



MEDIA RELEASE

International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED) Awarded Upto \$6 Million Grant to Strengthen Development Research in Africa

On May 12, 2020 at the University of California (UC) Davis, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Markets, Risk and Resilience (MRR Innovation Lab) announced the award of a five year research grant to the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED). ICED will lead the implementation of MRR Innovation Lab's Advancing Local Leadership, Innovation and Networks (ALL IN) in Africa. ALL IN is a new research program which aims to advance host country leadership in defining and implementing research projects and to deepen host country connections. Research will develop and test financial and market innovations that take the most promising agricultural tools for families in developing economies from the lab to the field.

ALL IN is designed to address capacity gaps among many research institutions in managing large and complex awards (particularly the unique complexities of managing the United States Agency for International Development awards). The program builds on the successes and draws on the strength of US-African research collaborations, but inverts the traditional model. ALL IN will call for researchers at African institutions to take the lead in defining priorities and will work with US university research partners to supplement their own skills, talents and ideas.

"With the growing capacity in African universities and other institutions it's time for more of our local partners to take the lead," said Michael Carter, director of the MRR Innovation Lab. "We anticipate that doing so will enhance the relevance and long-term impacts of the research."

Over the years, Feed the Future Innovation Labs have been built on partnerships between researchers at U.S. universities and researchers at host-country universities and institutions. Historically, these partnerships have been led, in both program administration and the ideas that drive the research, from the U.S. ALL IN will seek to shift this leadership role to researchers in Africa.

ICED President and CEO, Dr. David Sarfo Ameyaw remarked: "The partnership will place ICED in the position to promote an indigenous, culturally sensitive research program. Our projects will be led by researchers who understand the context and culture on this continent and who are closely related to policy makers and understand the intricacies of policy." Under ALL IN, nearly \$6 million will be made available for African-led research activities in the focus areas of research.

Ameyaw added: "Where the whole world's attention is on Africa, there is no opportunity for Africa to fail on development policies. The whole world's attention is drawn to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Africa Agenda 2063, there is a need to anchor Africa development policy on sound evidence."

As an African-based and African-led research institution, ICED is a natural choice to lead ALL IN based on its experience in nurturing leadership and innovation in impact evaluation for development and its ability to mobilize the emergent capacity of African universities and research institutions.

ICED currently has Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with research institutions in Africa such as the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research in University of Ghana; the School of Graduate

Studies, Research & Extension of the United States International University (USIU-Africa) in Nairobi, Kenya; The University of Nairobi Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation, Kenya, Nairobi; The School of Agricultural Economics and Business Studies, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania; The Africa Centre for Systematic Reviews & Knowledge Translation, College of Health Sciences (CHS), Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda; The Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and The Campbell Collaboration. ICED has plans to widen the network to most of the research institutions in Africa.

ICED also has MoUs with selected African countries' government ministries to promote research and evaluation for policy making and action. ICED currently has MOU with the Ghana Government Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation, The Commission of M&E-Office of the Prime Minister-Uganda, The State Ministry of National Treasury and Planning-Department of M&E-Kenya, The Planning Commission-Malawi, and The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation-Puntland-State of Somalia.

ICED has been championing the evidence to action movement in Africa through its annual Evidence to Action conference (E2A) which has created an excellent platform for researchers, academics, private sector practitioners, development agencies, civil society and policy makers to learn, share information, build networks and partnerships with the overall objective of identifying effective strategies and interventions for ensuring data generated from research and evaluation projects is well utilized

We hope that this research initiative and the innovations and interventions that emerge, will in turn boost the capacity of various African governments to design sound evidence-based policies that will cause positive development outcomes in the continent.

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