



Abena Asiamah

In her own words, GenNext Fellow, Abena Asiamah shares her incredible travel experience to Kigali, Rwanda with her host organization, PHI's Center for Wellness and Nutrition, for the pilot launch of a new nutritional level screening tool.

On August 24th, 2024, I got to embark on an exciting journey to Kigali, the vibrant capital city of Rwanda, with my GenNext advisor, Dr. Raissa Sorgho. I am working with the Global Nutrition and Partnership team at the Center for Wellness and Nutrition under PHI. The team acts as an intermediary between funders and in-country partners/local NGOs. Since July, I've had the opportunity to engage in various aspects of global health work.

Our primary role on this trip was to support our partners at SFH (Society for Family Health) with a pilot launch of a nutritional screening tool that Abbott produces called a MUAC Z-score tape, which stands for Middle Upper Arm Circumference. It assesses nutritional level in children based on the mass of the arm. Most



Abena and her advisor, Dr. Raissa Sorgho, showcase the MUAC Z-score tapes

people may be familiar with the standard MUAC tapes, but Abbott's model goes a little more in-depth in its assessment, categorizing the user into one of 7 risk classifications.

Rwanda is a such a beautiful country, it is known as the 'Land of a Thousand Hills,' for its lush greenery and mountainous landscapes. I was fortunate to have a breathtaking view of the city from my room and thoroughly enjoyed waking up to it every morning--the amazing weather made the experience even more enjoyable.

On our first full day we met with a team member from SFH, Alex Amugisha, who gave us an overview of what the week would look like, afterwards he was kind enough to take us sightseeing. On Monday, we connected with the rest of the core SFH team at their office in Kigali. Tuesday and



Group photo of community health workers at training in Muhanga

Wednesday were dedicated to training in Muhanga, a district southwest of Kigali (about a 2-hour drive), with a smaller group of nutritionists and nursing staff on Tuesday, followed by a larger group of community health workers on Wednesday. Thursday was spent catching up on work and preparing for our field day on Friday. By



Field day on Friday at the Health Facility in Muhanga.

Friday, all participants had the opportunity to practice using the MUAC Z tapes at a nearby health facility in Muhanga, where I was able to tour and engage with the local community. The week concluded with a meeting with SFH to discuss the success of the training and outline next steps.

I had an amazing week! The trip was highly productive, providing me with a deeper understanding and appreciation of our work. I learned how to prepare for a training and refined my public speaking skills. I left with a strong sense of accomplishment, seeing the impact our work has on the communities we serve. I'm excited for future trips!