



CAPSTONE

Non-Communicable Diseases
Collaboration in West Africa

**CAPacity Strengthening of Transdisciplinary education for nON-communicable
disease care in WEst Africa (CAPSTONE)**

Report of Third Stakeholders Meeting

Date: 2nd April, 2025

Time: 9:35 AM – 1:00 PM

Venue: West Africa Centre for GeoHealth Conference room, University of Ghana School of Public
Health

Attendance: 23 participants

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday, the 2nd of April, 2025 the third stakeholders meeting was held at the West Africa Centre for Geo Health, School of Public Health, University of Ghana, Accra. In attendance were stakeholders from the Ministry of Health, Ghana Health Service, CSOs, Academic and Research Institutions, Pharmacy Council and the Federation of Ghana Medical Students Association. The goal of the meeting was to discuss the current version of curriculum and solicit input from stakeholders. Also to introduce the concept of challenge-based learning within the context of the CAPSTONE project to stakeholders, as well as inform them about the upcoming train-the-trainer workshop in Ho, UHAS. Additionally, there was a presentation on the Community of Practice within the CAPSTONE project.

The meeting started at 9:30 am with an opening prayer by Prof. Yeetey Enuameh. Professor Bonsafah, the moderator for the day, welcomed all stakeholders on behalf of the team and asked them to introduce themselves. Dr. Arti Singh gave the purpose of the gathering. Dr. Judith Van de Kamp gave stakeholders an overview of the challenged based learning. This was followed by a question and answer session. Afterwards, Dr. Faith Agbozo presented the MPH curriculum on NCD to stakeholders. Following this, Prof. Amuna led the discussions on the curriculum. Dr. Sigh gave a brief overview of the CAPSTONE's community of practice and introduced stakeholders to the CAPSTONE's website, after which Dr. Boateng updated the house on the upcoming train-the-trainer workshop in Ho, UHAS, slated for 4th - 10th of May, 2025. The closing remarks was by the Chairman, Prof. Newton

Feedback/ Questions from Stakeholders

Challenge-Based Learning

Stakeholders thanked the presenter on her excellent delivery. However, few questions and concerns were raised by stakeholder on CBL. They were:

1. Origin of Challenge based learning - Stakeholders wanted to know whether CBL has been used elsewhere and under what circumstances it has been used. As well as the origin of CBL
2. Testing of CBL in Ghana: Stakeholders wanted to know why CBL is being tested in Ghana if it has not been verified - "The question is that if this is not being tested and verified to make sure it works, why do you use this here? "
3. Difference between challenge based learning and problem based learning: Stakeholders wanted to know how different challenge based learning was from problem based learning. One person said "everything I've heard is what we do in problem-based solving. And that's what, for example, the University of Cape Coast Medical School has been doing for quite some time. So if you're presenting this, you look at the added value and let's not present it. You know how we like giving names to certain initiatives that already exist? We embellish it and present that as if it's bringing some heaven on earth kind of thing."

MPH Curriculum

Overall stakeholders had a positive perception of the MPH curriculum and thought the content was fairly good. Few comments and clarifications were sought from the presenter. Below are the details:

1. Multisectoral collaboration and partnership for NCD : Stakeholders thought that the projects' focus on multisectoral collaboration and partnership for NCD management and prevention was laudable.
2. Advocacy, leadership and policy: Stakeholders emphasized the role and importance of advocacy in the CAPSTONE project. One said "But the other thing that I always think that is absent when it comes to the issue of this leisure, it has to do with advocacy, it has to do with legislation, I mean I can see policies there somewhere. Pardon me, but I see policy there. I don't know what I think that will capture the policy processes because sometimes it's not just about, I'm sure if you look at the interaction, you will see aspects of the laws that we have in Ghana, it doesn't just come like that. There was advocacy that pushed it."
3. Total credit hours: Stakeholders suggested a reduction of the total credit hours from 21 credits to 18 credits as per GTEC requirement. Specifically one said "...your schedule is actually four (4) and I think in total you have about 21 credit hours for the first semester but we were prevailed upon by GTEC to reduce our credit hours to 18."
4. Research Methods: Stakeholders suggested research methods should start from the first semester. One person highlighted that " ...I also noticed that in the curriculum which we are sharing, our research methods only start in the second semester. For a one-year program starting research methods only for the second semester I think is very challenging and problematic so I don't know how you manage to do it ."
5. Six (6) Short courses: Stakeholders wanted clarifications on whether the 6 short courses allows students to look at the various aspects of NCDs - "I was wondering whether any of these six short courses gives the learner the opportunity to look at the various aspects of NCD the different parts- the cancers, diabetes, hypertension, mental health in details or the person will have to choose some specific parts or you just have a general introduction to everything."
6. Intentionality: Stakeholders felt that the project should be intentional in terms of the content and description of our courses - "I just think that we should be intentional, because otherwise we would be running the same cycle. These injuries and things will be in the background. So we should be intentional."
7. Categorization and weighting: Stakeholders suggested that courses should be properly categorized and some made compulsory for students - "So I think that it's important to categorize them well. For the first semester, obligatory, mandatorily, they are doing some NCD epidemiology or prevention or surveillance. And in the second semester, you categorize them as starting with the implementation of technology or whatever."

Also some stakeholders raised concerns about the difference in weighting some electives - "The other point I see is that the first semester, the elective, as it's currently described, is given two credit hours. But in the second semester, when it took us six hours, it means each one is three hours. I don't know why the electives are weighted differently for each semester."

8. Nutrition: Stakeholders pointed out the absence of nutrition in the curriculum - According to one "...I don't see nutrition, whereas the food environment or the nutritional determinants, it's a huge contribution to the NCDs that we have. And looking at the core causes, I didn't see whether I don't see nutrition or the food environment or I don't see it anywhere. So I'm kind of confused."
9. Seminars: Stakeholders were of the opinion that there should be a slot for seminars, where people can share their lived experiences with students. One said "So one way around it is where, I think of some seminars or something, like the first semester, there are some courses where you have seminars and so on. It offers some opportunities where topics are very important, but somehow they are not captured. " Another person shared their views that "invite people who are really on the ground, who have experience, so that they can bring in their practice part of it, and the students get to think."
10. Opportunity for health professionals to build their capacity: One person said "I want to find out whether there is an opportunity for health professionals who are already into any kind of physical and mental health services practice, for them to build their capacity in certain aspects of these courses that you have outlined."

Recommendations from stakeholders

1. That we emphasize and dwell more on the added value CBL brings.
2. That we improve on multisectoral collaboration and partnership
3. That we do an economic evaluation and power finance of the program
4. That the project considers advocacy
5. That the total credit be reduced from 21 credits to 18 credits as per GTEC requirements
6. That research methods should start from first to second semester and not only start in second semester
7. That some electives should be made compulsory for students