



ISBNPA

Systems Science
SIG



Introduction - Systems Science April 2026 Newsletter

Dear Systems Science SIG members,

Welcome to the April 2026 newsletter! In this newsletter, you will read more about:

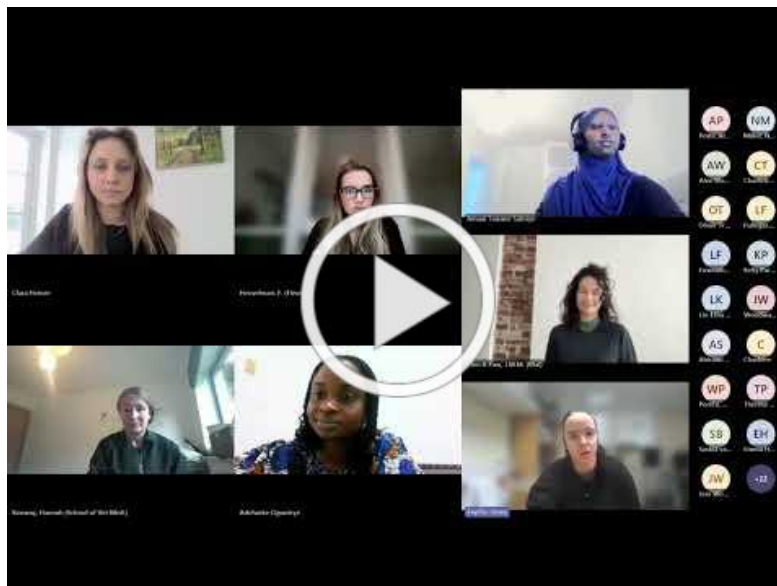
- ...the systems science webinar of February 13, 2026
- ...systems-related activities at the ISBNPA conference in Cadiz
- ...project spotlight of YoPa
- ...other updates related to Systems Science

Webinar: Communicating Systems Approaches with a Diverse Range of Audiences

On February 13 2026, we organized the second Systems Science SIG webinar.

This webinar explored practical strategies for translating systems thinking into clear, accessible narratives tailored to stakeholders with varying levels of familiarity - from policymakers and practitioners to community groups and technical experts. Our speakers Adefuke Ogunleye, Professor Mai Chin A Paw, Therese Lockenwitz Petersen and Clara Heinze shared real-world examples of how systems approaches are shared, translated, and applied across research, policy and practice.

In case you missed it, watch the video below.



We are excited to see you at [ISBNPA2026](#) in Cadiz, Spain, from 27 to 30 May. There will be a multitude of systems-science related sessions and workshops, including:

- Wednesday (May 27) 8:30-12:30 - Pre-conference workshop “Engaging Young Minds in Systems Science: Co-Creating Maps for Movement and Behaviour Change.”
- Thursday (May 28) 14:15-15:35 - Short orals: Systems Science Systems Thinking and Whole Systems Approaches to Health Promotion: Evidence, Methods and Implementation
- Thursday (May 28) 16:50-18:05 - Symposium: Systems Science Catalyzing System Change: From Understanding Complexity to Taking Action
- Saturday (May 30) 08:30-09:45 - Systems Science Symposium: Systems Science from theory to practice: implementing systems approaches to complex health challenges

We are also planning a joint social activity for members of the Systems Science SIG, together with the Implementation, Translation, Scale Up and Sustainability SIG, the Policies and Environments SIG, and the Participatory Research in Health Promotion SIG. The time and date will be released in due course. We will share this via email and social media!



Project spotlight: YoPA Communicating Systems Thinking Through Youth-Centred Participatory Action in Nigeria



By Adefunke Ogunleye

The [Youth-centred Participatory Action \(YoPA\)](#) project in Nigeria applies systems thinking to promote healthier movement behaviours among adolescents by working with young people rather than designing interventions for them. Implemented at Ido Osun High School, Osun State, Nigeria, YoPA engaged secondary school students in mapping the factors that shape their daily



physical activity, well-being, and health choices across school, family, community, environmental, and policy levels.

Using participatory systems mapping and co-creation sessions, Nigerian adolescents identified the interconnected drivers influencing their behaviours, from school timetables and infrastructure to safety, daily routines, family/home, peer norms, and institutional priorities. The goal of engaging the adolescents using the system approach is to empower them to co-create an effective intervention that is contextually appropriate. In collaboration with teachers and community stakeholders, these insights were then translated into locally tailored intervention strategies.

A key lesson from the project has been that communicating systems approaches requires adaptation. With the Nigerian adolescents, systems thinking was conveyed through reflective discussions, storytelling and lived experiences, partly in their local language. With educators and policymakers, the focus shifts toward shared responsibility, institutional alignment, and sustainability. In this way, participation itself becomes a communication tool.

Preliminary findings suggest that youth engagement enhances ownership, feasibility, and contextual fit of interventions. Moreover, applying a Context–Mechanism–Outcome lens helps unpack how and why participatory processes generate meaningful change within resource-constrained environments.

The Nigeria YoPA experience demonstrates that systems science can be both rigorous and accessible when grounded in local realities and youth agency. By translating complexity into shared understanding, the YoPA project advances participatory systems approach for sustainable adolescent health in a low- and middle-income setting.

Want to know more? Visit the [YoPA Nigeria website](#)



Other updates related to Systems Science

Research and Training on Complex Systems and Network Science

The WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training on Complex Systems and Network Science for NCD Prevention and Control are running four free online training sessions via Zoom:

Introduction to Stakeholder Network Analysis

- Wednesday 22 April 2026, 10:30 – 12:30
- Wednesday 29 April 2026, 10:30 – 12:30

Tools for General Systems Understanding

- Wednesday 20 May 2026, 10:30 – 12:30
- Wednesday 27 May 2026, 10:30 – 12:30

Introduction to Critical Systems Heuristics

- Wednesday 24 June 2026, 10:30 – 12:30
- Wednesday 1 July 2026, 10:30 – 12:30

More information:

- Full details regarding registration for each course can be found on the WHO CC website: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/who/whats-on/>
- If you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch via hocc@qub.ac.uk
- Check out their previous trainings: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/who/training/>

Systems Evaluation Network #16

The next Systems Evaluation Network session will take place on Wednesday 22nd April 2026 (15:00-17:00 London time) and focuses on how AI is being used, or considered, in the context of systems approaches and the associated evaluations. Sign up [here](#).

Stay connected!

Stay in the loop by following us on [LinkedIn](#), [Threads](#) and [Instagram](#).

Be updated of all ISBNPA news
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