



2026 ACMHR-K AMBASSADOR TRAINING PROGRAM:

COHORT 1 - PRELIMINARY REPORT

Theme “Building a Healthier Life Through Cardiometabolic Research and Action”

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme – Cohort 1 was established as a three-week professional development and capacity-building programme focused on cardiometabolic health, scientific knowledge, research translation and leadership. The inaugural programme attracted 54 applications. 17 participants were selected competitively to represent the first ACMHR-K Ambassador cohort. One participant subsequently withdrew from the programme, while 16 participants successfully completed all programme requirements, resulting in a 94.1% completion rate among selected participants. The programme comprised six expert-led sessions, covering a broad range of topics relevant to cardiometabolic health: Cardiometabolic Health and Family Medicine, Nutrition and Metabolic Health, The Gut-Heart Connection: Microbiota and Cardiometabolic Health, Medicinal Plants in the Prevention and Management of Cardiometabolic Disorders, Lipid Metabolism and Cardiometabolic Risk, and Translating Research Findings into Policy and Practice.

Through these sessions participants engaged with experts from diverse fields, broadened their understanding of cardiometabolic health, explored emerging research, strengthened professional networks and considered pathways for translating scientific evidence into practice, policy and community action. The programme will be concluded with a graduation ceremony to be held on Saturday, 5 December 2026, at 2:00 PM at Valley Coffee, Yala Towers, 3rd Floor, Biashara Street, Nairobi. The ceremony will mark the successful completion of the inaugural programme by 16 participants, formally recognising them as the first cohort of ACMHR-K Ambassadors. The programme details have been summarized in Table 1.

Table1: Summary of 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme — Cohort 1

Indicator / Programme Feature	Result / Description
Theme	Building a Healthier Life Through Cardio-Metabolic Research and Action
Purpose	Build a network of young cardiometabolic health ambassadors equipped for health awareness, leadership, advocacy, research communication and community engagement
Applications received	54
Participants selected	17
Participants completed	16
Completion rate	94.1%
Programme duration	3 weeks

Training period	11–26 February 2026
Mode of delivery	Online, via Zoom
Sessions per week	2
Target participants	Young health students and professionals
Minimum qualification	Diploma in Health Sciences or related field
Training approach	Expert lectures, interactive discussions, Q&A and exposure to international research perspectives
Excellence Award recipients	3 participants
Certificates	Certificates of completion for participants who fulfilled programme requirements
Institutional investment	Ksh 70,000
Cost to participants	Free
Expected ambassador role	Support cardiometabolic health awareness, community engagement, advocacy and ACMHR-K activities
Key capacity areas developed	Research communication, leadership, policy engagement, health education and community advocacy
Graduation	5 th December 2026 - Nairobi Kenya

2. PROGRAMME BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Cardiometabolic diseases represent an increasingly important public health challenge, requiring coordinated action across prevention, nutrition, clinical care, biomedical research, health education and policy. Addressing these challenges requires more than scientific knowledge alone. Health professionals, researchers and emerging leaders must also be able to communicate evidence, collaborate across disciplines, understand emerging research and contribute to the translation of knowledge into practice. The ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme was developed to provide an interdisciplinary learning environment in which participants could explore cardiometabolic health from multiple perspectives. The inaugural programme brought together expertise spanning family medicine, nutrition, microbiome science, medicinal plants, lipid metabolism and research-to-policy translation. The programme was built around a central principle: Knowledge becomes more meaningful when it can be translated into action. Participants were therefore encouraged to consider how scientific evidence can move beyond academic publication and contribute to professional practice, policy, health education and community action.

3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The inaugural Ambassador Training Programme was designed to:

- Strengthen participants' understanding of cardiometabolic health and its major determinants.
- Expose participants to current scientific perspectives and emerging areas of research.
- Promote interdisciplinary learning across medicine, nutrition, biomedical science and public health.
- Strengthen participants' ability to engage with scientific evidence.
- Introduce participants to the process of translating research into policy, practice and community action.
- Provide opportunities for professional networking and interaction with experts.
- Encourage participants to develop confidence as health advocates, researchers and emerging leaders.
- Establish the foundation of a continuing ACMHR-K Ambassador network.

4. PROGRAMME DESIGN

The programme was delivered over three weeks and consisted of six expert-led sessions.

Each session addressed a distinct dimension of cardiometabolic health. Collectively, the sessions moved from clinical and nutritional perspectives through emerging biological mechanisms and therapeutic approaches to lipid metabolism and, finally, research translation:

Clinical Health → Nutrition and Metabolic Health → Gut–Heart Connection → Medicinal Plants and Therapeutic Perspectives → Lipid Metabolism → Research Translation, Policy and Practice.

This interdisciplinary progression enabled participants to appreciate cardiometabolic health as a complex field requiring collaboration across different areas of science, healthcare and society.

The programme also created opportunities for participants to interact with experts, ask questions, exchange perspectives and build professional relationships.

5. PROGRAMME SELECTION AND PARTICIPATION

The inaugural programme generated strong interest, receiving 54 applications. Following the selection process, 17 participants were admitted into Cohort 1 based on the strength of their applications. One participant subsequently withdrew during the programme. The remaining 16 participants successfully completed the full three-week programme. This represents 31.5% selection rate from the total applicant pool and 94.1% completion rate among selected participants. The participants were inducted into the program on 2nd February 2026 (**Figure 1**).

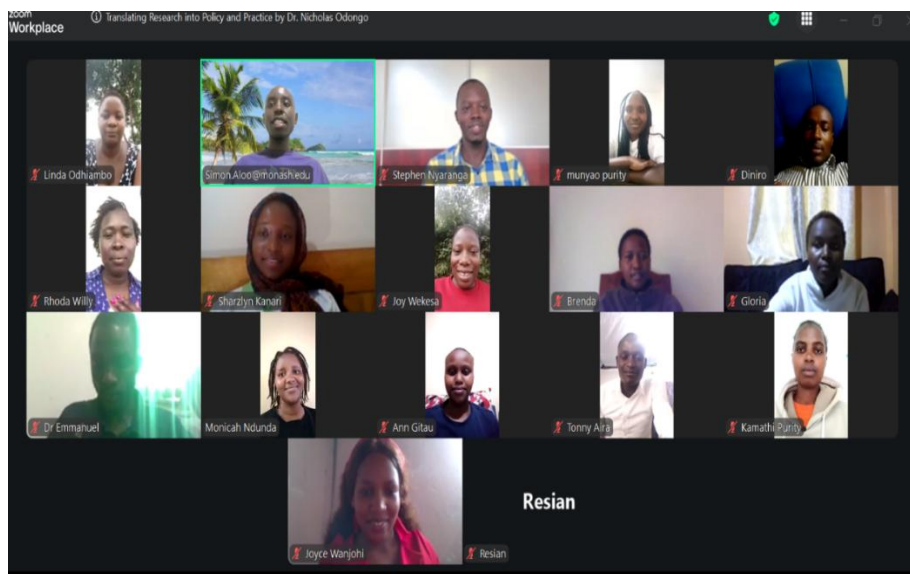


Figure 1. Induction of 2026 ACMHR-K trainees

6. SESSION-BY-SESSION PROGRAMME

The programme featured an interdisciplinary and internationally diverse panel of experts spanning clinical medicine, nutrition, microbiome science, medicinal plants, lipid metabolism, biomedical research and research-to-policy translation. Their diverse expertise and international perspectives enriched the learning experience and exposed participants to different approaches to cardiometabolic health research, practice and evidence translation (**Figure 2**).



Figure 2. 2026 ACMHR-K ambassador training session speakers

6.1. SESSION 1: Burden, Trends and Trajectories of Cardiometabolic illnesses in Kenya

Speaker: Mr. Alex Nguma, HSc

The opening session introduced participants to cardiometabolic health from a family medicine and primary-care perspective.

Participants explored the importance of prevention, early identification and appropriate management of cardiometabolic risk within healthcare settings. Participants gained:

- A broader understanding of cardiometabolic health from a primary-care perspective.
- Greater appreciation of prevention and early intervention.
- Insight into the role of family and primary healthcare professionals in addressing cardiometabolic risk.
- A foundation for understanding cardiometabolic disease within the wider healthcare system.

6.2. SESSION 2: Nutrition and Metabolic Wellness: From Food to Function

Speaker: Ms. Lilian Mumina

The second session focused on the relationship between nutrition and metabolic health.

The session provided participants with an opportunity to consider how dietary factors influence metabolic health and how nutrition knowledge can contribute to prevention and health promotion.

Participants gained:

- Greater understanding of nutrition in relation to metabolic health.
- Appreciation of evidence-based nutrition education.
- Insight into the role of nutrition in cardiometabolic disease prevention.
- Greater awareness of the importance of translating nutrition science into practical health messages.

6.3. SESSION 3: The Gut–Heart Connection: Microbiota and Cardiometabolic Health

Speaker: Dr. Eric Banan-Mwine Daliri, PhD

The third session introduced participants to the emerging relationship between the gut microbiota and cardiometabolic health.

Participants explored how research on the gut microbiome is contributing to the understanding of biological pathways associated with cardiometabolic disease. Participants gained:

- Exposure to emerging research on the gut–heart connection.
- Greater understanding of the potential relationship between gut microbial communities and cardiometabolic health.

- Appreciation of the role of emerging biological research in explaining complex disease processes.
- Awareness of the importance of continued research before emerging findings can be translated into practice.

6.4. SESSION 4: Herbal Medicine and Metabolic Health

Speaker: Dr. Olakunle Sanni, PhD

The fourth session explored the potential role of medicinal plants and plant-derived bioactive compounds in cardiometabolic health.

The session provided participants with an opportunity to examine traditional and emerging therapeutic approaches through a scientific lens. Participants gained:

- Greater awareness of research involving medicinal plants and cardiometabolic disorders.
- Appreciation of the scientific evaluation required when considering plant-derived interventions.
- Understanding of the importance of evidence-based approaches to complementary and emerging health interventions.
- Exposure to opportunities and challenges in translating plant-based research into health applications.

6.5. SESSION 5: Lipid and Cardiovascular Risk

Speaker: Dr. Simon Aloo, PhD

The fifth session focused on lipid metabolism and its relevance to cardiometabolic disease.

Participants were introduced to the biological importance of lipids and their relationship with cardiometabolic health, providing a bridge between molecular research and broader disease mechanisms.

Key Learning Outcomes

Participants gained:

- Greater appreciation of lipid metabolism in cardiometabolic health.
- Understanding of how lipid pathways contribute to disease mechanisms.
- Exposure to the relevance of lipid research in understanding cardiometabolic risk.
- Insight into how biomedical research can contribute to improved understanding of complex diseases.

The session connected fundamental biochemical mechanisms with broader questions of prevention, disease mechanisms and therapeutic research.

6.6. SESSION 6: Translating Research into Policy and Practice

Speaker: Dr. Nicholas Odongo, PhD

The final expert session addressed one of the central themes of the programme: the translation of research evidence into policy and practice.

Participants reflected on the journey from scientific discovery to real-world application and the importance of communication, stakeholder engagement and evidence-informed decision-making.

Key Learning Outcomes

Participants gained:

- Greater understanding of research translation.
- Appreciation of the relationship between evidence, policy and practice.
- Insight into how researchers can communicate findings beyond academic publications.
- Greater awareness of stakeholder engagement.
- Encouragement to think beyond research generation toward research application and impact.

The session provided a fitting conclusion to the scientific component of the programme by connecting the knowledge acquired throughout the three weeks to the broader goal of creating healthier communities.

6. GRADUATION AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY

The inaugural ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme will be concluded with a graduation and recognition ceremony in Nairobi.

Graduation Details

Date: Saturday, 5 December 2026; **Time:** 2:00 PM; **Venue:** Valley Coffee, Yala Towers, 3rd Floor, Biashara Street, Nairobi

The ceremony will mark the successful completion of the three-week programme by 16 participants. The graduates will be formally recognised as the inaugural cohort of ACMHR-K Ambassadors, marking the beginning of a growing professional network focused on cardiometabolic health, research engagement, health education and evidence-informed action

The programme will recognize three participants for their outstanding participation during the 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme:

Brenda Korir: Excellence Award Recipient

Brenda will be recognised for her outstanding participation and performance throughout the programme. Her reflection on the programme emphasised the value of practical and engaging learning, particularly the connection between research, community action and policy impact.

Tonny Muthembwa: Excellence Award Recipient

Tonny will be recognised for outstanding participation and performance during Cohort 1.

His reflection highlighted the programme's contribution to broadening his understanding of cardiometabolic diseases and their impact in African communities.

Joy Wekesa: Excellence Award Recipient

Joy will be recognised for outstanding participation and performance during the inaugural cohort.

Her reflection highlighted the value of exposure to leading scientists and professionals and the confidence this created around future research and leadership opportunities.

7. PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE AND TESTIMONIALS

The value of the programme extended beyond the formal content of the six sessions. Participants were exposed to different professional journeys, research perspectives and approaches to addressing health challenges. The programme also created an environment for participants to interact with peers who share interests in health, research, nutrition, medicine and community impact.

Brenda Korir: “The training sessions were practical, engaging, and highly informative. I particularly appreciated the emphasis on translating research into community action and policy impact.” Brenda's reflection highlights the importance of connecting research and knowledge with action beyond the Gra

Tonny Muthembwa: “The 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Program greatly expanded my understanding of cardiometabolic diseases and their impact in African communities.” Tonny's reflection captures the programme's emphasis on broadening participants' understanding of cardiometabolic health within an African context.

Joy Wekesa: “Participating in the 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Program exposed me to leading scientists and professionals whose journeys motivated me to pursue research and leadership opportunities with greater confidence.” Joy's reflection highlights the importance of professional exposure, mentorship and interaction with experienced researchers and health professionals.

8. PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Although the inaugural programme was primarily a capacity-building initiative, several important outcomes emerged.

8.1. Expanded Knowledge

Participants were exposed to multiple dimensions of cardiometabolic health, including clinical medicine, nutrition, microbiome research, medicinal plants, lipid metabolism and research translation.

8.2. Interdisciplinary Learning

The programme demonstrated the value of bringing together different areas of expertise. Participants were able to view cardiometabolic health beyond the boundaries of a single discipline.

8.3. Research Exposure

Participants interacted with researchers and professionals working across different fields, gaining exposure to contemporary scientific questions and research approaches.

8.4. Professional Development

The programme created an environment for participants to develop confidence, broaden their professional networks and consider new research, leadership and health advocacy opportunities.

8.5. Research Translation

A particularly important theme was the movement of knowledge beyond academic publication. Participants were encouraged to consider how research can inform professional practice, policy and community action.

8.6. Network Formation

The completion of Cohort 1 establishes the foundation for a growing community of ACMHR-K Ambassadors who can continue learning, collaborating and contributing to cardiometabolic health initiatives. The 2026 ACMHR-K ambassador trainees were officially recognized as 2026 ACMHR-K (chohort-1) ambassadors (**Figure 4**).

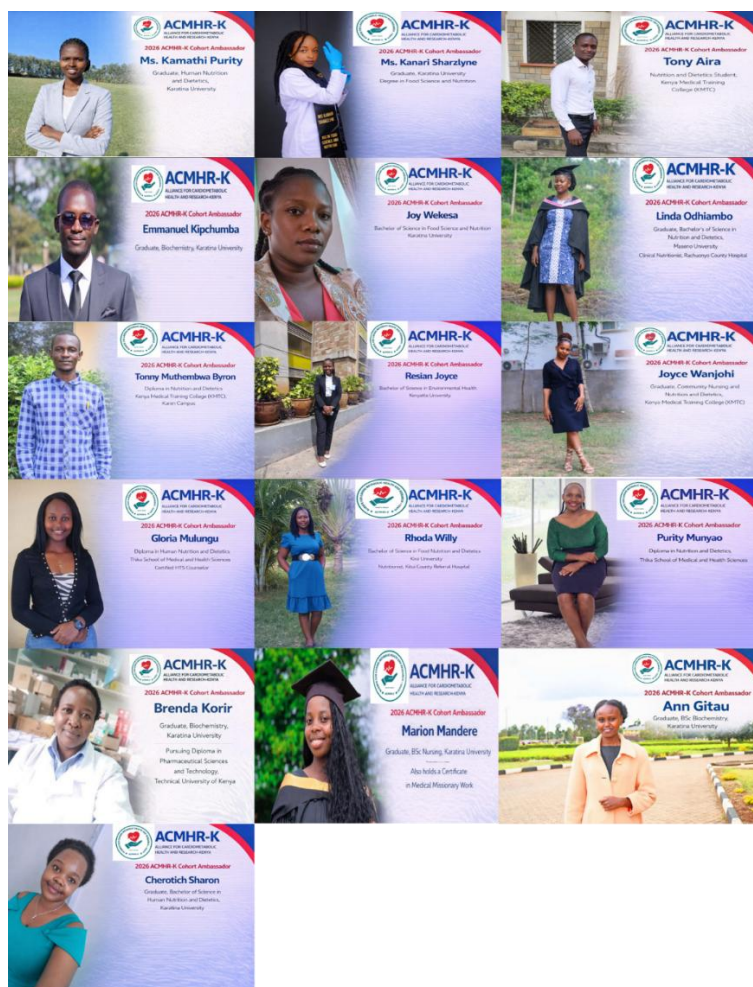


Figure 3. 2026 ACMHR-K Cardiometabolic Health Ambassador - Cohort 1

9. PROGRAMME FUNDING

The 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme - Cohort 1 was funded by the Alliance for Cardio-Metabolic Health & Research–Kenya (ACMHR-K) as part of its commitment to investing in professional development and strengthening capacity in cardiometabolic health. ACMHR-K board provided a total of Ksh 70,000, equivalent to approximately US\$540, toward the implementation of the inaugural programme. **The breakdown of the expenditure will be added after graduation.**

10. LOOKING AHEAD

The completion of 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme - Cohort 1 marks the beginning of the ACMHR-K Ambassador journey rather. Going forward, ACMHR-K aims to continue strengthening the Ambassador Programme as a platform for professional development, research engagement, health advocacy, and community impact.

11. CONCLUSION

The 2026 ACMHR-K Ambassador Training Programme - Cohort 1 represents the beginning of an important capacity-building journey. Across six expert-led sessions, participants explored cardiometabolic health from clinical, nutritional, microbiological, therapeutic, biochemical and policy perspectives. The programme demonstrated the value of bringing professionals together around a shared health challenge and creating opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, professional development and research translation. The inaugural cohort established the foundation of the ACMHR-K Ambassador network.

12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACMHR-K expresses its sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to the success of the inaugural 2026 Ambassador Training Programme:

- We thank our expert speakers for generously sharing their knowledge, expertise and professional experiences with the inaugural cohort.
- We acknowledge the ACMHR-K team and all individuals who contributed to programme coordination, communication, participant engagement, technical support and documentation. We are grateful to everyone who supported the establishment of this first cohort and helped create the foundation for future Ambassador programmes.
- We congratulate all 16 participants who successfully completed Cohort 1. Their commitment, participation and enthusiasm were central to the success of the programme. We also acknowledge the 17 individuals who were selected for the inaugural cohort and appreciate every applicant who expressed interest in joining the programme.