

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

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| <b>Submission date</b><br>28/11/2023   | <b>Recruitment status</b><br>No longer recruiting | <input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered<br><input type="checkbox"/> Protocol            |
| <b>Registration date</b><br>06/12/2023 | <b>Overall study status</b><br>Completed          | <input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results |
| <b>Last Edited</b><br>24/02/2025       | <b>Condition category</b><br>Other                | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data  |

## 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?

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## Contact information

### Type(s)

Principal investigator

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## Additional identifiers

### Protocol serial number

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 Committee (Nairobi, Nairobi, 00100, Kenya; +254(0) 206994000; [erc.kenya@amreg.org](mailto:erc.kenya@amreg.org)), ref: ERC/P1323/2022

## **Study design**

Three-arm randomized controlled trial

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study type(s)**

Prevention, Efficacy

## **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 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(s)**

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.

## **Key secondary outcome(s)**

There are no secondary outcome measures

## **Completion date**

31/01/2024

## **Eligibility**

### **Key inclusion criteria**

Participants >18 years and those who purchase packaged products.

### **Participant type(s)**

Resident, Population

### **Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

### **Age group**

Adult

### **Lower age limit**

18 years

### **Upper age limit**

69 years

### **Sex**

All

### **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

### Organisation

Rockefeller Foundation

### ROR

<https://ror.org/03sfkww85>

## Funder(s)

### Funder type

Government

### Funder Name

International Development Research Centre

### Alternative Name(s)

Centre de recherches pour le développement international, IDRC.CRDI, le Centre de recherches pour le développement international (CRDI), el Centro Internacional de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo (IDRC), International Development Research Centre: IDRC, El Centro Internacional de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo, IDRC, CRDI

### Funding Body Type

Government organisation

### Funding Body Subtype

National government

### Location

Canada

### Funder Name

Rockefeller Foundation

## Alternative Name(s)

Centre de recherches pour le développement international, IDRC.CRDI, le Centre de recherches pour le développement international (CRDI), el Centro Internacional de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo (IDRC), International Development Research Centre: IDRC, El Centro Internacional de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo, IDRC, CRDI

## Funding Body Type

Government organisation

## Funding Body Subtype

National government

## Location

Canada

# Results and Publications

## 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](mailto: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? |
|---|---------|--------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <a href="#">Results article</a>               |         | 10/11/2024   | 24/02/2025 | Yes            | No              |
| <a href="#">Basic results</a>                 |         | 24/10/2024   | 28/10/2024 | No             | No              |
| <a href="#">Participant information sheet</a> |         |              | 01/12/2023 | No             | Yes             |