice

- **Women Water Guardians, Kenya:** A women-led approach demonstrated how community participation and locally generated evidence can strengthen accountability and improve water governance.
- **Agricultural Mechanization, Ghana:** Longitudinal research informed policies that improved smallholder farmers' access to mechanization, helping communities respond to labour shortages and climate pressures.
- **Adaptive implementation:** Case studies showed how continuous monitoring, learning, and beneficiary engagement enable programmes to respond more effectively to changing contexts.



#### What We Learned

- Evidence is most valuable when it is continuously generated and applied throughout programme implementation
- Community ownership, adaptive management, and collaboration are essential for achieving sustainable development outcomes.
- Inclusive evidence systems should recognize local and Indigenous knowledge alongside formal research.



#### Priority Actions

- Strengthen community participation throughout programme design and implementation.
- Promote adaptive management informed by continuous monitoring, evaluation, and learning.
- Strengthen collaboration between governments, civil society organizations, and implementing partners.
- Invest in institutional capacity for evidence use and learning.
- Improve knowledge sharing to support the replication of successful implementation approaches.



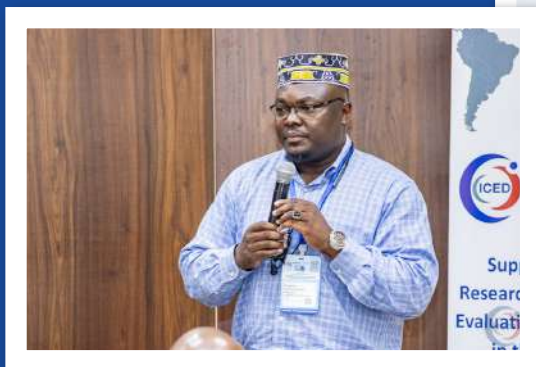
#### CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS



If evidence serves as knowledge, which group's evidence is used and which group's evidence is left behind?

— Charles Opole, TSC





## 4. Evidence, Research, and Policy Innovation

The Evidence, Research and Policy Innovation Interactive Laboratory brought together researchers, academics, policymakers, knowledge brokers, and development practitioners to explore innovative approaches for strengthening evidence generation, translation, and use in policymaking. Discussions focused on bridging the gap between research and action through collaborative, context-responsive, and demand-driven evidence systems.



### Evidence In Practice

- **African-led evidence models:** Frameworks such as the Adaptive Evidence Ecosystem for Policy Innovation (AEE-PI) and the Integrated Evidence-to-Decision (IED) Model demonstrated how sustained collaboration between researchers and policymakers can improve evidence uptake.
- **Health policy innovation:** Case studies from Ethiopia and Kano State, Nigeria, showed how experimental and community-generated evidence informed health financing reforms and maternal health policy.
- **Knowledge translation in action:** Experiences from Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa illustrated how accessible evidence, co-created research, and stakeholder engagement can strengthen accountability and support policy reform.



### What We Learned

- Producing high-quality evidence is only the first step; meaningful policy influence depends on co-creation, knowledge brokering, timing, and political alignment.
- African-led, context-responsive evidence systems are essential for addressing local development priorities.
- Community knowledge, innovative methodologies, and responsible use of emerging technologies all have a role to play in strengthening evidence-informed policymaking.



### Priority Actions

- Strengthen knowledge translation and evidence brokering to bridge the gap between research and policy.
- Promote co-production of evidence through sustained engagement between researchers, policymakers, and communities.
- Invest in African-led evidence systems that are responsive to local contexts.
- Strengthen the use of community-generated data and innovative research methods to inform policy decisions.
- Institutionalize demand-driven evidence generation and use across public institutions.



The most important evidence is not only provided by experts. Community experience can also be documented and it should be.

— Sally Miruri, Pamoja Trust



## 5. Private Sector Evidence-Based Decision Making

The Private Sector Evidence-Based Decision Making Interactive Laboratory brought together business leaders, entrepreneurs, researchers, policymakers, investors, and development partners to examine how evidence can strengthen business performance, innovation, investment, and sustainable enterprise development. The discussions explored practical approaches for integrating evidence into private sector decision-making to improve competitiveness and development impact.



### Evidence In Practice

- **Evidence-informed investment:** Case studies from Ghana demonstrated how research is helping shape more effective financing ecosystems for SMEs and informing digital finance regulation through sustained engagement between researchers, industry, and regulators.
- **Business sustainability:** Corporate examples illustrated how evidence can strengthen accountability by embedding measurable sustainability outcomes into business strategy and operations.
- **Inclusive enterprise development:** Experiences from Ethiopia and Northern Nigeria showed how evidence can support climate resilience, employment, and stronger market systems through investments that respond to local realities.



### What We Learned

- Evidence helps businesses manage risk, drive innovation, and make more informed investment decisions.
- Strong partnerships between the private sector, governments, researchers, and development partners are essential for building resilient and inclusive markets.
- Sustainable business growth depends on reliable data, trusted relationships, and investment in evidence systems that support entrepreneurship and long-term development.



### Priority Actions

- Promote greater use of evidence in business planning, investment, and innovation.
- Strengthen collaboration between the private sector, governments, research institutions, and development partners.
- Improve access to market intelligence, business data, and digital technologies, particularly for MSMEs.
- Invest in innovation ecosystems that support entrepreneurship and climate-resilient enterprises.
- Strengthen evidence generation to inform policies that promote inclusive and sustainable private sector growth.

“ At the beginning, it used to be just intentions, but now we know our stakeholders are more interested in the outcomes that we get.

— Bernard Owusu-Ansah, KPMG



# OUTCOMES AND LOOKING AHEAD

## Strengthened Partnerships

One of the defining outcomes of E2A 2026 was the strengthening of partnerships across research institutions, government agencies, development organizations, and regional networks. Beyond creating space for dialogue, the conference facilitated concrete commitments to future collaboration aimed at advancing evidence-informed policymaking across Africa.

As part of these commitments, partnerships were formalized through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between:

- Institute for Statistical, Social, and Economic Research and Parliament of the Republic of Ghana
- International Center for Evaluation and Development and Government of Tanzania
- International Center for Evaluation and Development and Government of Kenya

## New Knowledge and Resources

- Institutional MoUs
- Fair Tax Monitor launch
- Evidence Gap Maps
- AI-powered evidence synthesis
- Ghana Evaluation Map

## Key Actions Moving Forward

- Strengthen national evidence ecosystems.
- Invest in knowledge translation.
- Promote African-led evidence systems.
- Expand digital innovation.
- Increase domestic financing for evidence systems.

## Looking Ahead

E2A 2026 reaffirmed that Africa's challenge is not a lack of evidence, but ensuring that evidence is intentionally designed, communicated, and applied to inform policy and practice. Across the conference, participants consistently demonstrated that meaningful change depends on trusted partnerships, early collaboration between evidence producers and users, adaptive learning, and sustained investment in institutions that support evidence-informed decision-making. These priorities are reflected in the E2A Africa Declaration and Evidence-to-Action Roadmap, which provide a shared agenda for strengthening Africa's evidence ecosystem.

As the conference concluded, participants shared a common commitment to advancing evidence-informed policymaking through stronger partnerships, inclusive approaches, and African-led solutions. E2A 2026 reinforced that translating evidence into action is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process of collaboration, learning, and innovation. The conversations sparked in Accra now continue through the partnerships, initiatives, and commitments that will shape more responsive policies and improve lives across the continent.

**“ EVIDENCE MUST BECOME PART OF EVERYDAY DECISION-MAKING IF AFRICA IS TO ACHIEVE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. ”**

— E2A 2026 Africa Declaration

# GALLERY







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