



*Centre of Excellence
for Nutrition*

GIOVENTÙ

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for future succes**

Gioventù Foundation

Update Report

Period: April to October 2024

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Introduction

We are pleased to present an update report on the donor agreement between the Gioventú Foundation and the Centre of Excellence for Nutrition (CEN), North-West University (NWU). This report aims to provide an overview of the progress made on the various funding activities within this agreement.


MSc Scholarships

The following summary highlights the academic progress and achievements of students currently supported by the Gioventú Scholarship. Each recipient has shown exceptional dedication to their studies, research, and professional growth in the field of Human Nutrition and Dietetics. The updates provided by the students reflect their success in coursework, advancements in research, and active involvement in various academic and professional activities. The scholarship's support has played a vital role in enabling these students to focus on their academic and research pursuits, fostering their overall development and success.

Table 1: Summary of the academic progress and achievements of the Gioventú Foundation Scholarship recipients

Malawi		
Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)		
Ms Shamane Lole		
	Courses completed:	Emerging and Current Issues in Human Nutrition; Biometry 1; Advanced Nutrition and Human Metabolism; Nutritional Epidemiology; Food Systems and Healthy Diets.
	Research topic:	Trends, spatial distribution, and determinants of child food poverty in Malawi.
Ms Naomi Makande		
	Courses completed:	Biometry 1; Advanced Nutrition and Human Metabolism; Emerging and Current Issues in Human Nutrition; Nutritional Epidemiology; Food Systems and Healthy Diets.
	Research topic:	Assessing the willingness of caregivers to reduce the frequency and quantity of sweetened beverages and unhealthy foods for infants and young children.
Ghana		
University of Ghana (UoG)		
Ms Afia Asamoah-Duku		
	Courses completed:	Review of Basic Nutrition; Dietetic Professional Practice; Human Anatomy and Physiology; Therapeutic Catering; Social Psychology; Nutrition and Immunology; Advances in Nutrition in the Life Cycle.
	Research topic:	Association Between Food Security and Lipid Profile Among Urban-Informal Workers in a Selected Community in the Ashiaman Municipality.


Ms Cheryl Isabella Arbenser

	Courses completed:	Nutrition Science Laboratory, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Dietetic Professional Practice, Advances in Nutrition in the Life Cycle, Review of Basic Nutrition, Nutrition and Immunology, Social Psychology.
	Research topic:	Nutritional Status and Nutritional Support of Pediatric Cancer Patients at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital.
	Additional experiences:	Completed 144 hours of clinical rotation at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, gained hands-on experience, and participated in professional development workshops.


Nigeria

University of Ibadan


Mr Mukthar Mohammed

	Courses completed:	<p><u>First semester:</u> Principle of Food and Nutrition; Basic Statistical Procedure; Community Nutrition; Nutritional Physiology; Community Organization & Development; Clinical Nutrition & Diet Therapy; Experimental Techniques & Research Methodology in Human Nutrition.</p> <p><u>Second semester:</u> Public Health Nutrition/Community Nutrition; Nutrition Planning Policy, Monitoring & Evaluation; Food Preservation Safety and Consumer Protection; Agriculture and Nutrition Interphase; Ethics of Public Health Research and Practices; Food Consumption Studies and Nutrition Education; Food Economics; Advanced Nutrition Education & Advocacy; Seminar; and Research Project (ongoing).</p>
	Research topic:	Nutrient Intake, Meal, and Dietary Pattern of Children Aged 4-13 Years in Kebbi State, Northwest Nigeria.
	Additional experiences:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completed Seminar Presentation titled "Child Food Poverty: A Systematic Review from the 2024 WHO Report." - Engaged in research assistantship, contributing to study design, data analysis, AI in nutrition research, and various departmental duties. - Attended workshops and presented on the use of AI tools in nutrition research.

Ms Oluwatoyin Oladeji

	<p>Courses completed:</p>	<p><u>First Semester:</u> Nutritional Physiology; Principles of Food and Nutrition; Community Nutrition; Public Health Nutrition; Experimental Technique and Research Methodology in Human Nutrition; Clinical Nutrition and Diet Therapy; Community Organization & Development; Basic Statistical Procedures.</p> <p><u>Second Semester:</u> Public Health Nutrition; Food Preservation Safety and Consumer Protection; Nutrition Planning and Policy, Monitoring & Evaluation; Agriculture and Nutrition Interphase; Ethics of Public Health Research and Practice; Food Economics; Food Consumption Studies and Nutrition Education; Advanced Nutrition Education & Advocacy; Seminar; Research Project (ongoing).</p>
	<p>Research topic:</p>	<p>Development and Validation of a Contextualised Healthy Eating Plate to Improve Dietary Outcomes Among Adolescents.</p>
	<p>Additional experiences:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successfully presented the research proposal at the academic staff panel for project pre-data presentation. - Completed Chapter 1 to 3 of the research project and submitted it for review. - Conducted phase 1 of data collection. - Presented a seminar titled "Assessing the Diet Quality and Nutrition Outcomes of Adolescents in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo State," reviewed by the project supervisor.

Ms Temilade Arulogun

	<p>Courses completed:</p>	<p>Advanced Nutrition Education & Advocacy; Food Consumption Studies and Nutrition Education; Seminar; Research Project.</p>
	<p>Research topic:</p>	<p>Barriers and Enablers to Access and Adequate Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables among Students in the University of Ibadan.</p>
	<p>Additional experiences:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successfully completed and defended the research project. - Presented an abstract at the 3rd Ibadan Public Health Conference in May 2024. - Another abstract has been accepted for presentation at the 9th African Nutrition and Epidemiology Conference (ANEC). - Drafted two manuscripts based on the research project, with plans for submission to journals.

South Africa


North-West University (NWU)

Ms Rolivhuwa Matabi

	Courses completed:	First Semester: Introduction to Public Health Nutrition; Introduction to Nutrition Epidemiology and Research Methods. Second Semester: Applied Public Health Nutrition.
	Research topic:	The comparison of body image ideals among South African key population groups (Asian, Black, Coloured, & White) aged 15+ years.
	Additional experiences:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Revised research topic from "The relationship between South African population groups and body image ideals among adults aged 15 years +" to the current focus.- Completed writing background rationale, study objectives, problem statement, and research methodology.- Held biweekly meetings to report progress and receive guidance and corrections from supervisors.- Presented the entire research study and statistical plan to supervisors.- Completed and submitted the research protocol on the university template.- Protocol defense was on September 5, 2024.

University of Limpopo

Ms. Masodi Makhafola – University of Limpopo

	Courses completed:	MSc in Dietetics – full research dissertation
	Research topic:	Adherence to sports nutrition recommendations by netball athletes at the University of Limpopo, South Africa

Support Program for PhD Students

This Program aims to provide complementary training to the training that PhD students receive at their home institutions. It prepares and enables students to successfully navigate their PhD research and make the most of their academic journey. The Support Program is specifically designed for first-year PhD students in human nutrition and includes several core methodological modules essential for the successful completion of a PhD.

The program (Addendum 2) focused on critical elements of the research process, ranging from protocol writing to analysis and publication of results. Topics included protocol writing, research methodology, population and sampling, data capturing and analysis, presentation skills, and scientific writing.

The Support Program for PhD Students consists of two parts:

1. **Online/distance learning:** Modules were completed from 1 July to 13 September 2024, following a fixed weekly schedule. Weekly virtual face-to-face sessions were also held with the participants.
2. **Face-to-face meeting:** A six-day, full-time, face-to-face meeting was held in Potchefstroom, South Africa, from 13 to 18 October 2024.

The Program was successfully completed by 21 PhD candidates (See Addendum 1) from 10 different African countries. Participants came from Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Tanzania. Some of the words participants used to describe the Program included informative, insightful, supportive, enriching, and eye-opening (Figure 1). They were eager to return to their respective institutions to continue working on their research protocols. Some quotes from the participants:

“I would recommend the program to other PhD candidates, this program has made me feel confident about my journey forward in my PhD not just academic wise but in life. I think as I have just applied to do a PhD I had a strong feeling of uncertainty and fear about the journey but through the practical life skills training and academic training provided to me from the program I am more confident, I also think it helps candidates to not feel like they are alone.”

“This program is excellent, comprehensive and multisectorial that can accommodate a person who has intentions of doing a PhD regardless of his/her skills on research. Also equip people with leadership skills which everyone needs them in life.”

“I am so grateful for this opportunity. I have learnt so much from our able professors and fellow students not only on how to become a good researcher but also on how I should navigate the PhD journey smoothly by taking care of my health. I am so grateful that this is an ongoing program where many will benefit from. I hope that one day I will get the opportunity to be one of the donors of this program to reach out to many more young African researchers.”



Figure 1: Word cloud describing participants' workshop experience.



Participants, together with Prof Edith Feskens, Support Team and Facilitators



Support Program for PhD Students Participants and Support Team

African Nutrition Leadership Programme

Applications for the 23rd edition of the African Nutrition Leadership Programme (ANLP) closed on 23 September 2024. This year we received a record-breaking 642 applications. After the pre-screening process 214 applications progressed to the final selection stage. Due to the overwhelming number of applications for the 2025 10-day ANLP it was decided to host two programmes in 2025. The selection process has been completed and 80 candidates from 22 countries were selected to attend the two programmes in 2025. The first 10-day programme will be from 11-21 March. The second 10-day ANLP is likely to be hosted from 10-21 November 2025.

Table 2: Countries and number of participants selected from each country

Country	Selected	Country	Selected
Benin	3	Lesotho	2
Botswana	1	Madagascar	5
Burundi	1	Malawi	7
Cameroon	5	Mozambique	1
Cape Verde	1	Nigeria	15
DR Congo	1	Rwanda	1
Egypt	1	Somalia	1
Ethiopia	9	South Africa	2
Gambia	1	Tanzania	6
Ghana	4	Uganda	3
Kenya	9	Zambia	1



Funding for Congresses

The 9th Africa Nutrition Conference (formerly known as the Africa Nutrition Epidemiology Conference, but still retaining its signature acronym ANEC) was held in the city of Cape Coast in Ghana from 7th to 11th October 2024. The ANEC IX Conference theme was *FOOD AND NUTRITION IN A CHANGING WORLD: Implications for nutrition security and health*.

Fifteen students were supported in presenting their research at the congress. The funding paid for registration fees and subsidised accommodation. As the congress took place at the University of Cape Coast, accommodation was provided for the students on campus. A separate report will be compiled, including the awardees' reflection reports on their experiences at the congress.

Table 3: ANEC IX conference scholarship awardees

Name of Awardee	Country	Name of Awardee	Country
Noel Chikumbu	Malawi	Tolulope Owoyemi	Nigeria
Adebola Blessing Adepoju	Nigeria	Ifeoluwa Omolara Bodunde	Nigeria
Olukoye Opeyeoluwa Veronica	Nigeria	Lydia Pakira	Malawi
Deborah Ona-Ara Ariyo	Nigeria	Jane Mwamlima	Malawi
Shobi Gbemisola Otitoola	Nigeria	Chikondi Masamba Makanani	Malawi
Marcus Adegoke Ajayi	Nigeria	Zione Dembo	Malawi
Temitope Happiness, Oriola	Nigeria	Oladipo David Akinola	Nigeria
Ogundairo Yetunde Omotola	Nigeria		
Temilade Wemimo Arulogun	Nigeria		



Scholarships Awardees at ANEC IX conference held 5 to 7 October 2024

Expenditure Overview

An amount of €60,000 was received. For 2024, a total of €54,434.86 was spent, and an overview of the expenditure can be found in Table 4. An exchange rate of 20.2215 ZAR/EUR, which was the rate at the time of receipt, was used to calculate costs.

Table 4: Expenditure overview 2024

Category	Allocated amount (Euro)	Allocated amount (ZAR)	Amount spent 2024 (Euro)	Amount spent 2024 (ZAR)
MSc Scholarships	€36 500	R738 084.75	€34 780.89	R703 321.76
ANLP	€7500.00	R151 661.25	€7500.00	R151 661.25
Support Program for PhD Students	€7500.00	R151 661.25	€7500.00	R151 661.25
Conference Scholarships	€5000	R101 107.50	€3461.66	R70 000.00
Administration	€3500	R70 775.25	€1192.31	R24 110.28
Total	€60 000	R1 213 290.00	€54 434.86	R1 100 754.54

From now until March 2025, funds are anticipated to support the eight remaining scholarship students (one student is completing her studies this year) and the ANLP, scheduled for March 2025.

Conclusion

The first year of the donor agreement between the Gioventú Foundation and the Centre of Excellence for Nutrition has been highly successful. The distribution of support has been effective, allowing numerous students to gain valuable academic and professional experiences. We are pleased with the progress made, particularly in terms of scholarship support, the ANLP, PhD Support Program, and funding for congresses. This support has enabled students to make significant strides in their research and development, and we are confident that it will continue to have a lasting impact in the years to come. We look forward to further strengthening this partnership and supporting more students in their academic journeys.

Appendix 1 – Support Program for PhD Student 2024 Participants

Participants			
Surname / Family name	First name(s) / Given name(s)	Country	Name of Institution where registered
Akinlade	Ademola	Nigeria	Federal University of Agriculture
Amesimeku	Emmanuel	Ghana	University of Ghana
Balcha	Kifle	Ethiopia	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Bongkinuy	Nancy	Cameroon	University of Buea
Chirambo	Tamara	Malawi	Eduardo Mondlane University
Galaa	Yvon	Ghana	University of Ghana
Hamaimbo	Bubala	Zambia	University of Pretoria
Kawemama	Willbroad	Tanzania	Sokoine University of Agriculture
Konlan	Maxwell	Ghana	University of Ghana
Lyimo	Elizabeth	Tanzania	Nelson Mandela Africa Institution of Science and Technology
Martin	Martin	Tanzania	Nelson Mandela Africa Institution of Science and Technology
Masanja	Hope	Tanzania	Nelson Mandela Africa Institution of Science and Technology
Mbae	Umotho	Kenya	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
Modise	Theodorah	South Africa	North-West University
Mwelwa	Lukonde	Zambia	University of Zambia
Oladapo	Mojisola	Nigeria	Obafemi Awolowo University
Semenekane	Milton	South Africa	University of Pretoria
Ssenyondo	Muzafaru	Uganda	North-West University
Wamucii	Eunice	Kenya	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
Yakubu	Tamimu	Ghana	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
Zuma	Zoleka	South Africa	North-West University

Appendix 2 – Support Program for PhD Students Face-to-Face Program

Sunday – 13 October 2024		
Venue: Sports Village		
TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
17:00 – 19:00	Introduction and overview of programme	Prof Robin Macleod
	Meet and Greet	Dr Fré Pepping and Dr Frank Hayford
	Contracting with each other (10 min)	Prof Robin Macleod
	Team building	Mr Chris Conradie
19:00	Get together and braai	
Monday – 14 October 2024		
Venue: Sports Village		
TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
08:00 – 08:10	Opening and welcome	Prof Marius Smuts
08:10 – 08:15	Contracting with each other	Prof Robin Macleod
08:15 – 10:00	Presentation of protocols – Group 1: Development of tools (5)	Participants Facilitator – Dr Lizelle Zandberg
10:00 – 10:30	TEA BREAK	
10:30 – 12:30	Protocol presentations – Group 2: Product development/interventions (6)	Participants Facilitator – Dr Frank Hayford
12:30 – 13:30	LUNCH	
13:30 – 15:00	Protocol presentations – Group 3: Nutrition education/Behaviour change (5)	Participants Facilitator – Prof Robin Macleod
15:00 – 15:30	TEA BREAK	
15:30 – 17:00	Protocol presentations – Group 4: Other topics (4)	Participants Facilitator – Dr Fré Pepping
17:00 – 17:15	Feedback on presentation skills	Prof Robin Macleod
17:00	Participants work on own protocols	
Tuesday – 15 October 2024		
Venue: Sports Village		
TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
08:00 – 08:30	Reflection of the previous day	Prof Robin Macleod
08:30 – 10:00	Nutritional epidemiology	Prof Edith Feskens
10:00 – 10:30	Nutritional epidemiology: Errors, bias and confounders	Prof Edith Feskens
10:30 – 11:00	TEA BREAK	
10:30 – 11:30	Nutritional epidemiology: Errors, bias and confounders	Prof Edith Feskens
11:30 – 12:30	Data analysis plan	Prof Edith Feskens
12:30 – 13:30	LUNCH	
13:30 – 14:00	From theory to practice: CEN intervention studies	Prof Marius Smuts
14:00 – 15:30	Time to work on data analysis plan	Facilitators
15:30 – 16:00	TEA BREAK	
16:00 – 17:00	Last questions on errors, bias, confounders, etc	Prof Edith Feskens
17:00	Participants work on own protocols	
Wednesday – 16 October 2024		
Venue: Sports Village		
TIME	ACTIVITY	PRESENTER
08:00 – 08:30	Reflection of the previous day	Prof Robin Macleod
08:30 – 09:30	Lecture: Dietary assessment	Prof Tertia van Zyl
09:30 – 10:30	Qualitative research methods discussion	Prof Lize Havemann-Nel

10:30 – 11:00	TEA BREAK	
11:00 – 13:00	Presentation of data analysis plan (only one objective)	Participants Facilitators
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 15:00	Presentation of data analysis plan (only one objective)	Participants Facilitators
15:00 – 15:30	Feedback and questions	Prof Edith Feskens
15:30	Travel to University	
15:45 – 17:00	Tour of CEN and campus	
17:00	Return to Sports Village Participants work on their own protocols	
Thursday – 17 October 2024 Venue: Sports Village		
TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
08:00 – 08:30	Reflection of the previous day	Prof Robin Macleod
08:30 – 09:30	Data management process	Prof Linda Malan
09:30 – 10:30	Practical and logistical issues around biological sample collection	Dr Lizelle Zandberg
10:30 – 11:00	TEA BREAK	
11:00 – 12:30	Scientific writing	Prof Marius Smuts Prof Marlien Pieters
12:30 – 13:30	LUNCH	
13:30 – 15:00	How to write an abstract Publishing etiquette	Prof Marius Smuts Prof Marlien Pieters
15:00 – 15:30	TEA BREAK	
15:30 – 17:00	Leadership session	Prof Johann Jerling
17:00	Participants work on own protocol	
Friday – 18 October 2024 Venue: Sports Village		
TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
08:00 – 08:30	Reflection of the previous day	Prof Robin Macleod
08:30 – 10:30	Updated protocol presentations	Participants Facilitators
10:30 – 11:00	TEA BREAK	
11:00 – 13:00	Updated protocol presentations	Participants Facilitators
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 14:45	PhD Journey – personal experiences	Mr Arole Shivambu Mr Shams Bakali
14:45 – 15:00	Evaluation of the program	
15:00 – 15:30	Photos	
18:30 for 19:00	Gala dinner	Crista Galli