



9th Africa Nutrition Conference 2024

Pre-Conference on School Health and Nutrition

Date: 5th - 6th October, 2024

Venue: University of Cape Coast, Ghana

SPONSORS:



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



PARTNERS



Welcome Message



Distinguished Guests, Colleagues, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

With immense pleasure and a profound sense of pride, I welcome you to the Pre-Conference for School Health and Nutrition, of the 9th Africa Nutrition Conference (ANEC 9) in 2024. As we gather here today, we are presented with an exciting opportunity to exchange knowledge, explore innovative approaches, and build sustainable strategies for promoting health and nutrition in African schools.

Our workshop focuses on the critical intersection of health, education, and nutrition. These are key pillars in shaping the future of our continent, especially for our children, who deserve the best start in life. As we know, the health and nutrition status of school-aged children directly impacts their learning outcomes, cognitive development, and overall well-being, making this discussion both timely and essential.

As a continent, we face unique challenges - ranging from poverty and food insecurity to the rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Yet, we also have incredible opportunities to address these issues through comprehensive school health and nutrition programs. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the future generations of Africa grow up healthy, educated, and empowered individuals to lead. In this gathering, we will review progress at local, national, and international levels and plan for the next phase of coordinated actions on school health and nutrition across Africa.

I trust that this workshop will not only deepen your understanding of these vital topics but will also foster new partnerships, inspire collaborations, and drive forward the agenda for improved health and nutrition in schools across Africa. Together, we can make a lasting impact, creating healthier environments where our children can thrive.

Thank you for your commitment to this cause, and I wish you all a productive and inspiring session.

Warm regards,

Professor Francis Bruno Zotor

Co-Convenor of the Workshop

Trustee - ANS, FANUS

Vice President, IUNS.

Professor of Public Health Nutrition,

Fred N. Binka School of Public Health,

University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana.



About School Health and Nutrition in Africa

Since 2018, the Africa Nutrition Society (ANS) has been at the forefront of efforts to enhance the School Health and Nutrition Agenda across Africa. In collaboration with the International Union of Nutrition Sciences (IUNS) and its task forces, including the International Malnutrition Task Force (IMTF) and the International Collaboration on Nutrition in Relation to Cancer (ICONIC), ANS has spearheaded initiatives aimed at improving school nutrition.

Integrated school nutrition programs are vital for improving school retention, health education, water-sanitation-hygiene (WASH) practices, and overall nutrition outcomes. These programs not only provide daily meals using fortified food but also support menstrual hygiene, reduce drop-out rates, and strengthen local agricultural capacities, particularly for women in rural communities.

GOALS AND KEY DELIVERABLES

Goals:

This consultation will focus on reviewing progress at local, national, and international levels and plan for the next phase of coordinated actions on school health and nutrition across Africa specifically on:

- Evaluating the current status of school nutrition programs in Africa, highlighting positive experiences and identifying challenges faced in different regions
- Exploring the role of nutritionist in resolving challenges related to school health and nutrition programs and developing strategies to enhance their engagement

Planning and implementing measures to strengthen school nutrition initiatives in countries where establishing secure nationally supported activities has been difficult, towith the aim of improving overall effectiveness.

KEY DELIVERABLES

- Informed policy recommendations to improve school health and nutrition programs across Africa.
- Aligned technical approaches for effective partner strategies for school health and nutrition program implementation.
- Enhanced collaboration among national nutrition professionals, international institutions and fostering networking among experts for knowledge exchange and collaboration.
- Publication of key findings through a comprehensive report which will highlight key recommendations and next steps for scaling up impactful and sustainable school health and nutrition in Africa.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Representatives from NGOs and international organizations.
- Government officials and policymakers in the education and health sectors.
- Nutritionists, dietitians, and public health professionals.
- Academics and researchers.
- Corporate partners interested in corporate social responsibility and sustainable development.



Pre-Conference on School Health and Nutrition

Programme for 5th – 6th October 2024

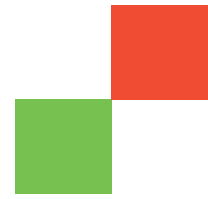
Day One	Moderators: Bibi Giyose (FAO), Mawuli Sablah (CRS) and Francis Zotor (ANS)		
Welcome and Introduction	08.00 – 09.00	Welcome Purpose Process	Chair: Francis Zotor (ANS & UHAS) Greetings: Martins Ekor, Provost UCC Process: Alan Jackson (ICONIC & IMTF)
Session 1			
Session 1a	09.00 – 13.00	National experiences: positive, lessons learned and challenges	Chairs: Jennifer Overton – (CRS Leadership) & Victor Owino (IAEA)
	09.00 – 10.30	CRS Championship: Showcasing Consolidated CRS Experience on School Nutrition in Africa – Overview & Panel of 5 Chief of Parties (1.5 hours)	Panel-CRS CoPs/Countries
BREAK	10.30 – 11.00	COFFEE BREAK	
Session 1b	11.00 – 12.30	National experiences: Presentations/Panel of 7 countries (1.5 hours) Countries	Panel-Partners/Countries
	12.20 – 13.00	Q&A and Conclusion of Chair	
BREAK	13.00 – 14.00	LUNCH BREAK	
Session 2			
Session 2a	14.00 – 16.00	Nutrition in context	Chairs: Mawuli Sablah (CRS); Amos Laar (ANS & UG)
	14.00 – 14.45	Adolescence: experiences, engagement, evidence for policy	Deda Ogum (ARISE Network & UG)
	14.45-15.05	Benefits of Fortified Whole Grain Foods in School Feeding Programs	Johanes Davids (Fortified Whole Grain Alliance)
	15.05-15.25	Social considerations: poverty, gender.	Rosemary Anderson Akolaa (UESD)
	15.25-15.45	Food and agriculture: seasonality and climate: commercial sustainability.	Patience Asiedu (WFP)

	15.45-16.00	Discussion: Q & A	
BREAK	16.00-16.30	TEA BREAK	
Session 2b	16.30-18.00	Importance of nutrition for school-age children and adolescents	Chair: Barbara Bray (NutSoc)
	16.30-16:50	Why invest in nutrition for school-age children and adolescents? Global Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition.	Donald Bundy (LSHTM & GRCSHN)
	16.50-17.05	The role of the Global Research Consortium communities of practice, and the School Health and Nutrition Special interest group.	Robert Akparibo (UShef), GRCSHN, SHN-SIG, School Meal Coalition)
	17.05-17.20	The contribution of non-governmental organizations: experiences and lessons learned (I): Swiss Health Foundation	Elizabeth Imbo (Swiss Foundation), Beatrice Nakholi (CGBK/Swiss Foundation)
	17.20-17.30	The contribution of non-governmental organizations: experience and lessons learned (II): Bayer Foundation.	Assoc. Professor Juan Andrade, University of Florida
	17.30- 18.00	Panel discussion: Q&A	
Day Two	Moderators: Mawuli Sablah (CRS) and Francis Zotor (ANS)		
SESSION 3			
Session 3a	08.30 – 13.00	International agencies: experience, support, data-informed policy	Chairs: Julia Tagwireyi (ANS & AfriCAN) & Alan Jackson (ICONIC & IMTF)
	08.30 – 08.50	Summary of experiences from School Health Initiatives to date; data support, informed policies and challenges	Florence Turyashemererwa (WHO)
	08.50 – 09.10	Summary of experiences from School Health Initiatives to date; data support, informed policies and challenges	Mphumuzi Sukarti (FAO)
	09.10 – 09.30	Summary of experiences from School Nutrition Initiatives in South Africa to date	Rina Swart (University of Western Cape, South Africa)
	09.30 – 09.50	Responsibilities of Education and country nutrition societies for in Nutrition for the next generation	Kingsley Pereko (GAND & UCC)
		Panel discussion: Q&A	
BREAK	09.50 – 10.10	TEA BREAK	
Session 3b	10.10 – 10.30	Summary of experiences from School Health Initiatives to date; data support, informed policies and challenges	Stacy Katua (GAIN)

	10.30 – 10.50	Civil society advocacy in promoting School Health Initiatives; experiences, support, data informed policies and challenges	Judith Kabore (SUN)
	10.50 – 11.10	Summary of experiences from School Health Initiatives to date; data support, informed policies and challenges	Sophia Ndemutila Ashipala (AU/NEPAD)
	11.10 – 11.30	Report from SADC Workshop	Nyanungo Mclvor (SADC)
	11.30 – 11.45	Learning from the past	Habiba Hassan-Wassef (ANS)
	11.45 – 13.00	Panel discussion: Q&A	
BREAK	13.00 – 14.00	LUNCH BREAK	
SESSION 4			
Session 4	14.00 – 15.40	Developing professional nutrition capability and capacity to advance sustainable school health and nutrition	Chairs: Paul Amuna (ANS & UHAS) & Jackie Landman-Bogues (SOTON)
	14.00 -14.20	Information platform for community of practice: WHO KAP, chronic on-communicable diseases – cancer and nutrition in Children, Teenagers and Young Adults as initial example	Stephen Wootton (SOTON)
	14.20 – 14.40	Establishing a quality assurance framework for assessing nutritional related health as integral to service-based activities and M&E.	Reginald Annan (KNUST)
	14.40 – 15.00	Research agenda for population level information of nutritional health. Cancer and Nutrition for Africa.	Keiron Audain (CANA)
	15.00 – 15.20	Developing a curriculum for nutritional professionals to become school-based nutrition extension officers and nutrition education in schools.	Basma Ellahi (U Chester)
	15.20 – 15.40	Panel discussion: Q&A	
BREAK	15.40 – 16.00	TEA BREAK	
SESSION 5			
Session 5	16.00 – 17.00	The future: way forward, preparation of report, planning towards an action plan	Chair: Alan Jackson (ICONIC & IMTF)
		Directed Discussion: Q & A	

Closing	17.00	Closing Remarks	Prof. Kingsley Pereko (Vice Dean- School of Medical Sciences, University of Cape Coast
<p>Africa Nutrition Society (ANS); University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS); International Collaboration on Nutrition in relation to Cancer (ICONIC); International Malnutrition Taskforce (IMTF); University of Ghana (UG); International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); University of Cape Coast (UCC); Community of Practice (CoPs); Cancer and Nutrition in Africa (CANA); Catholic Relief Services (CRS); Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST); London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM); University of Environment and Sustainable Development, (UESD); World Food Programme (WFP); Africa Union- New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU/NEPAD); Scaling-up Nutrition (SUN); Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN); University of Southampton (U. Soton); UN-Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); University of Sheffield (UShef); School Meal Coalition; Africa Research, Implementation Science, and Education (ARISE); University of Chester (U Chester); Southern African Development Community (SADC); Nutrition Society (Nut Soc); The Global Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition (GRCSHN); The School Health and Nutrition Special Interest Group (SHN-SIG); County Government of Busia – Kenya (CGBK); Questions and Answers (Q&A)</p>			

Planning Committee



Prof. Alan Jackson's major interest is the biological and social factors that enable optimal growth and development during childhood. He trained in paediatrics in Cambridge and London. He was Director of the Tropical Metabolism Research Unit, University of the West Indies, Jamaica, developing the evidence base for the WHO guidance on effective treatment of severe malnutrition. He has been a Senior Advisor on nutrition to the UK Government and advisor to the World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the European Union. He was recently Director for Nutrition Research, National Institutes for Health Research, England, Chair of their Cancer and Nutrition infrastructure collaboration and Chaired the Continuous Update Panel on nutrition and cancer for the World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Research.



Prof. Francis Bruno Zotor is a Professor of Public Health Nutrition at the Fred N. Binka School of Public Health, University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana. He is a recognized leader spanning over two and a half decades in nutrition across Africa and has been instrumental in driving and promoting the establishment of a strong nutrition profession on the continent, across the health and education sectors in Africa. Prof Zotor's global context of his work has enabled him to work in both developed and developing societies. He serves on a number of international boards. In Africa, he is Board member and a Director of AfriCAN (<https://african-network.org>), Trustees of both the African Nutrition Society (<https://www.ansnet.org>) and the Federation of African Nutrition Societies (<https://www.fanus.org>). Currently, he serves as Vice President of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS). In Ghana, he serves as Advisor to the Ghana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and also chairs the Food and Drugs Authority Board's Technical Advisory Committee on Nutrition.



Prof. Robert Akparibo is an Associate Professor in Public Health and Nutrition based at the School of Medicine and Population Health, the University of Sheffield, UK. He is also a visiting Professor at the Fred Binka School of Public Health, the University of Allied Health Sciences (Ghana) and the University for Development Studies School of Allied Health. He currently chairs the Nutrition Community of Practice of the Global Research Consortium of School Health and Nutrition and is a member and co-chair of the Global Special Interest Group for School Health and Nutrition. Professor Akparibo has consulted for organisations such as the World Food Programme, the World Health Organisation, Oxfam GB, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, World Vision International, the European Communicable Disease Control, and the UK National Health Service (NHS) including the UK local government councils in the areas of public health and nutrition. He has been playing a lead role in developing and supporting the capacity building of early career researchers in sub-Saharan Africa.

Planning Committee



Dr. Mawuli Sablah is a seasoned expert in health and nutrition, currently serving as the Regional Technical Advisor for Health and Nutrition at Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in West Africa. He has consulted for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and served as a Nutrition Specialist at UNICEF. Mawuli has also worked with FAO, championing nutrition integration into agricultural programs. He holds a Doctorate from the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, focusing on the human right to food and nutrition. His extensive experience spans international development, food systems, and nutrition, impacting under-represented populations globally.



Barbara Bray MBE FIFST is a Registered Nutritionist and food safety consultant. Her work over the last 30 years focussed on delivering food safety in food supply chains and nutrition strategy for businesses, alongside leadership and educational roles in her public engagement activities. Her charity trustee roles include the Farming Community Network, Honorary Officer of International Affairs at the Nutrition Society and Governor at the speaking food and agricultural University Harper Adams in the UK. She is currently researching diets to protect health of older adults at Queen's University Belfast under the BBSRC funded Doctoral Research Programme to train PhD researchers in food systems. In 2017, Barbara was awarded a Nuffield Farming Scholarship to study international food and farming systems.



Dr. Gilbert Miki is a Research Fellow specializing in School Health and Nutrition, focusing on generating robust and actionable evidence in this field. His work intersects Nutrition, Diets, and Food Systems, aiming to enhance policy and practice in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. With over a decade of experience, Dr. Miki has collaborated with various development agencies, including the African Development Bank and USDA-funded programs. At LSHTM, he co-chairs the Nutrition and Diet and Food Systems CoPs and co-leads the Rockefeller Foundation's initiative on planet-friendly school meals. He holds a PhD from the University of Reading and a Master's from the University of Sheffield, funded by Commonwealth and Chevening scholarships.



Dr. Martin N. Mwangi is an award-winning Nutritional Epidemiologist specializing in anaemia, iron deficiency, and infectious diseases, particularly during pregnancy and early childhood. He currently leads the Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies (HMHB) program at the Micronutrient Forum in Washington DC. Previously, he served as a Senior Researcher and Team Leader at the Training and Research Unit of Excellence (TRUE) at the University of Malawi. Dr. Mwangi has also worked as a Research Scientist at Wageningen University in the Netherlands and is a Guest Lecturer at institutions in Amsterdam and Kenya.

Speakers & Facilitators



Mrs. Jennifer Overton is the Regional Director for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in West Africa, overseeing programs in eleven countries and supporting over 1,300 talented staff, and works closely with a regional team of more than 30 dedicated professionals. With over 30 years of experience in the non-profit sector, she has held key positions at CRS, including Deputy Regional Director for Program Quality in East Africa and Director of the Special Grants Support Unit. Overton began her career with Catholic Relief Services in 1993 as an International Development Fellow in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. She is skilled in business development, food security, humanitarian aid, rural development, and technical assistance. She is passionate about fighting micronutrient deficiencies and promoting localization in development aid. Overton was born and raised in Philadelphia, USA. She holds a Master's in Public Administration from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in New York. She currently lives in Baltimore with her husband and has two grown daughters.

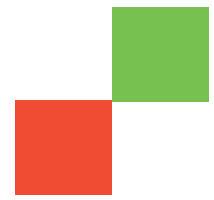


Prof. Basma Ellahi is a Public Health Nutritionist based at the University of Chester, UK. Basma is a fellow of the higher education academy in the UK and a registered nutritionist with the Association for Nutritionists (AfN) in the UK and a member of the Nutrition Society of UK and Ireland as well as both the African and Pakistani Nutrition societies. Basma is section editor for the Journal of Population Health and Nutrition. Basma recognises the importance of good quality education for nutritionists and has been involved in capacity-building workshops on the African and Asian subcontinent. Her current research interests focus on the health and wellbeing of diverse minority communities and in particular south Asians using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. She is co-chair of the Nutrition Society Diet and Health of Ethnic Minorities Special Interest Group and an active member of the Global School Nutrition SIG. Her research interests focus on the health and wellbeing of diverse minority communities and this work has been extended to her involvement in the school feeding projects on the African continent.



Prof. Donald Bundy is Professor of Epidemiology and Development at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. He is Director of the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition and Advisor to the UN World Food Programme, leading a global research effort to provide evidence-based guidance to the 95+ member states of the School Meals Coalition on strengthening national school meals programmes. Previously, Professor Bundy served as Senior Advisor to the Global Health Team of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Lead Education & Health Specialist to the World Bank's Africa Region and Human Development policy unit; and Deputy Director of the Epidemiology Centre, University of Oxford.

Speakers & Facilitators



Mr. Mphumuzi Sukati is a Public Administrator, Economist, Veterinary Doctor and Scientist. He is currently the Senior Nutrition and Food Systems Officer at FAO Regional Office for Africa working in 47 countries, in food security, nutrition and resilience. He is also the Acting FAO Representative in Benin (2019-2022) and Togo. Before joining FAORAF he was the Senior Policy Officer: Economics, Trade and Marketing at the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), based in Nairobi, Kenya. Before joining AU-IBAR he was an Agricultural Economist at the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), based in Zambia, Lusaka. He has worked for many years in senior positions and as a consultant for UN Agencies in Eswatini, his home country.



Prof Rina Swart is a professor in the Department of Dietetics and Nutrition at the University of the Western Cape and also serves as the Nutrition programme leader within the DSI/NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security. She is a registered dietitian / nutritionist with a PhD in Public Health. Her area of specialization is in Public Health Nutrition with a focus on the prevention of all forms of malnutrition through nutrition policies and programmes as well as the evaluation of such policies and programmes.



Dr Deda Ogum is a public health professional with interests in Nutrition and women's health including adolescents. She holds a BSc in Nutrition & Food Science, MPhil Nutrition and PhD Public Health. Her research covers school age and adolescent nutrition, non-communicable diseases, food environments, nutrition education, school-based and adolescent nutrition interventions. She is a member of the ARISE Network and co-leads the "Reducing nutrition-related noncommunicable diseases in adolescence and youth: interventions and policies to boost nutrition fluency and diet quality in Africa (NUTRINT) for Ghana.



Stacy Katua is a dedicated nutrition and public health professional with six years of experience, specializing in Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition, as well as School-Age and Adolescent Nutrition programming. Driven by a passion for innovative and sustainable health and nutrition solutions, she has contributed to the development of contextualized policies and the implementation of programs aimed at strengthening health and food systems to improve nutrition outcomes in Kenya. Stacy is particularly committed to enhancing resilience among vulnerable groups, including children, adolescents, and women. She's currently supporting Children and Young People programming in GAIN focusing on Infant Foods, School foods and nutrition and youth projects. She holds a Masters degree in Global Public Health from Queen Mary University of London and a Bachelor's degree in Foods, Nutrition, and Dietetics from Kenyatta University.

Speakers & Facilitators



Prof Juan E. Andrade Laborde is an associate professor of global food and nutrition at the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville. He holds a B.Sc. in Agricultural Sciences from Zamorano University, Honduras, and a Ph.D. in Human Nutrition from Purdue University. Dr. Andrade's long-term goal is to develop sustainable strategies that can be used to deliver adequate nutrition, especially micronutrients, to residents of low-resource countries and thereby help to promote human health and economic development. His research interests are focused on innovative concepts for food fortification, point-of-use sensing technologies for micronutrients in fortified foods, reformulation of relief food products, and service, experiential learning education programs. Dr. Andrade is an affiliated faculty in the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department, the Food Systems Institute, the Center for Latin American Studies and the Center for African Studies at UF. He is also a research affiliate at the USAID's Livestock Innovation Lab (LSIL – housed at UF) and the PI of the Human Nutrition Team at the USAID's Soybean Innovation Lab (SIL – housed at Illinois). Dr. Andrade is a member of the Institute of Food Technologists, the American Oil Chemists' Society, and the American Society for Nutrition.



Dr. Habiba Hassan-Wassef: An initial career in nutrition research took Dr. Hassan-Wassef to Paris University, then Columbia University where she was a Whitehall Research Fellow. Lifelong service with the World Health Organization ended with high level strategy and policy responsibilities in Geneva. Dr. Hassan-Wassef's knowledge and expertise in nutrition, food and health was further enriched through continued national and regional research projects and expert services to multilateral, bilateral, and regional organizations in the Middle-East, Africa and Europe. A Trustee of the African Nutrition Society, she is also Vice-President of the African Society of Mycotoxicology. She is author of several scientific publications and laureate of regional and international awards and prizes, the last one being the IUNS award of the title "Living Legend" received at the Tokyo ICN in 2022.



Dr. Stephen Wootton is an Associate Professor in Human Nutrition at the University of Southampton. He has been instrumental in national educational initiatives to enhance doctors' nutritional care delivery. A prominent nutrition educator in the UK, Dr. Wootton has contributed to the International Malnutrition Task Force and spoken at global nutrition conferences. He played a key role in developing the undergraduate nutrition curriculum at Southampton and the national curriculum for medical schools. Awarded an OBE in 2018 for his services to nutrition, his research bridges basic nutrition science and clinical care. His work examines how diet, lifestyle, and disease affect nutritional needs and body composition, focusing on conditions like cancer, inflammatory diseases, and severe malnutrition. Dr. Wootton leads major national research initiatives in cancer prehabilitation, improving remission quality in inflammatory bowel disease, and reducing chemotoxicity in breast cancer. His research employs stable isotope methodologies to study lipid handling in various health conditions.

Speakers & Facilitators



Professor Paul Amuna is a physician scientist, academic, researcher and pedagogist. He holds Fellowships of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences and the Royal Society of Medicine. He has held various academic and research positions in three UK Universities, Europe, the Arab Gulf and as Dean, Fred N. Binka School of Public Health, University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana. He has served in the Nutrition Society (UK & Ireland), Association for Nutrition, and African Nutrition Society. His interests include health workforce capacity building and academic mentoring. He is a member of the CAPSTONE Project consortium, an EU Erasmus+ project on Capacity Development for Transdisciplinary Training in Non-communicable Diseases Prevention and Management in West Africa. His research focuses on maternal nutrition, birth outcomes and non-communicable diseases.



Dr. Kingsley Kwadwo Asare Pereko is an Associate Professor of Public Health Nutrition and a Registered Nutritionist, at the Department of Community Medicine, School of Medical Sciences, College of Health and Allied Sciences, University of Cape Coast. Kingsley for the past 5 years have served as the founding President of the Ghana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. He also coordinates the Peoples Health Movement Ghana as the country coordinator and currently serves as the Vice-Dean of the School of Medical Sciences, University of Cape Coast. Since 2008, Kingsley has serves as an academic and a researcher. His areas of interest include nutrition and food security, nutrition programming and food environment. He is a mentor, advocate, a husband of one and a father.



Dr Victor Owino is a Nutrition Specialist at the IAEA where he has served for the past 9 years, supporting Member States to use stable isotopes and related nuclear techniques in generating information needed to tackle malnutrition in all its forms. Mr Owino has over 20 years' experience in food and nutrition and has worked in industry, non-governmental organizations and as a professor and researcher at universities in Kenya. A fellow of the International Nutrition Foundation, Mr Owino holds BSc Food Science and Technology from University of Nairobi, MSc Food Science and Technology from University of Ghent, MBA Leadership and Management from York St John's University and a PhD in Nutrition from the University of London. He has over 50 publications in high impact journals.



Patience Abrafi Asiedu is the Head of Nutrition at World Food Programme's Ghana Country Office and has been working in the Public Health, Nutrition and Food Science space for over twelve years. Results-oriented and with an eye on integrity no matter the circumstance, she values working for the public good. Patience has worked with teams within WFP, across the UN, government, academia and private sector to address nutrition, health and social needs of the most vulnerable.

She holds a degree in Nutrition and Food Science from the University of Ghana and a master's degree in Public Health from the London Metropolitan University.

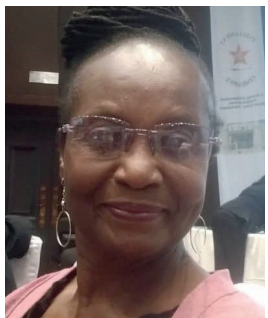
Speakers & Facilitators



Dr. Jacqueline Landman, born in South Africa, finished her education in the UK and at the University of the West Indies Mona. She has a longstanding interest in professional education and regulation, the subject of a PhD she co-supervises. She has been a member of an ad hoc group working on school nutrition in Africa since 2017 and a longstanding member of ANS & NS (GB).



Elizabeth Imbo is currently the Country project manager- Nutrition In City Ecosystems (NICE) in Kenya, working with Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (SAF-A) She has a background in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics, has over 13 years' experience in implementing Food security, nutrition, and livelihoods and food systems projects across Kenya, leading in the inclusion of women, youth and social transformation agenda. She is leading implementation of the NICE project interventions which include leading the food systems transformation in the secondary cities of Busia and Bungoma located western Kenya, Incentivising sustainable production of nutrition sensitive value chains(NSVC) and stimulating demand and uptake of nutritious foods through social behaviour change and communication (SBCC) campaigns, working with schools and health facilities to offtake for locally produced nutritious foods through integrated public procurement approaches.



Ms. Kwadzanai R.L. Nyanungo served as the pioneer Chair of the National School Feeding Taskforce from 2016 to 2024 and was the National SFP Focal Point. She is also a member of the AU Expert Practitioners Technical Working Group. A retired government official, Ms. Nyanungo has attended numerous home-grown SFP continental and regional events. She has visited various African countries to learn from their SFP implementations.



Prof. Amos Laar is a professor of Public Health Nutrition, who has received academic training in Nutrition, Public Health, and Bioethics. In his independent scholarship, he draws on theoretical, conceptual, and methodological perspectives from the social sciences, bioethics, and public health to understand how physical environment, social environment, as well as structural forces affect health. Currently, his research focuses on two distinct, yet related areas of public health – bioethics (ethics & public health; food ethics, & nutrition rights); public health nutrition (food systems, food environments, and their nexus with nutrition-related non-communicable diseases).

OPERATIONS TEAM



Dr. Rosemary Anderson

University of Environment and Sustainable Development, Somanya



Dr. Phyllis Addo

FNBSPH, University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho



Afua Tetteh

School of Public Health, University of Ghana, Legon



Helena Nti

UG, UCD IGN, UHAS



Roseline Delali Ashigbui

University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho



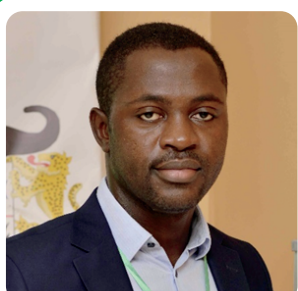
Rachel Marklew (RNutr)

International Collaboration on Nutrition in relation to Cancer (ICONIC)



Marian Appiah

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
Senior Project Officer
LSFF in West Africa



Vitalis Chofor

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
Technical Advisor - LSFF in West Africa



Dr Frank Ekow Atta Hayford

University of Ghana

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Abstracts



STACY KATUA

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

A Transformative Approach to School Food and Nutrition Through Food Systems

The presentation focuses on a transformative approach to school meals that leverages the power of integrated food systems. School meals are more than a service that provides nutrition; they represent a vital opportunity to enhance children health, support local economies, promote sustainability, and advance educational goals. This approach reframes school food and nutrition programs as central components of a sustainable and equitable food system.

The presentation outlines GAIN's approach to food systems through different programmes which also serve as entry points for school food and nutrition programming. The presentation also highlights key challenges facing traditional school meal programs, including issues of accessibility, nutritional quality, and environmental impact. We will then introduce the concept of integrating school meals into local food systems, which emphasizes local sourcing, sustainability, and collaboration with small-scale farmers and food producers.

Key components of this transformative approach include prioritizing children's health through diverse and nutrient-rich meals, reducing the environmental footprint by focusing on locally sourced foods, and addressing food equity to ensure all children, regardless of background, have access to quality meals. By integrating educational opportunities into the school meal program, we also create a platform to teach children about nutrition, food systems, and environmental responsibility.

Through defined case studies, the presentation demonstrates how this model can be implemented and scaled, with insights on how to foster community engagement, government support, and cross-sector collaboration.

The presentation comprehensive understanding of how school meals, when embedded in a broader food system, can contribute to healthier children's, more resilient communities, and a more sustainable future for all.

This presentation explores a transformative approach to school meals that harnesses the power of integrated food systems. School meals are more than a source of nutrition; they present a critical opportunity to improve children health, strengthen local economies, promote sustainability, and advance educational outcomes.

Key words: Food systems, Transformative, Sustainability, Local economies, Quality

Contact email: skatua@gainhealth.org

DEDA OGUM

Africa Research, Implementation Science, and Education Network (ARISE)

Improving Adolescent Nutrition and Wellbeing through Implementation Science

The ARISE Network was established in 2014, as a dynamic platform for groundbreaking research, transformative education, and sustainable partnerships across the region. It was initiated and supported by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and co-convened by the Africa Academy for Public Health (AAPH). The network has thrived in advancing implementation science in the following priority research areas: Nutrition & Physical Activity, Mental Health, Sexual and Reproductive Health, food systems, and climate change. The network currently consists of 10 sub-Saharan African countries and 22 institutions: Burkina Faso; Ghana; Nigeria; South Africa (3 Institutions); Tanzania (5 institutions); Uganda (2 Institutions); Botswana; Rwanda (2 institutions); Senegal; and Ethiopia (2 institutions); and Heidelberg Institute of Global Health, Germany.

The Network's first study was an exploratory community-based nutrition survey of 8,075 adolescents aged 10-19. Subsequent studies were conducted in different member countries in priority research areas, one of which sought to harness longitudinal data and digital technologies to improve adolescent health in 8 African and 2 Asian countries. The current phase of the Network's activities involves two related studies and a public health capacity development component: Reducing nutrition-related noncommunicable diseases in adolescence and youth: interventions and policies to boost nutrition fluency and diet quality in Africa (NUTRINT); Research Network for Design and Evaluation of Adolescent Health Interventions and Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa (DASH); and Initiative on The Future of Health and Economic Resiliency in Africa (FHRA).

Some quantitative evidence from earlier selected studies shows the following: There are gender differences in nutritional status, physical activity and hygiene behaviours among adolescents in SSA. Pooled prevalence of anaemia recorded was 41.8%

(95% CI: 40.8 – 42.8) with 3.7% having severe anaemia. At the country level, Ethiopia recorded the least (4.9%) while Ghana recorded the highest (73.6%). The prevalence of underweight, overweight and stunting pooled across sites was 14.3%, 6.8% and 18.1%, respectively.

Participating countries have completed wave 1 survey for the NUTRINT longitudinal study and are at different stages of conducting wave 1 of the DASH study. The FHERA meetings have been conducted and discussions are far advanced in relation to graduate public health training in Africa. The ARISE network places a high priority on capacity development and is made up of a multi-disciplinary team of researchers, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students and interns.

Key words: Adolescents, Young people, Implementation Science, Nutrition, Wellbeing

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ELIZABETH IMBO

The Nutrition in City Ecosystems
(NICE) Project

Sustainable and Local Nutritious School Meals Programs

Providing nutritious school meals in the secondary cities of Busia and Bungoma presents a significant challenge for local governments. Through the devolved government system, the state department of early learning and basic education has supported the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) to provide school meals. These meals, which comprise rice and beans, are procured through an integrated mechanism that acknowledges public procurement and home-grown school meals programs (HGSM). The NICE project has mapped four schools for a pilot program aimed at integrating Nutrition-Sensitive Value Chains (NSVC) that it promotes into school menu designs for a nutritious and diversified meal. These value chains include African leafy vegetables (ALVs) and eggs. The primary objective of this pilot is to generate insights on effective pathways for incorporating nutrition into school meal programs. Specifically, the pilot intends to :

1. Develop pathways for involving local farmers in public procurement systems for school meals.
2. Enhance school health and nutrition by incorporating fresh, locally sourced vegetables.
3. Ensure access to safe, nutritious meals for school children.

Methodology:

The NICE project has engaged local farmers organized into farmer hubs. These hubs are responsible for producing the NSVC, providing agricultural advisory services, aggregating produce and adding value to agricultural products.

By supporting schools in establishing kitchen gardens, the project aims to enable sustainable production of fresh vegetables for school kitchens. Through established Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) and collaboration with local school procurement teams, the pilot will ensure supporting interventions including strengthening the capacity on the importance of nutrition and local sourcing, enabling local farmers to benefit from procurement opportunities in government and supporting sustainable and local production and access to food by most vulnerable from the urban and peri urban school. Through this pilot, the nutritionists at the county will be supporting the schools on menu design, focusing on affordable and nutritious options and capacity building for the teachers and support staff on healthy and diverse diets. The other approach will be to support farmer hubs on business development, fiscal capacity, public procurement processes, and food quality standards for school delivery.

Expected Outcomes:

The anticipated outcome is the development of an inclusive procurement system that facilitates participation of smaller farmer groups and farmer hubs, providing them with opportunities to engage in local procurement initiatives.

Key words: School meals, Nutrition, ECDE, Healthy diets, African leafy vegetables

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KEIRON AUDAIN

Cancer and Nutrition for Africa
(CANA)

Research Agenda for Population Level Information of Nutritional Health

This presentation focuses on the critical work of the Cancer and Nutrition for Africa (CANA) initiative. CANA is a collaborative effort between the International Collaboration on Nutrition in relation to Cancer (ICONIC) and the African Nutrition Society (ANS) aimed at addressing the lack of capacity for cancer and nutrition research in Africa, particularly in the field of epidemiology. The presentation explores CANA's origin, objectives, ongoing initiatives, and long-term goals in the context of the rising cancer burden across the continent.

The presentation begins by providing a background on CANA's mission, which is to build research capacity for African scientists and foster collaboration in cancer and nutrition research. This includes training researchers in grant writing, observational epidemiology, and practical skills needed to secure research funding. With cancer incidence projected to rise significantly in Africa, CANA aims to explore the role of diet, nutrition, and lifestyle factors in cancer prevention and care. Key areas of focus discussed in the presentation include CANA's efforts to raise awareness of the links between nutrition and cancer, establish cancer registries, and advocate for the integration of nutrition into cancer care across Africa. Through case studies and success stories, such as the Fish and Cancer grant, the presentation highlights how CANA has empowered researchers to develop impactful studies tailored to African contexts. Finally, the presentation emphasizes CANA's long-term goal of conducting large-scale cohort studies, similar to the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC), which will help generate critical data for Africa. The presentation concludes by calling for continued collaboration and support to reduce the cancer burden through better research, funding, and awareness efforts across the continent.

Key words: Cancer prevention, Nutrition, Africa, Epidemiology, Research capacity

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KWADZANAI R. L. NYANUNGO
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A Practitioner's Perspective on Lessons Learnt Through the Implementation of a Multisectoral Home-grown School Feeding Programme in Zimbabwe from 2016 to 2024

Triggered by the African Union decision on the implementation of the home-grown school feeding approach by all its member states, the year 2016 marked a key turning point in the transformation of the education service delivery system of Zimbabwe. The presentation highlights the progress milestones achieved on advocacy, multisectoral linkages, evidence based planning, monitoring and evaluation in the Zimbabwean education sector.

Discussion on the critical role of the health sector on nutrition sensitive programming and complementary school health activities in the roll out of the government-led home-grown school feeding programme.

Examples are shared on experience-based implementation challenges, attempted local innovations, and nutrition indicators of concern.

Key lessons learnt from continental and regional peer exchange platforms, including the shared resource document AUD-ANEPAD Guidelines on home-grown school feeding programme and UNCEF Nutrition Guidelines.

Proposed ideas are shared on an African approach to the investment case for accelerating progress towards Nourishing Minds, Empowering Futures: Building Stronger Communities through School Nutrition.

Key words: Sustainability, Evidence, Curriculum, Investment

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MAWULI SABLAH
JESSIE BENNETT
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Advancing Integrated School Health and Nutrition in Africa – CRS Multi-Stakeholder Approaches and Promising Practices

Childhood malnutrition poses a significant public health challenge across Africa, impacting growth and cognitive development during critical developmental stages. This paper explores the multi-stakeholder approaches and promising practices employed by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in advancing integrated school health and nutrition programs. Highlighting the prevalence of undernutrition, stunting, and micronutrient deficiencies, the paper emphasizes the importance of school-based interventions in addressing these issues. CRS's comprehensive approach includes the provision of nutritious meals, health and nutrition education, community empowerment, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) initiatives.

Learn from CRS's extensive experience in school feeding programs across several African countries, showcasing successful strategies such as local procurement of food, large-scale food fortification, and the establishment of community support structures. By integrating health services, including deworming and micronutrient supplementation, CRS is leading school feeding programs in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and Togo, enhancing the overall health and educational outcomes for school-aged children. The role of community engagement, particularly through Mother Support Groups and school health clubs, is highlighted as essential for fostering sustainable practices and improving nutritional knowledge among families.

Furthermore, the paper discusses the critical need for government ownership and commitment to ensure the sustainability of these programs. By transitioning responsibilities to local governments, CRS aims to maintain the gains achieved in child health and nutrition, underscoring the need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders to create resilient systems that support the nutritional needs of children, ultimately contributing to their educational success and long-term well-being.

In conclusion, this paper advocates for continued investment in integrated school health and nutrition initiatives as a viable strategy to combat malnutrition and enhance educational outcomes in Africa, emphasizing the need for holistic approaches that address both immediate and underlying factors affecting child health.

Key words: Malnutrition, School feeding, Nutrition, Community health, WASH

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JOHNES N. DAVID
FWGA – Fortified Whole
Grain Alliance

Benefits of Fortified Whole Grain Foods in School Feeding Programmes

The Fortified Whole Grain Alliance (FWGA) is a coalition of stakeholders that span across the food system, including nonprofit and private sector members and is committed to increasing the global consumption of fortified whole grain (FWG) foods by providing catalytic support to the food system actors.

The purpose of the Alliance is to sustainably improve the diets of school children, vulnerable populations, and eventually whole populations, through increased consumption of FWG foods. In the short term, the Alliance specifically aims to reach 10M+ people with FWG foods through its initiatives by 2025; across 5+ countries, with work already ongoing on fortified whole grain maize in East Africa (Kenya, Rwanda, and Burundi) and recently commenced work on parboiled unpolished rice (PUR) in West Africa (Ghana, Nigeria and Benin) and on fortified whole wheat flour in North Africa (Egypt). In the long term, the Alliance intends to convert at least 50% of grain foods in institutional markets and 25% in consumer markets to be consumed in fortified whole form in LMICs by 2032.

The dominance of refined grain foods in diets contributes to the double burden of malnutrition as only 20-30% of grains are consumed as whole. Fortified whole grain foods offer a strong proposition in mitigating the hidden hunger potentially through school meals due to their nutrition-positive (5x) and budget-neutrality elements in addition to the significant environmental benefits (better land and water use, and are more sustainable). Incorporating FWG foods in school's menu would enable learners' benefit from the nutrient-dense diets at no additional cost, broaden menu diversity and encourage resilience in food systems.

A pilot study on fortified whole maize meal carried out in Rwanda demonstrated the feasibility of a large-scale shift in school feeding towards FWG foods; over 13,000 learners in 18 schools initially supplied, expanded to 74,000 learners in 81 schools and currently exploring universal coverage implementation. To date over 500k learners have been reached with FWG maize meal in E. Africa, and growing. In W. Africa, work on rice is underway where the Alliance is working with various partners and millers to introduce PUR in school meals. Recently, the Alliance has started a fortified whole wheat flour initiative in Egypt targeting institutional demand (school feeding).

Key words: Malnutrition, Nutrient-dense /Wholegrains, Budget neutral, Environment friendly, Sustainable

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MUFARO CHIRIGA MR.
World Food Programme
(WFP)

Ethiopia's School Feeding Programme: Positive Experiences and Challenges

The presentation focuses on the following issues:

- History, milestones, and vision of Ethiopia's School Feeding Programme (SFP)
 - The SFP has existed for 30 years in Ethiopia, during which its scope, strategic focus and Government ownership growing, with a vision for universal coverage by 2030.
- Ethiopia's SFP Policy environment
 - The national school meals programme is anchored in a robust policy framework, including a National School Feeding Policy Framework and Strategy that was endorsed in 2021, and other complementary policies.

- Scale and reach of the country's SFP.
 - Ethiopia's SFP is currently reaching almost all regions of the country, reaching over 7.5 million children this year.
 - School meals are being provided by the Government, WFP, and other development partners, with the Government having the highest share, through a Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) modality.
 - WFP delivers both in-kind and HGSF modalities, with the HGSF increasing steadily over the years to 55% of WFP's school meals this year.
- Example of the HGSF successes
 - The HGSF is seen as a potential game changer, with benefits not only for school children receiving meals, but also for local communities and local economy, with an estimated Return on Investment (ROI) of \$7.20 for each \$1 invested, against \$3.10 ROI from traditional/in-kind modality.
 - The HGSF also creates an opportunity to bring more food diversity into the school meals to include nutrient dense foods, while delivering locally acceptable foods
- Role of Nutrition Experts in the SFP in Ethiopia, (example on WFP's ongoing pilot project on strengthening nutrition sensitive social protection (SNaSSP) focusing on 2 social protection programmes namely the SFP and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)
 - Currently, both programmes not meeting their nutrition goals, and this project aims to address this gap.
 - The project assesses the extent to which the current SFP and PSNP are nutrition sensitive, identifies gaps and priority areas to be strengthened and pilots an intervention package with evidence generation.
- Current opportunities to leverage on and challenges impacting on the programme.
 - Government resource commitment, the policy environment, vision for universal coverage by 2030 create an enabling environment to strengthen the SFP.
 - Areas to be improved include innovative financing, the quality of the school meals, infrastructure for school meals, cross-sector collaboration among others.

Key words: Home grown school feeding, Universal coverage, Food diversity

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MS PATIENCE ASIEDU
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Enhancing School Meals: a Food Systems Approach to Reaching the Goal

With rising levels of food insecurity and micronutrient deficiencies in Africa, school meals continue to be the guaranteed source of a decent meal for children from resource-poor households. Investing in local food systems to support home-grown school feeding (HGSF) has been identified as a critical pathway to enhancing nutritional quality of school meals for improved learning, child health and nutrition outcomes.

The World Food Programme in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation and others has been exploring cost-effective ways of enhancing quality of school meals. The presentation highlights how using a combination of approaches including production of nutrient-dense crops, promotion of wholegrains and food fortification could help meet the nutritional needs of school-aged children in Ghana. It further explores the challenges in sustaining home-grown school feeding with current gaps in local food systems and proffers recommendations to strengthen HGSF in Ghana.

Key words: School meals, Food insecurity, Micronutrient deficiencies, Fortification, World Food Programme

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STEPHEN WOOTTON
International Collaboration on Nutrition
in relation to Cancer (ICONIC)

Building a Community of Practice to Support Schools as a System to Improve Nutrition – a Bottom-up Approach to Support Agents of Change in Schools.

A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic and come together to share the best experience and understanding and create new knowledge to advance professional practice. New web-based collaborative learning environments are being created to connect, communicate and conduct community activities. Within the school feeding agenda, several CoPs have been introduced to build independent evidence through research to inform effective policy-making (Research Consortium), facilitate knowledge exchange and build solidarity

and community around food systems (Food Systems Leadership Network) or leveraging the voice and response of the UN agencies and partners to enhance the role of schools as a platform for multi-component nutrition action UN-Nutrition School Nutrition CoP).

While playing important roles, such CoPs do not directly address the concerns raised by the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) on schools as a system to improve nutrition (2017). There is a need to specifically train teachers to equip and support them in providing a suitable learning environment within school that deliver food and nutrition education and consider nutrition as a demand-led process alongside food production and availability issues. Changing the school environment and implementing nutrition and health-related interventions requires capable, trained agents of change. Teachers, school staff, students, parents, and caterers all play essential roles in promoting positive nutritional behaviour but cannot do this without support from nutritional professionals. Competent, trained nutritional professionals are needed to work together with those in schools to enable intersectoral collaboration, set standards, identify and solve operational problems, and generate secure and reliable data that can be used to monitor and evaluate interventions.

ICONIC has been working to bring together nutrition professionals, health professionals, and children, teenagers and young adults (CTYA) with cancer to form a CoP to advance nutritional care. This intersectoral collaboration meets virtually through the WHO Global Co-ordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Disease using their Knowledge Action Portal (KAP) to share knowledge and act. Developing the CTYA KAP offers insight into how this approach might help address the gap identified by UNSCN. Building a CoP to support change agents in schools is the responsibility of nutritional professionals and offers a bottom-up approach, to complement the top-down approaches around policy and food system to improve nutrition, prevent disease and prepare children for their life ahead.

Key words: Nutrition, Community of Practice, School environment, UN Systems

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9th Africa Nutrition Conference 2024

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