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KENYA MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE KEMRI
In Search of Better Health

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EAST AFRICA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR EVIDENCE INFORMED DECISION MAKING MEETING

APRIL 14 - 15, 2026
NAIROBI, KENYA

VISUAL NOTES BY :NJUNG'E WANJIRU

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT for EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

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Lilian Mayieka
Co-Director
Cochrane Kenya

COCHRANE KENYA'S JOURNEY HAS BEEN BUILT ON PARTNERSHIP, AND WE DEEPLY RECOGNIZE KEMRI'S SUPPORT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING

STRONG EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEMS GROW THROUGH SHARED COMMITMENT AND LONG TERM INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

YOUR PRESENCE HERE REMINDS US THAT EVIDENCE IS NOT JUST DISCUSSED IN THEORY; IT IS USED BY LEADERS TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT MATTER

Barbara Miheso
Co-Director
Cochrane Kenya

THERE IS A CLEAR NEED TO DEEPEN ONGOING CONVERSATIONS, SET A STRONGER REGIONAL PACE, AND STRENGTHEN SOUTH–SOUTH COLLABORATION ACROSS INSTITUTIONS SO THAT THE SOLUTIONS WE DEVELOP ARE TRULY RESPONSIVE TO OUR CONTEXTS

COLLABORATION

IS NOT A CHOICE, BUT A NECESSITY
NO SINGLE INSTITUTION OR COUNTRY CAN DO THIS ALONE

THIS MEETING IS ABOUT PEOPLE, AND THE CHOICES THAT CAN CHANGE THEIR LIVES. AFRICA IS TAKING CHARGE OF ITS FATE, AND THE FUTURE WILL BE DEFINED BY HOW WELL WE MOVE TOGETHER, WITH COCHRANE READY TO BE PART OF THAT JOURNEY

Karla Soares-Weiser
Cochrane CEO

Host
Ruthpearl Ng'ang'a

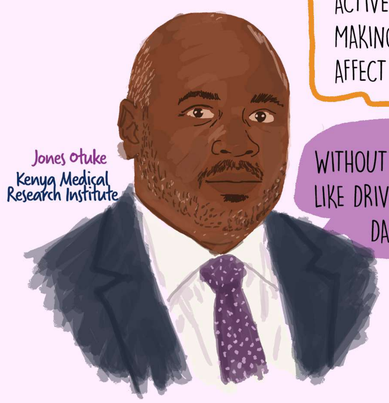
BEFORE WE BUILD AN EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM, WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THE ROOM ; THE HOPES, DOUBTS, POWER DYNAMICS, AND QUESTIONS PEOPLE ARE CARRYING IN

WHAT DECISION DID YOU MAKE IN THE LAST 3 MONTHS , AND HOW WAS IT INFORMED BY EVIDENCE

IF WE WANT GENUINE COLLABORATION, WE MUST CREATE SPACE FOR HONEST QUESTIONS ,ABOUT RELEVANCE, POWER, FUNDING, CONTEXT, AND ACTION

THE REGION IS NOT STARTING FROM ZERO
IT IS BUILDING ON GROWING EVIDENCE, PARTNERSHIPS AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

GENERATING EVIDENCE ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH; KNOWLEDGE MUST BE ACCESSIBLE, RELEVANT, AND TRANSLATED, ACTIVELY USED BY THOSE MAKING DECISIONS THAT AFFECT PEOPLE'S LIVES



Jones otuke
Kenya Medical Research Institute

WITHOUT EVIDENCE, WE ARE LIKE DRIVERS MOVING IN THE DARK WITHOUT HEADLIGHTS

EVIDENCE IS NO LONGER A LUXURY, IT IS A NECESSITY. IT IS THE FOUNDATION FOR RESPONSIVE POLICIES, STRONGER SYSTEMS, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SINCE COVID-19, THE REGION HAS SEEN MORE RESEARCH, FUNDING, GENOMIC SURVEILLANCE, PATHOGEN MONITORING, AND DIGITAL REPORTING STRENGTHENING EARLY DETECTION AND TRACKING HEALTH SERVICE RECOVERY, ESPECIALLY IN HARD TO REACH AREAS

ACHIEVEMENTS

- EVIDENCE IS BEING GENERATED
- COLLABORATION IS GROWING
- PANDEMIC RESEARCH AND FUNDING HAVE INCREASED
- SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS ARE EXPANDING
- COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS AND DIGITAL REPORTING ARE IMPROVING EARLY DETECTION
- ONE HEALTH APPROACHES ARE GAINING MOMENTUM

SHARED INSIGHTS
STRONGER DECISONS
BETTER OUTCOMES

OPPORTUNITIES

- CO-CREATE EVIDENCE WITH COMMUNITIES AND POLICYMAKERS
- ALIGN EVIDENCE WITH THE POLICY CYCLE
- BUILD CAPACITY FOR QUALITY AND QUANTITY
- USE AI RESPONSIBLY
- BRING IN INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE
- STRENGTHEN PREPAREDNESS SYSTEMS
- BUILD SOUTH–SOUTH LEARNING ACROSS EAST AFRICA

GAPS

- OUTPUT IS STILL LOW COMPARED TO GLOBAL EVIDENCE PRODUCTION
- TOO MUCH EVIDENCE REMAINS IN REPORTS, NOT ACTION
- FUNDING IS OFTEN FUNDER DRIVEN, NOT POPULATION DRIVEN
- POLICY, RESEARCH, AND GOVERNMENT ARE NOT ALWAYS CONNECTED
- PREPAREDNESS IS WEAKER THAN RESPONSE
- DATA SYSTEMS ARE FRAGMENTED
- MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES REMAIN UNDERREPRESENTED

65+ INSTITUTIONS

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THE EVIDENCE IS THERE, BUT IS IT DECISION-READY?

"WILL THIS LEAD TO REAL ACTION?" "DO GOVERNMENTS EVEN READ WHAT WE PRODUCE?" HOW DO WE MOVE FROM DISCUSSION TO MEASURABLE OUTPUTS?

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HOW DO WE BUILD AN EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM THAT ACTUALLY WORKS?

MAPPING IS ESSENTIAL TO REVEAL:

- CAPACITIES
- GAPS
- LINKAGES
- MISSING ACTORS
- POINTS OF WEAK COORDINATION

THREE BOLD IDEAS

- AI–POWERED KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION PLATFORM
- EVIDENCE, LAW AND ETHICS AS NON–NEGOTIABLE
- AN INCLUSIVE AFRICAN EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM

GROUNDED IN HEALTH RESEARCH, PRACTICE, LIVED EXPERIENCE, AND AFRICAN VOICES

THE FUTURE OF EVIDENCE FUNDING MUST MOVE FROM COMPETITION TO CO-CREATION

A ROADMAP NEEDS PEOPLE, STRUCTURE, RESOURCES, AND FOLLOW THROUGH

WHAT CAN WE BUILD TOGETHER?

WHO SHAPES THE AGENDA? WHO USES IT?
AND HOW DO WE MAKE SURE IT LEADS TO CHANGE?

- AI EVIDENCE ARCHITECTURE
- LEGAL AND POLICY THRESHOLDS FOR EVIDENCE
- A BROADER EVIDENCE SYSTEM CONCEPT
- AN OPEN AFRICAN EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM
- A KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION PLATFORM FOR EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

PARTNERSHIP, FUNDING & CO-CREATION

FUNDING MODELS CAN EITHER STRENGTHEN OR FRAGMENT THE EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM. DONOR CYCLES, PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS, AND INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS CAN MAKE COLLABORATION DIFFICULT.

EVIDENCE VALUE CHAINS

STRONG EVIDENCE DOES NOT ALWAYS LEAD TO STRONG DECISIONS.
EVIDENCE HAS A JOURNEY AND EVERY LINK IN THE CHAIN MATTERS, FROM FUNDING TO COMMUNITY IMPACT

FUNDING → PRODUCTION → SYNTHESIS → TRANSLATION → POLICY → PRACTICE → IMPACT

NOT ANOTHER PROJECT
A STRUCTURE FOR COLLABORATION

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS

CAPACITY IS NOT JUST TRAINING PEOPLE
IT IS BUILDING INSTITUTIONS, SYSTEMS, AND PATHWAYS THAT KEEP EVIDENCE MOVING

Umbrella Platform/Network

A place to connect researchers, funders, policymakers communities, implementors, and knowledge brokers

AFRICAN EVIDENCE PRIORITIES NEED AFRICAN LEADERSHIP, COORDINATION, AND OWNERSHIP

TECHNOLOGY IS USEFUL ONLY WHEN IT SERVES CONTEXT, EQUITY, AND DECISION MAKING

A STRUCTURE THAT CAN HELP THE ECOSYSTEM SEE ITSELF

- WHO IS DOING WHAT?
- WHO IS MISSING?
- WHERE ARE THE OVERLAPS?
- WHERE ARE THE GAPS?
- WHERE CAN COLLABORATION BEGIN?

EVIDENCE MAY BE PRODUCED, BUT DOES IT REACH THE RIGHT PEOPLE? IS IT TRANSLATED INTO THE RIGHT FORMAT? DOES IT ARRIVE AT THE RIGHT TIME? DOES IT INFLUENCE BUDGETS, POLICY, PRACTICE, OR COMMUNITY OUTCOMES?

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WHO FUNDS THE QUESTION OFTEN SHAPES THE ANSWER

AI CAN SPEED UP SYNTHESIS AND TRANSLATION
TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP TAG, MAP, AND ORGANIZE EVIDENCE
DIGITAL TOOLS CAN SUPPORT EARLY WARNING AND DECISION MAKING
BUT AI MUST BE GOVERNED ETHICALLY
AFRICA NEEDS A VOICE IN SHAPING AI SYSTEMS

TECHNOLOGY MUST SERVE LOCAL PRIORITIES AND LIVED REALITIES

CO–DESIGN FROM THE BEGINNING
BRING FUNDERS, GOVERNMENTS, COMMUNITIES, AND RESEARCHERS INTO THE SAME PROCESS
MOVE FROM CONSULTATION TO SHARED OWNERSHIP
REVERSE RFPS CAN HELP LOCAL ACTORS SET THE AGENDA
CONSORTIUMS CAN COMBINE TECHNICAL, POLICY, AND COMMUNITY STRENGTHS
COLLABORATION MUST BE PLANNED, FUNDED, AND PROTECTED

SHARED OWNERSHIP CREATES EVIDENCE THAT IS MORE LIKELY TO BE USED

REGIONAL ACTION PLANNING

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS:

- MAPPING ACTORS
- IDENTIFYING MISSING VOICES
- CREATING TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS
- BUILDING COORDINATION STRUCTURES
- DEVELOPING SHARED COMMITMENTS

A ROADMAP IS NOT JUST A DOCUMENT
IT IS A SHARED PATH FOR MOVING TOGETHER

A POEM PAUSED THE ROOM
THE CHANT CARRIED THE COMMITMENT:
BUILDING AN EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM TOGETHER

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EASR AFRICA IS ALREADY PRODUCING EVIDENCE– THE TASK NOW IS TO CONNECT IT INTO A TRUSTED, INCLUSIVE ECOSYSTEM THAT TURNS EVIDENCE INTO ACTIONS

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