

From Evidence to Action and from Action to Evidence : Best Practices and lessons from African Network for Evidence - to - Action in Disability (AfrINEAD)

THE SAFOD REGIONAL DISABILITY ROUNDTABLE FORUM




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Format of the presentation

- Introduction
 - Evolution of the AfriNEAD program
 - Aim and objectives of the program
 - The cycle of developing best practice
 - 2007 – 2009: Creating the network
 - 2009 – 2011: Moving from storming phase to implementation phase
 - 2011 – 2014: Consolidation phase
 - 2014 - Challenges facing AfriNEAD
 - Future plans
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Introduction

- Strong link between disability and poverty
 - 80% of disabled people reside in low and middle income countries
 - Disability is still addressed within welfare / medical model system.
 - Disabled people sees disability as a social construct.
 - Birth of social model of disability
 - Birth of emancipatory research paradigm
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Evolution of AfrINEAD

- Limited research evidence on disability
 - Available evidence questionable on impact on the lives of disabled people.
 - Questions have been raised regarding type and strength of research methods.
 - Challenge of translating research evidence from policy to practice.
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Evolution of afriNEAD cont.

Voices from both researchers and disabled people's organizations.

“ there is a danger that the research community – ejected with international ‘ Aid cash’ – may simply accumulate evidence without developing practicable solutions to address the ways in which society can become more responsive, and inclusive of persons with disabilities.”

“There is a need for a platform that is uniquely African that can translate new and existing disability research evidence into relevant and meaningful policy practice, advocacy and products. This platform must engage with all stakeholders.”

Hence the birth of the African Network on Evidence - to - Action on disability (AfriNEAD).

Aim and Objectives of AfriNEAD

Aim: To be a significant contributor and facilitator around disability research evidence in Africa by:

Objectives:

- Facilitating knowledge translation
- Drawing a broad presentation of stakeholders
- Developing AfriNEAD research products
- Facilitate and coordinate research dialogue
- Share best evidence – to – action practice guidelines
- Read for Africa
- Bi-annual Regional Symposium
- Disability – academic, Business, Government and Civil Society formation consortium (DABGC Consortium)

2007 – 2009: Creating the Network

The uneasy journey of becoming an African disability Research network:

- Consultation with management of the faculty of Health Sciences.
- Consultation with key stakeholder within the disability movement
- Linking with the Office on the Status of Disabled People (OSDP), the Disability Ministry and the Premier of the Western Cape.
- Enter the storming phase: 2007 -1st Afrinead conference
- Need to create a relevant disability research network: **the contribution of the UNCRPD**
- Consolidation of relationships between AfriNEAD and some key DPOs
- Start of development of clusters of researchers and linking with DPOs for guidance.
- Regional and International partners

2009 – 2011: Consolidation Phase

Moving from storming phase to implementation phase:

- Start of the outcome of research outcomes from SAFOD research program.
- Development of the 8 CRPD based research commissions
- The development and inauguration of the African Journal of Disability
- The implementation of the disability and rehabilitation Studies program in Nkwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana (KNUST)
- The completion of the APPOD project
- The Tabling of the 3rd AfriNead Conference in Ghana
- The bidding by Namibia, Ghana and Malawi to host the 4th AfriNEAD conference.

2011 – 2014: Consolidation Phase

From storming Phase to consolidation phase:

- The hosting by Theology Faculty, AfriNEAD and Psychology Department a conference on theology, disability and Human dignity.
- The bidding and selection of Malawi to host the 4th AfriNEAD conference.
- The tabling of the 1st special issue by the AJOD journal
- The unanimous selection of Ghana to host the 5th AfriNEAD conference.
- Inclusion of AfriNEAD in the UNPRPD talks of inclusion of disability issues on the Post Millenium Development Goals.
- At local level the working together of AfriNEAD with Deafnet, Deafsa, Cape Town Network for PWDs and National Institute for the Deaf.
- Using AfriNEAD as a theme for celebrating Africa day.
- The introduction of the GATE project to AfriNEAD.

How will afriNEAD measure success

Depends on AfriNEAD responsiveness to:

- Legitimization of the past and planning for the future
- Acknowledgement of “expert objectivity” or subject participation.
- Completeness of what is known or processing what is unknown and uncertain
- The uncertain space inbetween rich with possibilities for the future.

AFriNEAD achievements

- 4 symposia were tabled in: 2007, 2009, 2011 & 2014 (2x in Cape Town and other 2 in Zimbabwe and Malawi).
- More than 400 people are affiliated with the network
- A consortium of researchers has tabled approximately 5 major projects that each covered not less than 4 African countries.
- AfriNEAD has AJOD that was initiated by the AfriNEAD, Centre for Rehabilitation Studies of Stellenbosch University and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana

Challenges facing AfriNEAD

- Moving from storming phase to performing phase
- Keeping to the philosophies of the Network but open to new ideas
- Keeping membership glued within AfriNEAD
- Allowing the AfriNEAD secretariat to move to other regions and developing AfriNEAD concept in other regions
- Funding

Challenges facing Afrinead cont.

- Some question arise whether AfriNEAD is about researcher or advocacy
- Slow turn of events
- Size of the hosting mother body
- Being understood and adopted internally
- Nature of AfriNEAD just being a Network.
- Funding



Where to from here AfriNEAD

Exploring and navigating new frontiers:

- Prepare for the next conference in Ghana in 2017
 - Introduce the WHO global GATE project to AfriNEAD country working groups
 - Strengthen affiliations with regional and international disability networks as well as global organs such as WHO, UNESCO and UN
 - Market AfriNEAD widely at grass root level
 - Generate funding to sustain the network
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THE AFRICAN NETWORK FOR EVIDENCE TO ACTION IN DISABILITY

