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Lessons Learned in Transforming Evidence to Action: Capacity building for females in STEM at KNUST-LISA, Ghana

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Abstract:

The paucity of female representation in the middle to top decision making positions in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related careers is a global phenomenon but more pervasive in Africa. There are also observed deficiencies in puting available data to good use in government institutions and an information needs assessment report of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, researchers, especially women frequently pointed to weak statistical and computing knowledge as one of the major constraints to effective dissemination of research results. This has hindered the proper use of data for policy development and planning constituting a major constraint hindering the transformation of research results into data-driven policy interventions, and consequently undermining the benefits that could accrue to national development. It was therefore pertinent to provide training that will equip some promising women (working in key areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - STEM) with the requisite skills and competencies required for proper data acquisition, analyses, dissemination and policy development to ameliorate individual and institutional capacities to make adequate use of data for decision making and planning.

With the support of LISA 2020, KNUST-LISA in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and innovation (MESTI) and the School of Public Health, KNUST, conducted a two-part residential workshop from (2019 to 2021) to train a cohort of 26 early to middle career women drawn from government establishments, in statistical data analysis for decision making and strategic planning. The overall objective of the programme is to; build data analysis and interpretation capacity for policy decision making and strategic planning, develop leadership capabilities and provide a mentoring platform for women.

The lessons learned are shared in order to exchange learned experiences and to learn from the experience of member LISA labs.

Keywords:
capacity; transformation; STEM;