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Assessing the effectiveness of front-of-pack food labels in Kenya

Submission date 28/11/2023	**Recruitment status** No longer recruiting	[_] Prospectively registered [_] Protocol [_] Statistical analysis plan [X] Results [_] Individual participant data
Registration date 06/12/2023	**Overall study status** Completed	
Last Edited 24/02/2025	**Condition category** Other	

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Kenya has a high rate of unhealthy food consumption because there are no comprehensive policies in place to regulate the food environment. The main objective of the study is to evaluate the effect of different front-of-pack labels on participants' identification of products high in nutrients of concern, identification of unhealthy foods, and intention to purchase unhealthy foods and beverages.

Who can participate?
Adults over the age of eighteen years who are not employed by marketing firms, food and beverage companies, health promotion organizations, the tobacco industry, or the food and beverage sector (grocery stores, eateries, etc.)

What does the study involve?
This research involves the comparison and identification of a front-of-pack label that most effectively improves nutrient comprehension among the Kenyan population.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
No individual benefits are anticipated from participation in this study. The proposed study is expected to provide evidence for public policy, and participants will be duly informed of this. The study poses minimal risks to the participants.

Where is the study run from?
African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) (Kenya)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2022 to January 2024

Who is funding the study?
1. International Development Research Centre (Canada)
2. Rockefeller Foundation (USA)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Gershim Asiki, gasiki@aphrc.org
Shukri Mohammed, smohamed@aphrc.org

Contact information

Type(s)
Principal Investigator

Contact name
Dr Gershim Asiki

ORCID ID
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9966-1153

Contact details
African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC)
P.O BOX, 10787
Nairobi
Kenya
00100
+254 714712834
gasiki@aphrc.org

Type(s)
Public, Scientific

Contact name
Dr Shukri Mohammed

ORCID ID
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8693-1943

Contact details
African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC)
P.O BOX, 10787
Nairobi
Kenya
00100
+254 713089457
smohamed@aphrc.org

Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number
Nil known

IRAS number

ClinicalTrials.gov number
Nil known

Secondary identifying numbers
ERC/P1323/2022

Study information

Scientific Title
Assessing the effectiveness of front-of-pack food labels in Kenya: A randomized controlled trial

Acronym
FEP-ACTION

Study objectives
The presence of a Front-of-Pack Label will lead to a higher rate of correct identification of unhealthy foods by consumers compared to a condition where no label is present.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 24/04/2023, AMREF Ethics and Scientific Review Commitee (Nairobi, Nairobi, 00100, Kenya; +254(0) 206994000; erc.kenya@amreg.org), ref: ERC/P1323/2022

Study design
Three-arm randomized controlled trial

Primary study design
Interventional

Secondary study design
Randomised controlled trial

Study setting(s)
Community, Retail/food outlet

Study type(s)
Prevention, Efficacy

Participant information sheet
See outputs table

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Identification of unhealthy foods using different front-of-pack labels in urban and rural settings in Kenya

Interventions

The intervention involves two phases: a control (placebo) phase and an experimental phase. Each participant will be exposed to both the control and experimental phases, with the aim of assessing the within- and between-subject effects.

During the control (placebo) phase, all participants will view product images displayed on mock packages without any front-of-pack label. Subsequently, they will respond to a set of questions. In the experimental phase, the same participants will be randomly assigned to one of three label conditions (intervention or experiment). They will view the same product images, but this time the images will be presented with a front-of-pack label (the intervention), and they will be asked to respond to the same identical set of questions as in the control phase.

The study duration is approximately is one month, and there will be no subsequent follow-up for the study arms.

In terms of randomization, a manual process utilizing an Excel sheet will be used to randomly allocate study participants to one of three front-of-pack labels. The initial step involves using the sample allocation for counties and sub-counties to ensure an equal distribution of labels among participants in those specific counties. Participants will then be assigned labels randomly based on their specific unique IDs. This process will be imported into the data collection equipment, and random symbols will appear for each participant during the interviews.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome measure
Measured during the control and intervention phases:
1. Identification of foods high in nutrients of concern measured by presenting products and asking the participant to identify the products that are high in salt, sugar, and fat (yes, no, or don’ t know) and identify the products as unhealthy (healthy or unhealthy)
2. Identification of unhealthy foods measured by presenting paired images of products and asking the participant to identify the product higher in salt, sugar, or fat and determine the unhealthier product.
3. Consumers intention to purchase unhealthy foods measured using a four-point Likert scale.

Secondary outcome measures
There are no secondary outcome measures

Overall study start date
01/03/2022

Completion date
31/01/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Participants >18 years and those who purchase packaged products.

Participant type(s)
Resident, Population

Age group
Adult

Lower age limit
18 Years

Upper age limit
69 Years

Sex
Both

Target number of participants
2,185

Total final enrolment
2196

Key exclusion criteria
1. Participants aged less than 18 years
2. Participants working in the marketing industry, food and beverage companies, health promotion, tobacco industry, and food and beverage industry (e.g., supermarkets, restaurants, retail companies)

Date of first enrolment
29/11/2023

Date of final enrolment
22/12/2023

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Kenya

Study participating centre
Nairobi County
Embakasi North and South counties, and Langata sub counties
Nairobi
Kenya
00100

Study participating centre
Mombasa County
Mvita and Kisauni Sub Counties

Mombasa
Kenya
80100

Study participating centre
Garrisa County
Garrisa township and Fafi sub counties.
Garrisa
Kenya
7 0100

Study participating centre
Kisumu county
Nyando and Kisumu central sub counties
Kisumu
Kenya
4 0100

Sponsor information

Organisation
International Development Research Centre

Sponsor details
45 O'Connor St, Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4
Ottawa
Canada
K1G 3H9
+1 (613) 236-6163
info@idrc.ca

Sponsor type
Government

Website
http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Pages/default.aspx

Organisation
Rockefeller Foundation

Sponsor details

420 Fifth Avenue
New York
United States of America
NY 10018
+1 20 4987500
info@rockfound.org

Sponsor type
Research organisation

Website
https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/

ROR
https://ror.org/03sfkwk85

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
International Development Research Centre

Alternative Name(s)
Centre de recherches pour le développement international, IDRC, CRDI

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Local government

Location
Canada

Funder Name
Rockefeller Foundation

Alternative Name(s)
Centre de recherches pour le développement international, IDRC, CRDI

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Local government

Location
Canada

Results and Publications

Publication and dissemination plan
We plan to publish the findings of this study in a peer-reviewed journal.
The findings will also be disseminated to various audiences, including government stakeholders, civil society, communities where the data will be collected, scientific conferences, etc.

Intention to publish date
30/12/2024

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study will be available upon request from gasiki@aphrc.org. The shared data will be anonymized and have no identifiers linking it back to the study participants. Broad consent will be sought from the study participants thus allowing for future analysis.

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Participant information sheet			01/12/2023	No	Yes
Basic results		24/10/2024	28/10/2024	No	No
Results article		10/11/2024	24/02/2025	Yes	No