



Research Collaboration between University of Oxford and Maseno University

Dr. Jennifer Carter and Dr. Agatha Christine Onyango applied for the AfOx Collaborative Catalyst Grant. The proposal titled “Pilot Study of a Mixed-Methods Approach Investigating Changing Food Systems, Sustainable Dietary Patterns and Cardiometabolic Health in Kenya” was accepted for funding.

Dr. Carter (BA, MRes, PhD, SFHEA), is an Associate Course Director, MSc Global Health Science and Epidemiology, Senior Research Fellow, CTSU. In 2017, Jennifer won the Medical Sciences Division Early Career Teaching Excellence Award. She also won 'Most Acclaimed Lecturer of the Year' in 2018 for the Oxford Student Union student-led teaching awards. In 2021, she was awarded the 'Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy' (SFHEA) title for her leadership in the promotion of teaching excellence. In 2024, Jennifer was the highly commended finalist in the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Innovative Teaching and Assessment for her creation of the Fundamentals of Statistical Software and Analysis course.

Dr. Onyango and Dr. Carter have a shared interest in global health, nutrition, obesity and non-communicable disease. A synergy between our research interests began and we developed the proposal together to target our shared scientific interests and desire to improve nutrition and global health.

With the pilot data we can reach out to other researchers that Nuffield Department of Population Health (NDPH) collaborates with in the region to progress the formation of a larger grant for a prospective study, such as UKRI's Applied Global Health calls (opening February 2025). For this call we can harness the expertise in NDPH for the development of large prospective studies around the globe, such as Professor Sarah Lewington (head of the Global Population Studies group) and Goylette Chami (PI of prospective study in Uganda), and Professor Tim Key's team working on the Livestock, Environment and People [LEAP] research programme (which provides evidence on the environmental, social and health impact of meat consumption). Dr. Carter also leads several short courses in epidemiology and statistics, the material of which have been used internationally for capacity building over the last four years. With a growing collaboration between NDPH and Maseno University, Department of Nutrition and Health, there is scope to bolster capacity building in epidemiology and statistics using these training materials. The data that Dr. Carter and Dr. Onyango can collect together from this pilot study and the future larger-scale project will also hopefully form the foundation for student exchanges between University of Oxford

and Maseno University. Student exchanges between Oxford and Maseno will hopefully promote Oxford's MSc and DPhil courses locally to increase the diversity of MSc and DPhil applications at NDPH from the region, as well as provide opportunities for Oxford students to learn in Kenya.

The collaboration on this Catalyst grant will begin a new partnership between Kenyan and Oxford teams passionate about assessing the relationship between a changing global environment and the aetiology of nutrition-related cardiometabolic disease. It is our hope that in the future the evidence from this collaboration will provide preliminary data that may inform potential targets for interventions encouraging more sustainable dietary patterns that can help prevent diet-related disease.



Dr. Jennifer Carter



Dr. Agatha Christine Onyango