

PROFILE

Justice Nonvignon is the first Professor of Health Economics at a University in Ghana. He has over 15 years of experience in teaching, research and technical assistance to governments and development programmes.

Education and career

Professor Nonvignon started his schooling at Confidence Institutions at Pokuase. He then went to St. John's Junior High School (JHS), Accra New Town and later Pokuase District Assembly JHS. He started his secondary education at Benkum Senior High School at Larteh Akuapim and completed at St. John's Grammar School, Achimota in 1998. Professor Nonvignon then enrolled at University of Cape Coast (UCC) in 2000, from where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Economics (with Geography minor) in 2004. After national service as a Teaching Assistant at the Economics Department of UCC in July 2005, he gained scholarship from the African Economic Research Consortium, Nairobi, Kenya (as part of their Collaborative Master of Arts Programme), to study at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from where he obtained a Master of Arts Degree in Economics in 2007. Professor Nonvignon then worked briefly with the Dodowa Health Research Centre of the Ghana Health Service as health economist, and enrolled in a Doctor of Philosophy Degree programme at the School of Public Health, University of Ghana in August 2009, completing in December 2011. He is a past African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellow, postdoctoral fellow at African Population and Health Research Centre, Kenya, visiting scholar at Duke Global Health Institute, USA, Coimbra scholar at Aarhus University, Denmark. He is Adjunct Faculty at Public Health Foundation of India and Strathclyde Business School, Scotland, having also previously served in a similar role at New York University College of Global Public Health

Professor Nonvignon joined the Department of Health Policy, Planning and Management at the School of Public Health in June 2009 as a Tutor, was upgraded to Lecturer (following completion of his PhD) in December 2011, promoted to Senior Lecturer in March 2013, Associate Professor in February 2018, and Professor in September 2021. Justice is currently on sabbatical leave from the University and serves as Acting Head of the Health Economics Programme (HEP) at the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, an autonomous technical health agency of the African Union based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As foundation Head, Justice formed the strategy and is helping grow the HEP into a continental programme that supports continental agencies and programmes, and African Union Member States to leverage health economics capacity and evidence for policies.

Teaching and mentorship

Between 2009 and 2022, Professor Nonvignon taught six different courses to a total 47 groups of students at the bachelor, masters and doctoral levels at the University of Ghana, and three groups of students of New York University Accra Campus. He has delivered guest lectures to students at Harvard University School of Public Health (USA), Duke University's Global Health Institute (USA), and University of Strathclyde's Business School. He was instrumental in designing the Master of Science in Public Health Monitoring and Evaluation and Master of Health Economics programmes, both at the University of Ghana, as well as supporting the design of MSc Monitoring and Evaluation at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences in Tanzania. He also supported the design of many courses and short courses at the international level, through GEMNet-Health, a global organization he chaired, and led delivery of same at several international workshops.

Professor Nonvignon has co-supervised and mentored 5 doctoral students to completion, with 10 more at various stages of completion, at the University of Ghana; co-supervised 5 other doctoral students (to completion) at universities in the UK, Australia and USA. He has also supervised 52 masters students and 14 undergraduate students at the University of Ghana; examined more than 35 master and 5 doctoral theses at the University of Ghana; 10 doctoral and 75 master theses from various universities in Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, and Scotland. He has also been an assessor for faculty promotions for a total of 5 universities in Ghana, Zambia and South Africa. Professor Nonvignon has also mentored postdoctoral and early career researchers from many universities globally. He has a passion for strengthening capacity and mentoring Africa's next generation of health economists who will drive evidence-based health reforms and policies in Africa and be the continent's ambassadors in the global health space.

Research

Professor Nonvignon's research has focused on economic evaluation and health technology assessments, impact evaluation, health financing and economic burden of health states affecting vulnerable populations (the elderly, children and people with mental illness). At the Africa CDC, his work is focused on policy-oriented health economics and financing research to support decision-making at continental, regional and African Union Member State level.

Over the past 14 years, he has served as principal or co-investigator of more than 30 grants of varying sizes, mostly through the University of Ghana and Africa CDC – involving multiple countries, and training and mentoring doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. His research has been funded by organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, PATH, WHO, UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), DANIDA, Research Council of Norway, Susan T. Buffet Foundation, Agence France de

Développement, Centre for Global Development, among others. He has undertaken funded research or collaborated with partners in many countries in Africa, Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australia. Professor Nonvignon has published 4 book chapters, over 90 peer review journal articles, and over 12 commentaries, perspectives and blogs.

National and international consultancies

Professor Nonvignon has consulted for major global health organizations such as the WHO, PATH, World Bank, UNICEF, FCDO, MSH, Palladium, among others, in Ghana, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Comoros, Ethiopia, Mali, Malawi, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Zimbabwe. In Ghana, he has consulted for the National Malaria Elimination Programme, Mental Health Authority, Christian Health Association of Ghana, among others.

University Committees

At the University of Ghana, Professor Nonvignon has served on the Academic Boards of the University and College of Health Sciences; Homecoming Committee (2011); College Short Courses Committee, as well as the following committees at the School of Public Health – Graduate Manual Review, Postgraduate and COVID-19 Response Committees. He was also a departmental PhD coordinator.

National and international level services

Outside of the University, Professor Nonvignon has served on more than 30 national and international committees:

National:

Professor Nonvignon has contributed to the health system in Ghana in many ways, notably through his service on national level committees, including as co-Chair of the Ministry of Health's Technical Working Group for Health Technology Assessment; Member, Mental Health Authority's Committee on Investing in Mental Health, Advocacy Committee of the National Malaria Elimination Programme, MOH Health Financing Technical Working Group, Ghana Health Service COVID-19 Modelling Technical Working Group. He has also led research that has informed decisions on introduction of new vaccines and other public health programmes, including home-based care for fevers in children. Outside the health sector, he serves on MTN Ghana Foundation's Bright Scholarship Award Panel.

International:

Professor Nonvignon has served on more than 16 international Boards and Committees, notably the Technical Advisory Panel of the Pandemic Fund hosted by the World Bank; the Quadripartite Technical Group on Economics of Antimicrobial Resistance hosted by WHO; Evaluation Advisory Committee of

Gavi, the vaccine alliance; the World Health Organization's Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on Infectious Hazards of Pandemic and Epidemic Potential (STAG-IH). Others include Advisory Board of Global Health Economics Centre at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; past Chair of Global Evaluation and Monitoring Network for Health. He is a non-resident Fellow of the Center for Global Development.

Capacity strengthening and research impact

The impacts of Professor Nonvignon's work are varied. In terms of capacity strengthening, he has taught and supervised many students who are currently leading or contributing to policy design and implementation at national, regional and global levels. In addition, materials from his courses and curricula, as well as research are used at various training institutions, particularly in Africa. Professor Nonvignon has also led research on costs and cost-effectiveness of seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC) in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea which is globally acknowledged, as one of few and early such studies, which also contributed to evidence for continued recommendation of SMC as an effective and cost-effective intervention for reducing the burden of malaria in children in the Sahel region of Africa. He also contributed to early studies on the cost of malaria vaccine in Africa countries and currently contributing to evidence on the cost and cost-effectiveness of the next generation of malaria chemoprevention therapies. At the Africa CDC, Justice is leading an effort to develop a continental strategy on evidence-informed priority setting (EIPS) and options for supporting countries to institutionalize EIPS. Professor Nonvignon also spends time providing advice to African Union Member States on economics and financing related strategies and policies.

Professional Associations and networking

Professor Nonvignon is a founding member of the African Health Economics and Policy Association and African HTA Network, member of the International Health Economics Association (served on its Professional Development Subcommittee – which developed the Association's first mentoring programme – as well as Scientific Committee of the World Congress on Health Economics (2013 – Date, serving as a Program Chair for the 2023 conference in Cape Town), and Health Technology Assessment International. Professor Nonvignon has attended and presented at numerous conferences and meetings, as well as given talks at various Universities (including Harvard, Duke, York and Strathclyde Universities), and served on invited panels organized by organizations such as the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Council of Foreign Relations, the World Bank, UNAIDS, on topics related to his expertise and experience.

Other professional work

Professor Nonvignon is Section Editor for Journal of Public Health in Africa and PLOS Global Public Health, has served as Associate Editor for BMC Health Services Research. He has also reviewed about 95 manuscripts for more than 30 peer review journals. He has also reviewed funding proposals for Research Council Norway, Medical Research Council and Wellcome Trust, both of the UK, and National Research Foundation of South Africa.

Family and social life

Professor Nonvignon was born on 16th June, 1979 at Pokuase, near Accra, to the late Stephen Nonvignon Agbojou (an auto mechanic) and Bridget Nonvignon (a petty Trader), with roots from Ho and Benin. Justice is number 13 of 22 children. He is married to Angela Ofosuhemaa Nonvignon and they have been blessed with three children: Jaison, 12; Joses, 8; and Annaliese, 5. Justice worships at the Bethlehem Methodist Church at Pokuase, where he has been a Lay Preacher over the past 22 years. He is currently a Patron of the University of Ghana Branch of the Ghana Methodist Students' Union. Professor Nonvignon loves singing and interacting with the youth. Apart from English, he speaks Swahili and French (intermediate proficiency) in addition to local Ghanaian languages.