

# 2<sup>ND</sup> AFRICA FOOD ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH NETWORK MEETING **#FERN2021**

**THEME: LEVERAGING FOOD ENVIRONMENT  
RESEARCH NETWORK (FERN) TO TRANSFORM  
AFRICA'S FOOD SYSTEMS**

**WEDNESDAYS 3<sup>RD</sup>, 10<sup>TH</sup>, 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2021**  
**AN ONLINE MEETING**



## PROGRAMME

BROCHURE  
NOVEMBER 2021



## BACKGROUND

The impact of the multiple pandemics of malnutrition (including undernutrition, and obesity), climate change, and currently, COVID-19 - on our food environments and the food systems in general is immense. These challenges require urgent attention. Addressing the challenges, malnutrition in all its forms, will require improvement in food environments and a food system that works for all. In Africa, improving food environments is an urgent priority. Rapid urbanization, coupled with changes in food environments, has impacted the burden of obesity and diet-related NCDs in the region. Dietary habits of people in Africa are shifting towards highly processed foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt. Africa needs policies and practice guidance designed to create supportive food environments for healthy food choices. To be successful, food systems stakeholders led by governments require inputs – including data, evidence, nudging.

Against this background, the MEALS4NCDs Project and partners (INFORMAS, REPSAO, DFC, Others) is convening the second Africa Food Environment Research Network Meeting (FERN2021). The MEALS4NCDs project is focused on measuring and supporting public sector actions that create healthy food marketing and food provisioning environments for children and adolescents in Ghana, with the aim to prevent obesity nutrition-related NCDs. The FERN initiative, birthed by the MEALS4NCDs Project is a regional capacity-building, and knowledge-sharing network that encourages research collaborations, implementation of innovative food environment research, and practices that facilitate creation of healthier food environments in Africa. The 1st FERN meeting was held online from 3rd to 5th November 2020, with about 200 participants from 56 countries in attendance. The meeting provided a platform to connect researchers working on African food environment, identified research priorities for improving food environment in Africa and provided capacity building workshops for participants.

The 2nd FERN meeting will build on the progress made from the first meeting, and leverage research, practice, and policy-making networks to contribute to the transformation of Africa's food environments and food systems as a whole. The event is being held jointly with the International Network for Food and Obesity/Non-communicable Diseases Research, Monitoring and Action Support (INFORMAS)'s e-symposium series – as per the joint call for abstracts below.



# PROGRAMME

## DAY 1

3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2021

TIME: 12:00 – 16:00 GMT

English/French translations provided

Time	Activities	Speaker(s)
12:00 - 12:10	Opening Session	
	Welcome address	Amos Laar
	Overview of meeting format & objectives	Phyllis Ohene-Agyei
12:10 – 12:30	Plenary 1: Foodscapes are not just what you see	Damien Conaré (UNESCO Chair for World Food Systems)
12:30 – 12:50	Plenary 2: City-level innovations in improving Africa's food environments and food systems: Experiences of 3 African cities	Solophina Nekesa (ICLEI Africa)
12:50 – 13:10	Plenary 3: FS-TIP – Food System Transformative Integrated Policy: update on three African country pilots (Ghana, Malawi, and Rwanda)	Peiman Milani (Rockerfeller Foundation)
13:10 – 13:30	Plenary 4: Role of FAO in transforming Africa's Food Environments	Dr Mphumuzi Sukati (FAO Africa)
13:30 – 14:00	Q & A	
14:00 – 14:10	Short break	
14:10 – 14:30	Plenary 5: Understanding Lived Experience of Food Environments to Inform Policy: An Overview of Research Methods	Kimberly Neve (City University London)
14:30 – 14:50	Plenary 6: Food environments in Africa: Addressing Malnutrition using a Syndemics Approach - The Food-SAMSA Project.	Dr Carmen Klinger (LMU-Munich) & Peter Delobelle (CDIA)
14:50 – 15:10	Plenary 7: Plastic food environments: Concepts and evidence gaps in African contexts	Joe Yates (ANH Academy)
15:10 – 15:30	Plenary 8: Food Environment Research and Neglected Indigenous African Foods	Namukolo Covic (African Nutrition Society)
15:30 – 15:55	Q&A	
15:55 – 16:00	Summary of days activities & adjourn	Krystal Rampalli



## DAY 2

10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

TIME: 9:00 – 16:15 GMT (linked with FERN2021)

INFORMAS eSymposium Series 2021: Africa

English/French translations provided

Time Slot	Topic	Speaker(s)
<b>Morning</b>		
<b>09:00 - 10:00</b>	Opening Plenary	Amos Laar, Boyd Swinburn
	Welcome - Overview/Symposium objectives	David Nabarro
<b>10:00 – 10:20</b>	Keynote 1. Update from the UN Food Systems Summit and next steps: Monitoring for accountability, and shifting the balance of power through collective action	
	Module Updates      Brief overviews of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Composition</li> <li>• Food Trade</li> <li>• Food Labelling</li> <li>• Food Retail</li> <li>• Diet Quality</li> <li>• Food Prices</li> </ul>	Kelly Garton
<b>10:20-11:00</b>	Technical Discussions	Private sector (Business Impact Assessment on obesity and populations) – Senegal
	2 Concurrent Streams	Food-EPI – Uganda/Tanzania
	With module update at the beginning of each discussion	Adama Diouf
<b>11:00 - 11:10</b>	Break	
<b>11:10 – 12:00</b>	Technical Discussions	Food Promotion - Ghana
	2 Concurrent Streams	Food Provision - Kenya
	With module update at the beginning of each discussion	Amos Laar
<b>12:00 - 12:45</b>	Lunch break	Gershim Asiki

Afternoon			
12:45 – 13:30	Keynote 2. Monitoring food systems for the double-burden of malnutrition and sustainability		Stella Nordhagen
13:30 – 15:00	Abstract Sessions	Public Sector Policies /	Ursula Trübswasser
	5 parallel streams	Food Prices /	Savannah Froese
		Communication	Christine G.Kiria Chege
	6 x15 min abstracts per stream	Stefanie Vandevijvere	Morgan Boncyk
			Iheme, Gideon Onyedikachi
			Natasha Mazonde (HPL Media SA)
			Winnie Sambu
		Population Diets	Ortutu Beulah
			Julia de Bruyn
			Cristiana K. Verissimo
			Julia Liguori
		Food Composition / Food Labelling	Eva-Charlotte Ekström
			Tamryn Frank
			Lucia Segovia de la Revilla
			Makoma Bopape
		Kobby Mensah	Rina Swart
			Geoffrey Adebayo Asalu
	Matthew Yosah Konlan		
	Akosua Pokua Adjei		
	Food Retail / Food Promotion	Tjale Cloupas Mahopo	
		Noella Nyirangirinshuti	
		Alice Scaria Khan	
		Patience Mushamiri-	
	Francis Zotor	Kuzviwanza	
		Akua Tandoh	
		Agnes Erzse	
		Hanna Y. Berhane	
School Food Environments	Constance A Gewa		
	Ayala Wineman		
	Mulenga Mary Mukanu		
	Gideon Senyo Amevinya		
15:00 – 15:15	Break		
15:15 – 16:15	Working Groups and Closing Remarks	Dashboards and Harnessing Data	Gary Sacks/ Richmond Aryeetey
	Strategies and innovation in knowledge translation	Advocacy and Coalition-Building	Nzama Lawrence Mbalati
		Monitoring and Demanding Accountability	Boyd Swinburn/ Peter Delobelle
		3 Breakout Rooms	
	Closing Remarks in Main Plenary by Adama Diouf		



## DAY 3

17<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

TIME: 12:00 – 16:00 GMT

English/French translations provided

Time	Activities		Speaker(s)
12:00 – 12:05	Opening Session		
	Welcome/ Overview of activities for the day		Akua Tandoh
12:05- 14:00	Capacity building activities	Different kinds of food price analysis and how they relate to each other:	
	Parallel stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>INFORMAS Food Prices module</li> <li>Food Prices for Nutrition Project</li> </ul>	Stefanie Vandevijvere William Masters (Tufts University)
		Food Labeling	
		Adopting a fit-for-purpose Nutrient Profiling Model + Front of Pack labeling (S/A)	Prof Rina Swart and Team
		Food composition database (Senegal)	Adama Diouf
14:00 – 14:10	Short Break		
14:10 – 15:10	Abstracts Session	Population Diets	Alice Karanja Moses Mokaya
	3 parallel streams		Annabel Yeboah-Nkrumah
	4 x15 min abstracts per stream		Charles Lwanga Tumuhe
		General Food Environments	Magnus Jirström
		Matilda Laar	Daniel Opoku Mensah
			Sejla Isanovic
			Anthony Muchai
			Manyara
		General Food Environments / Communication	Kovania Naidoo
		Krystal Rampalli	Semira Abdelmenan
			Awel
			Vincent Linderhof
			Natasha Mazonde (obesity portrayals – social media)
15:10 – 15:50	Next Steps:		
	Preview of research priorities from FERN 2020		Moderator: Prof Saa Dittoh
	From dialogues to action – commitment statements and pathways to transformation		(Guided discussion)
	How the food environment can contribute to food systems transformation		
15:50 – 16:00	Closing Remarks & follow up announcements		Amos Laar

# SPEAKERS



**Professor Boyd Swinburn**  
*Professor of Population  
Nutrition and Global Health*



**Dr David Nabarro CBE**  
4SD Switzerland



**Associate Professor Gary Sacks**  
Deakin University



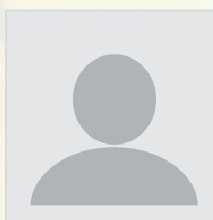
**Dr Stefanie Vandevijvere**  
Sciensano



**Dr Stella Nordhagen**  
*Senior Technical Specialist*  
Global Alliance for Improved  
Nutrition



**Professor Amos Laar**  
*Associate Professor*  
University of Ghana



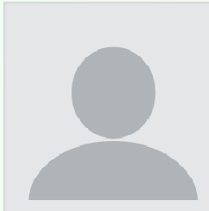
**Ms Milka Wanjohi**  
*Research Officer*  
African Population and Health  
Research Centre (APHRC)



**Dr Gershim Asiki**  
*Research Scientist*  
African Population and  
Health Research Centre  
(APHRC)



**Dr Kobby Mensah**  
*Senior Lecturer*  
University of Ghana



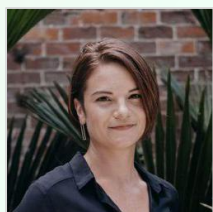
**Dr Kingsley Pereko**  
*Senior Lecturer*  
University of Cape Coast



**Professor Francis Zotor**  
*Professor*  
University of Health and  
Allied Sciences



**Dr Dennis Laryea**  
*Programme Manager for  
Non-Communicable  
Diseases*  
Ghana Health Service



**Dr Kelly Garton**  
*Research Fellow*  
The University of Auckland



**Nzama Lawrence Mbalati**  
*Programmes Manager*  
Healthy Living Alliance (HEALA)





**Dr. Phyllis Ohene-Agyei**  
Research Associate  
MEALS4NCDs



**Damien Conaré**  
Secretary General  
UNESCO Chair for World  
Food Systems



**Solophina Nekesa**  
*Professional Officer*  
ICLEI Africa



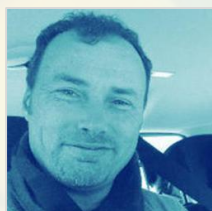
**Peiman Milani**  
Independent Consultant  
The Rockefeller Foundation



**Dr. Mphumuzi Sukati**  
*Senior Nutrition and Food  
Systems Officer*  
FAO Africa



**Kimberly Neve**  
*Research Assistant*  
City University of London  
School of Health Sciences



**Peter Delobelle**  
*Senior Researcher and Senior  
Lecturer in Health Promotion*  
University of Cape Town  
Chronic Disease Initiative for  
Africa (CDIA) and University of  
Western Cape



**ANH Academy**  
ANH Academy  
Agriculture Nutrition &  
Health (ANH) Academy



**Dr. Namukolo Covic**  
*Senior Research Coordinator*  
International Food Policy  
Research Institute (IFPRI)



**Krystal Rampalli**  
*Research Assistant*  
University of South Carolina,  
Department of Health Promotion,  
Education & Behavior



**Dr. Carmen Klinger**  
*Chair of Public Health and  
Health Services Research*  
Pettenkofer School of  
Public Health LMU Munich



**Akua Tandoh**  
*Project Associate/Doctoral  
student*  
MEALS4NCDs



**Professor William Masters**  
*Professor*  
Department of Economics,  
Tufts University



**Professor Adama Diouf**  
*Professor*  
University Cheikh Anta Diop,  
Dakar, Senegal



**Prof Saa Dittoh**  
*Professor*  
University for Developmet  
Studies Tamale, Ghana



# MEALS4NCDs TEAM

## INVESTIGATORS

This MEALS4NCDs project is a collaboration between 10 researchers from 7 academic and research institutions across Ghana, Kenya, Netherlands, France, and Belgium.

### University of Ghana, Ghana (Lead Institution)



**Prof. Amos Laar**  
*Project Principal Investigator/  
Project Leader*  
Associate Professor  
School of Public Health  
University of Ghana



**Prof. Richmond Aryeetey**  
*Co-Investigator*  
Professor  
School of Public Health  
University of Ghana



**Dr. Matilda Essandoh Laar**  
*Co-Investigator*  
Lecturer in Human Nutrition  
Department of Family and  
Consumer Sciences  
University of Ghana



**Dr. Kobby Mensah**  
*Co-Investigator*  
Senior Lecturer  
Department of Marketing &  
Entrepreneurship  
University of Ghana  
Business School

### University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana



**Professor Francis Zotor**  
*Co-Investigator*  
Professor of Public  
Health Nutrition  
University of Health and  
Allied Sciences, Ghana

### Ghana Health Service, Ghana



**Dr. Dennis Laryea**  
*Co-Investigator*  
Non-Communicable Diseases  
Programme. Disease Control  
and Prevention Department,  
Public Health Division

### African Population and Health Research Center, Kenya



**Dr. Gershim Asiki**  
*Co-Investigator*  
African Population and  
Health Research Center  
(APHRC)

### University of Toronto



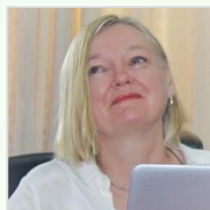
**Professor Daniel Stellen**  
*Co-Investigator*  
University of Toronto  
Canada

### University of Amsterdam, Netherlands



**Professor Charles Agyemang**  
*Co-Investigator* Academic  
Medical Center University  
of Amsterdam

### National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD), France



**Professor Michelle Holdsworth**  
*Co-Investigator*  
National Research Institute  
for Sustainable  
Development (IRD)

### Sciensano Research Institute, Belgium



**Dr. Stefanie Vandevijvere**  
*Co-Investigator*  
Sciensano Research  
Institute



## PROJECT STAFF/EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS



**Dr. Phyllis Addo**  
*Postdoctoral Fellow*



**Akua Tandoh**  
*Project Associate*  
*Doctoral student*



**Wilhemina Quarpong**  
*Project Associate*



**Gideon Senyo Amevinya**  
*Monitoring and*  
*Evaluation Specialist*



**Silver W. H. Nanema**  
*Research Assistant*



**Dr. Phyllis Ohene-Agyei**  
*Project Associate*

## SUPPORTED GRADUATE STUDENTS



**Krystal Rampalli**  
*Ph.D Candidate*  
University of South Carolina



**Zuwera Zankawah**  
*Master of Public Health*  
University of Ghana



**Akosua Pokua Adjei**  
*Master of Public Health*  
University of Ghana

## IT SUPPORT



**Emmanuel Hammond**  
*Information Specialist*



## ADVISORY BOARD

This project is supported in process and methodology by the expertise of a high-level Project Advisory Board to ensure the research team achieves its objectives. The Board's role will be crucial in providing expert guidance in relation to the implementation of the project, dissemination and future plans to scale-up the innovation and implement the project's findings in other countries.

## CURRENT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



**Professor Mary L'Abbe**  
*Project Advisory Board Chair*  
*INFORMAS Food Provision Module Leader*  
Earle W. McHenry Professor, and Chair, Department of Nutritional Sciences, Faculty of Medicine University of Toronto, Canada



**Dr. Emmanuel Ankrah Odame**  
Ministry of Health  
Ghana



**Professor Kaleab Baye**  
Center for Food Science and Nutrition Addis Ababa  
University Ethiopia



**Dr. Namukolo Covic**  
International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)  
Ethiopia



**Mrs. Delese Darko**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
Food and Drugs  
Authority Ghana



**Dr. Rebecca Pradeilles**  
*Senior Research Associate*  
Loughborough University



**Mrs. Mary Mpereh**  
National Development  
Planning Commission  
Ghana



**Dr. (Mrs). Beatrice Wiafe Addai**  
Ghana NCD  
Alliance Ghana



**Mr. Issah Ali**  
Vison for Alternative  
Development (VALD)  
Ghana



**Ms. Lilian Selenje**  
*Nutrition Manager*  
UNICEF Ghana



**Ms. Joana Ansong**  
World Health  
Organisation  
Ghana Country Office



**Professor Bridget Kelly**  
*INFORMAS Food Promotion Module Leader*  
University of Wollongong  
Wollongong, Australia



**Hon. (Dr) Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare**  
*Member of Parliament and Member, of Parliamentary Select Committee on Health, Ghana*

## DESIGNATED IDRC REPRESENTATIVE



**Dr. Samuel Oti, MD, PhD**  
*Senior Program Specialist*  
Global Health Program Division  
International Development  
Research Centre (IDRC)

# PARTNERS

## MEALS4NCDs Partners

University of Ghana; University of Health and Allied Sciences; Ghana Health Service; Africa African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Kenya; National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD), France; Amsterdam University Medical Centers, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands; Sciensano, Belgium, University of Toronto.

## INFORMAS

INFORMAS (International Network for Food and Obesity / Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) Research, Monitoring and Action Support) is a global network of public-interest organisations and researchers that aims to monitor, benchmark and support public and private sector actions to increase healthy food environments and reduce obesity and NCDs and their related inequalities. There are currently more than 60 countries worldwide participating in INFORMAS. For more information, kindly visit <https://www.informas.org/>

## UNESCO Chair in World Food Systems

The Unesco Chair in World Food Systems aims to bridge the gap between food science disciplines and supporting different stakeholders to deliver more sustainable food systems. The Chair currently organizes science-society interactions through three types of activities : training; action research; opening doors to and disseminating knowledge. More information on : <https://www.chaireunesco-adm.com/?lang=en>

## REPSAO

REPSAO "Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques et les Systèmes Alimentaires en Afrique de l'Ouest" has been implemented in 2019. REPSAO is a platform of stakeholders including researchers, public policy makers and community actors that aims to develop research-action on healthy food environments policy and food system and to stimulate a regional dynamic around this topic in West Africa. The network has defined and agenda of priority research topics and actions that will guide policy-making decision and development of strategic plans in nutrition, health and environmental sustainability.

## DFC Program

The Drivers of Food Choice (DFC) generates, synthesizes, and disseminates knowledge to provide a deep understanding of the drivers of food choice among the poor in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. The DFC Program which is funded by the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and managed by the University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health. <https://driversoffoodchoice.org/>

## Food Prices for Nutrition

Food Prices for Nutrition is a project at Tufts University, implemented with the World Bank and IFPRI, to support computation of diet cost and affordability metrics such as those used in UN system SOFI reports and other outlets like <https://ourworldindata.org/food-prices> . Details at: <https://sites.tufts.edu/foodpricesfornutrition>.



## CDIA

The Chronic Disease Initiative for Africa (CDIA) is a network of multidisciplinary researchers from the University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University, University of the Western Cape, and the South African Medical Research Council, and policymakers from local and national Departments of Health. The Centre serves as a regional hub for developing and evaluating models of chronic disease care and prevention. For more information, kindly visit <http://www.cdia.uct.ac.za/>

## ANH Academy

The Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) Academy is a global community of interdisciplinary researchers, practitioners, and policymakers working on agriculture and food systems for improved nutrition and health, with over 5000 members from 145 countries, 63% of whom are based in Africa or Asia.

The Academy is a platform for sharing research and evidence, with a focus on supporting peer-to-peer capacity strengthening and fostering collaboration across diverse disciplines, geographies, seniorities and sectors. As a workstream of the IMMANA programme it also shares methods and metrics developed through IMMANA grants and fellowships.

Membership of the ANH Academy is free of charge and open to all. What we do: Annual ANH Academy Week, where hundreds of Academy members meet for learning labs and an interdisciplinary research conference.

Working groups to accelerate research by sharing experience and synthesising disparate research methods and metrics. Skills-based trainings via face-to-face gatherings and webinars. Synthesis Centre for Agriculture and Nutrition Research (SCANR).

An online collaborative platform. For more information, kindly go here <https://www.anh-academy.org/>

## The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC)

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) is a leading Africa-based, African-led, international research institution headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, with a regional office in Dakar, Senegal. Our researchers are contributing to the body of evidence about critical issues in population health and wellbeing, impeding Africa's development to provide strong direction and recommendations to policy- and decision-makers at all levels. APHRC also aims to enhance the use of the evidence generated by decision-makers for policy and programming at the local, national and regional level.

The RECAP project by APHRC aims to identify context-relevant priority actions that promote a healthy food environment as a strategy to enhance healthy dietary patterns/practices and prevent nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NR-NCDs) in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The project has four objectives: i. To assess gaps, barriers and facilitators to developing and implementing public food policies and government actions, ii. To assess the frequency and nature of unhealthy food and beverage marketing to children, the power of promotions on television, in stores, and in and around schools, iii. To estimate the cost of inaction for selected NR-NCD policies, and iv. To assess the legal and administrative feasibility of adopting and implementing context-specific NR-NCD interventions.



## FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The MEALS4NCDs Project/FERN is funded by The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Food, Environment, and Health Program—IDRC, Canada.

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**IDRC | CRDI**

International Development Research Centre

Centre de recherches pour le développement international

**Canada**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For further details, visit the project website: <https://www.meals4ncds.org/en/fern-initiative/> or send direct enquiries about the FERN Meeting or the MEALS4NCDs Project to:

**Amos Laar, PhD.**

Project Principal Investigator

MEALS4NCDs Project – providing Measurement Evaluation, Accountability and Leadership Support (MEALS) for NCDs prevention

E-mail: [alaar@ug.edu.gh](mailto:alaar@ug.edu.gh) / [info@meals4ncds.org](mailto:info@meals4ncds.org)