

Newsletter Generation H

April 2025

Dear reader,

The Generation H project team, which started in January 2024, would like to share some updates about the past period to inform you what has happened within Project Generation H lately.



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GENERATION H

Reporting to the European Commission

Suggestion: Since the project is funded by the European Commission (EC), the following reports have been delivered to the EC.

- **The report on community engagement** provides an identification of the field work sites and community engagement with relevant stakeholders and community leaders to identify suitable strategies for engaging local communities in the project.
- **The Communication, Dissemination and exploitation plan** describes which dissemination channels and strategies apply for the certain communication and dissemination goals of the project.
- **In the plan for the scientific stakeholder interaction event** the goal of the event, exploring practical strategies and share experiences on implementing multi-component interventions which promote physical activity behaviour, is explained.
- A document about **the security measurements** with a description of actions to protect the data.
- **The Benefit-Sharing plan for stakeholder in Ghana** outlines the benefit-sharing arrangements for stakeholders, to ensure equitable distribution of both monetary and non-monetary benefits.
- **An Ethics Advisory Board** has been composed for the project and will provide advice with a focus on all aspects concerning ethical, legal and social issues and will have an independent role in these aspects.



The first annual meeting of the Generation-H project

Last December (2024), the first annual meeting of the Generation-H project took place at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) in Nairobi, Kenya. During 3 inspiring days the team discussed various topics, gained a deeper understanding of the study context and strengthened collaborative relations.

The first day consisted of a welcome from Prof. Andre Pascal, the director of Programs at APHRC, and site visits of the study areas Buruburu and Kibra in Nairobi. These site visits proved a valuable basis for the discussion during the meeting, as the team had now a good understanding of the study context.

During the second and third day of the meeting, updates were provided by various work packages on various components, including: results of the realist review, implementation strategies, dissemination and stakeholder engagement, reaching and involving out of school adolescents, study and sampling design and health economic evaluations.

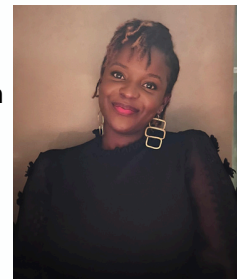
We look back on a successful first annual meeting in which important decisions were made. We thank the APHRC for their hospitality during the annual meeting. Please click [here](https://www.generationh.org/) for a more extensive update of the meeting.

PhD plans

There are several PhD students involved within the Generation H project. The PhD students are happy to introduce themselves and tell you more about their PhD plan. Please find a short summary of their plans below.

Martha Nassali, Amsterdam University Medical Centre, University of Amsterdam

My name is Martha Nassali and I am currently a PhD candidate at the Amsterdam UMC in my first year, originally from Uganda. My PhD, titled 'Non-communicable disease risk among adolescents living in informal settlements of urban sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)', is embedded within the Generation H project. It focuses on exploring the burden of non-communicable disease (NCD) risk among slum dwellers in SSA and comparing the effects of the Generation-H project on the adolescents living in the slums compared with their counterparts living out of the slums in the urban areas of Ghana and Kenya. This work is critical given the rising rates of urbanization in SSA, the subsequent lifestyle changes and the proliferation of informal settlements - all of which can further increase the risk of NCDs.



Emmanuel Okello, Loughborough University

I have a background in Nutrition and Public Health. The potential to reduce the NCD burden in SSA through appropriate lifestyle changes in children and adolescents fuels my passion for my work. My PhD research will focus on coproducing and evaluating implementation strategies to improve the delivery of diet and physical activity interventions among adolescents in Kenya and Ghana within the Generation-H project. I will explore strategies to enhance equitable implementation of the intervention to reduce disparities in nutrition and physical activity among disadvantaged adolescents based on gender and socioeconomic status.

Gideon Amevinya, IRD (French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)

I am a PhD student at L'Institut Agro Montpellier and a research affiliate at the Montpellier Interdisciplinary Centre on Sustainable Agri-Food Systems (IRD). I am holding a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Ghana. For my doctoral research, I aim to co-produce a context-relevant diet and physical activity intervention to promote healthy eating and physical activity among adolescents in Ghana and Kenya. My work involves identifying, appraising, and contextualizing evidence from urban Sub-Saharan Africa to determine which interventions will work, how, for whom, and under what circumstances to improve adolescent dietary and physical activity behaviors in urban Ghana and Kenya



Birhan Ewunu Semagn, Amsterdam University Medical Centre, University of Amsterdam

I studied at the University of Gondar, Ethiopia, and have a background in health promotion and behavioural health science. During my PhD, I will assess the prevalence of behavioural risk factors (unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and sedentary behaviour) and evaluate the Generation-H interventions targeting these behavioural risks among adolescents in Kenya and Ghana. My research will focus on changes in physical inactivity, unhealthy diets and the underlying determinants of these behaviours, including capability, opportunity and motivation. Furthermore, I will explore how implementation outcomes—such as adoption, acceptability, appropriateness and fidelity—mediate or moderate the effect of these interventions.

Work package 2 update

Work package 2, who is responsible for adapting and optimising the existing protocols of the WHO Best Buys and recommended interventions through co-creation and co-production, gives an update on the current status of the realist synthesis, stakeholder consultations and the coproduction of the intervention.

Generation of CMOs and Programme theories: As part of the realist synthesis process, we developed Context-Mechanism-Outcome (CMO) configurations from 15 articles rated as having high ‘relevance’ and ‘richness’ during the quality appraisal stage. These CMO configurations were consolidated into 10 programme theories by grouping them based on similarity in context. From these, a ‘grand’ programme theory was developed to enable the Generation H project team to make an evidence-informed decision on the scope of the multicomponent intervention.

Testing of programme theories: 5 out of the 10 programme theories were selected for testing by the Generation H project team. These 5 selected programme theories were tested using 79 articles from the original set included in the review. The testing process involved assessing available evidence (if any) from these 79 articles to confirm, refute, or refine the five programme theories. Additionally, we are complementing this process with qualitative data collected from key stakeholders in Ghana and Kenya who are involved in the development and implementation of diet and physical activity interventions.

Stakeholder consultation: The qualitative data collection consisted of interviews and focus groups and started in September 2024 in both countries and has been successfully completed. The consultations involved key stakeholders across three major categories: adolescents (in school and out of school), parents and faith-based organisation leaders and intervention developers, implementers, and academic researchers. Transcription of audio recordings began in November 2024 and completed successfully, generating a total of 81 transcripts. A protocol for data cleaning and coding has been developed, and data coding is currently in progress.

Coproduction of the intervention

The coproduction of the intervention started at the Generation H annual meeting in December 2024. It involved a prioritization exercise and subsequent deliberative workshop by Generation H team members after hearing the evidence generated during the Realist synthesis and the stakeholder consultations. This resulted in the development of a simplified ‘grand’ programme theory that would be used to guide co-design workshops planned for 2025.

The WP2 team has developed a protocol to guide the coproduction process which is currently undergoing review by the project team. The coproduction process will be conducted in both Ghana and Kenya by an intervention development group. Potential stakeholder groups have been identified, and recruitment is ongoing. The coproduction process will begin in Kenya from mid-April followed by Ghana from mid-June to mid-August.

Stakeholders engagement event - Webinar

The Generation H Project and the African Food Environment Network (FERN) hosted a webinar on 14th March 2025, focusing on transforming food and physical activity environments for adolescents in Ghana and Kenya. The session brought together 136 participants, including policymakers, researchers, and public health practitioners.

Prof. Amos Laar, Generation-H Ghana Lead, introduced the project’s objectives and its alignment with WHO’s Best Buys strategies. Key presentations followed, with Prof. Charles Agyemang presented the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and the need for adolescent-focused interventions. Prof. Michelle Holdsworth discussed adapting WHO interventions through co-creation with stakeholders, while Prof. Lauren Sherar and Milka Njeri elaborated on implementation strategies using theoretical frameworks like CFIR and RE-AIM. Dr. Gershim Asiki presented the study design, outlining baseline assessments and evaluation methods, and Dr. Antonio Armando from WHO emphasized the economic impact of NCDs and WHO’s strategies for prevention.

The session concluded with an interactive discussion. The webinar successfully introduced the Generation-H project, engaged key stakeholders, and laid the foundation for ongoing partnerships to promote healthier environments for adolescents in Africa. Watch the full webinar here: [Generation-H Webinar](https://www.generationh.org/).



Site visit in Ayawaso West, Ghana

As part of the preparations for the upcoming mapping and household listing census, a site visit was conducted to Ayawaso West Municipality, by the Ghana team. The visit team included Prof. Laar Amos, Dr. Emmanuel Assasie, Mr. Bismark Akosoe, and Ms. Pearl Aovare.

During the visit, the team held a productive and interactive meeting with the District Director of Health Services. The District Director provided detailed insights into the catchment area of the study site and emphasized key considerations for the mapping exercise. She highlighted the importance of aligning with existing administrative boundaries and shared essential information that will support planning and implementation, particularly in ensuring accurate coverage of the area. Overall, the visit was instrumental in confirming the feasibility of the activities and also in strengthening collaboration with local authorities.

2 Generation H abstracts accepted for conferences

A realist synthesis accepted for the IUNS 2025

An abstract of the realist synthesis was submitted for the IUNS-ICN International Congress of Nutrition, titled: "Which interventions to promote healthy dietary and/or physical activity behaviours could work best among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa? A realist synthesis." The abstract is accepted and will be presented during the congress on 24-29 August 2025 in Paris.

Generation H study protocol accepted for the GSMERH Conference

The Generation H protocol "Multi-component-Intervention to combat unhealthy diets and physical inactivity among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa: the Generation H study protocol" is accepted for presentation at the Global Society on Migration, Ethnicity, Race and Health (GSMERH) 2025 which is taking place in Lisbon, Portugal 2nd-5th of September 2025.

The next Generation H newsletter can be expected around September 2025



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