

WHAT ARE OUR OBJECTIVES?

The aim of this research study is:

To conduct in a partnership framework including interdisciplinary teams from Cape Town, Freiburg and Penn State Universities an analysis



of the existing information in Cape Town on major urban health risk factors and on the spatial distribution of morbidity and mortality particularly –but not only– related to mother-child health with a view to identifying and informing targeted intersectoral interventions to improve health and living in urban areas.

Specific Objectives:

1. Assess the Cape Town mother-child relevant data that is available
2. Explore the association between health outcomes and upstream health determinants

and compare these with provincial / city priority areas

3. Assess data on environmental risk factors available in Cape Town and explore their relationship with population health (morbidity and mortality data) with a view to informing intervention projects using environmental health indicators

4. Describe the availability, accessibility and acceptability of mental health services and identify gaps in mental care provision needed for designing successful interventions

5. Collect existing information about primary and specialist palliative care services in Cape Town and identify information gaps

6. Conduct a targeted literature review of a) community-based mother-child health interventions with a focus on diarrhea and b) mental health services and palliative care services in Cape Town

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URBAN HEALTH - URBAN LIVING

UNI
FREIBURG



Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg





An interdisciplinary Research Project in Cape Town, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the rapid urbanization worldwide the task of improving urban health is of increasing importance, requiring a multidisciplinary approach. The Global Urban Health Project is based on interdisciplinary research of determinants and geographical disparities of health and disease as well as on accessibility to medical care and environmental protection in urban settings. A comprehensive understanding of key issues is needed, adding



aspects of social learning for the design and implementation of improved prevention strategies, communication between stakeholders and researchers, politics and health economics in urban areas.

Our Research Focus integrates bio-psycho-social concepts of health incorporating physical, sociocultural and environmental factors with



a focus on specific urban health risks and problems, such as the raising prevalence of non-communicable diseases.

We aim to develop models for improving health of disadvantaged population groups and reducing disparities and health risks.

Due to existing partnerships Cape Town has been selected as the model city for implementing the here presented interdisciplinary research project.

THE CENTRE FOR MEDICINE AND SOCIETY (ZMG)

The ZMG was founded in November 2014 to combine and foster the cooperation between life sciences and social sciences. It is assumed that interdisciplinary research is required to analyse and respond to the health needs of urban populations particularly in low and middle income countries. The faculties of Environmental Medicine, Mental Health, Biological Anthropology, Palliative Care and Medical Sociology and Psychology are embarking on an interdisciplinary approach to explore determinants and spatial disparities of health and disease.

Our mission is to contribute to improving the health situation in resource poor countries through research and training.



The faculties of Environmental Medicine, Mental Health, Biological Anthropology, Palliative Care and Medical Sociology and Psychology are embarking on an interdisciplinary approach to explore determinants and spatial disparities of health and disease. In cooperation with global organizations (such as WHO) the focus is on disease-causing ecological-biological,



social and psychological factors in urban settings and on options for improved access to health care. This approach is embedded in the overall general aim of Global Health efforts to improve health by reducing disparities and health risks at local, national and international level.

OUR COLLABORATING PARTNERS:



Faculty of Health Sciences (Cape Town, South Africa)

The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Cape Town (UCT) is the oldest medical school in Southern Africa. Their focus is on research in medical and allied fields as well as teaching students over a wide range of healthcare related disciplines. Their goal is to respond to the health care needs of South Africa, to produce and support health practitioners and scientists capable of addressing health need, to promote a spirit of enquiry and contribute to global health equity.

Pennsylvania State University (Pennsylvania, USA)

The Department of Biobehavioral Health at Pennsylvania State University is an innovative interdisciplinary program that enables to explore all factors—biological, behavioral, social/cultural, and environmental—that influence the health of individuals and groups through the life span.

The Department of Health Policy and Administration apply their expertise to consequential research to improve health and preparing the next generation of health services managers,



policymakers, researchers, and scholars.