

COUNTRY BRIEF ACCRA-GHANA

RAPIDLY TRANSFORMING URBAN SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABLE HEALTH:
FROM INDIVIDUALS CHOICES TO COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS

Ghana, like most Sub-Saharan countries, is characterised by rapid urbanisation. It is estimated that by 2050 approximately 73.2% of Ghana's population will reside in urban areas. Following this urbanization trend, Accra, the largest metropolis in the country is undergoing significant economic and demographic changes.

If poorly managed, urbanization can present a multitude of challenges to both health and livelihoods. This can arise from various factors, such as alterations in the food environment and consumption patterns, augmented health and environmental risks, and increased pressure on health services and social sectors. The consequences of such issues can be severe, leading to elevated risks of disease transmission, exacerbation of the impacts of extreme events, and worsening social disparities.

In order to improve the safety and well-being of affected populations, as well as minimise urban inequalities, this research utilised holistic approaches to health in cities.



KEYWORDS

Climate crisis adaptation

Urban Food Environment

Urban Transformation

Zoonotic Diseases

Intersectoral Collaboration

GHANA

QUICK FACTS & RESULTS

1. Comprehensive policies and programs on urban (health) development within the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) have not been able to adjust to the speed of urban change.
2. Limited to no intersectoral collaboration between the zoonotic disease surveillance systems of the human and animal health sectors were reported in about 60% of the districts in GAMA
3. Inter-sectoral rabies elimination collaborative efforts in GAMA face challenges due to the high risk of dog bite and limited vaccine take up associated with poor living environment.
4. Neoliberal logics on state-led urban transformation efforts manifest in the marginalization and displacement of urban informal workers and their "working relationships", resulting in notable deprivations across economic, social, human and physical dimensions.
5. Urbanization affects the way food is accessed and consumed, with the vast majority (over 60%) of ready to eat foods around schools being high in fat, sugar and/or sodium.
6. Knowledge and beliefs about the climate crisis vary among primary healthcare practitioners.



GHANA

RECOMMENDATIONS

- One Health implementation strategies should streamline collaborative efforts in multisectoral zoonotic disease surveillance and control systems.
- Inter-sectoral rabies elimination collaborative efforts should prioritize health education and promote access to rabies vaccine under the National Health Insurance Scheme to vulnerable communities.
- AMA should spearhead the formulation of a sustainable plan to guide, coordinate and enhance the inclusivity of informal workers' livelihoods, as part of the overall urban transformation agenda.
- Targeted communication of mitigation and adaptation strategies could be achieved through accessible digital resources.
- Focus on double-duty actions regarding healthy diets in and around schools. This means to ensure that fresh, nutritious foods are more readily available, accessible and affordable for consumption while moderating access and consumption of processed foods.

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