

African Contributions to Global Health

Concluding conference of the SNSF Sinergia Project

Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques en Côte d'Ivoire (CSRS), Abidjan

13-14 September 2023

African countries have always been the site of medical and health innovations – be it in terms of vernacular bodies of knowledge on health and healing, novel health policies and practices, clinical research and trials, innovative health insurance schemes, or epidemics control measures, among many others. However, scholarly and policy discourse on innovation and the broader theme of global health still tends to see lower-income countries as adapting new developments from the West, often with some delay.

The interdisciplinary Sinergia project ‘African Contributions to Global Health’,¹ funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), has been challenging these unidirectional models and their underlying assumptions. Based at three different Swiss research institutions, the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, and the University of Basel, the members of our consortium have explored questions of health-related knowledge circulation – and noncirculation – from various fields of public health, urban planning, and history. We examine bodies of knowledge, practices and applications that were designed for improving healthcare in Africa but have become relevant to questions of health globally or have the potential to do so. At the same time, we highlight that ‘learning from the South’ must mean more than transplanting quick and cheap technological fixes to serve societies in the global North.

With this concluding conference, the project seeks to debate and refine its research results, and to stimulate and expand ongoing discussions on Africa’s role in the production of health-related knowledge, public health policy, and medical innovation. We invite contributions by researchers from various disciplines and career stages, as well as by health professionals and policy experts.

For further information, please consult: www.globalhealthafrica.ch

Conference day 1

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

8.30-9.00 *Welcome and project introduction*
Julia Tischler (University of Basel, Switzerland)

9.00-10.45 *Panel 1: Knowledge from below, indigenous knowledge*
Chair: Jürg Utzinger (Swiss TPH, Switzerland)

Tolulope Esther Fadeyi (University of Basel, Switzerland): “Women heal with herbs: Phytomedicine, maternity care and knowledge production in Yoruba culture”

Samuel Umoh (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa): “African indigeneity, epistemological beliefs (EBs) and mental health in South Africa”

Akoko Sita Kondo, Kathrin Heitz-Tokpa, and Bassirou Bonfoh et al. (CSRS, Côte d’Ivoire): “Impact of knowledge-sharing strategies on zoonoses at the local level: Case of the Taï National Park in Côte d’Ivoire”

10.45-11.15 *Coffee break*

11.15-12.30 *Panel 2: Space and health care (part 1)*
Chair: Jérôme Chenal (EPFL, Switzerland)

Akuto Akpedze Konou and Jérôme Chenal (EPFL, Switzerland): “Urban agriculture practices and its impact on health determinants in Africa from an urban planning perspective: The case of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Lomé, Togo”

Trésor Bungiena (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium): “Architecture of care: Rethinking hospital infrastructure in African postcolonial cities”

12.30-13.30 *Lunch*

13.30-14.45 *Panel 3: Space and health care (part 2)*
Chair: Jérôme Chenal (EPFL, Switzerland)

Vitor Pessoa Colombo (EPFL, Switzerland): “Contextualizing water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructures in informal settlements in Côte d’Ivoire and Kenya”

Bosco Chinkonda (Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Malawi): “The engagement of children in road traffic injuries and air pollution prevention: A photovoice study in Blantyre, Malawi”

14.45-15.15 *Coffee break*

15.15-16.30 *Panel 4: Drugs and clinical research*

Chair: Christian Burri (Swiss TPH, Switzerland)

Eric Ipyin Nébié (Swiss TPH, Switzerland): “Clinical trial efficiency improvement – learning from neglected diseases’ drugs development”

Chanelle Adams (University of Lausanne, Switzerland): “A local ‘cure’ for a global virus: a case study of phyto- and pharma-nationalism in Madagascar's Covid-19 pandemic response” (*ONLINE*)

16.30-17.00 *Coffee break*

17.00-18.30 *Keynote lecture*

Moderation: Jürg Utzinger (Swiss TPH, Switzerland)

Margaret Gyapong, University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS), Ghana

18.30 *Drinks and conference dinner*

Conference day 2

Thursday, 14 September 2023

9.00-10.15 *Panel 5: Research ethics and stakeholder contributions*

Chair: Jürg Utzinger (Swiss TPH, Switzerland)

Kathrin Heitz-Tokpa, Akoko Sita Kondo, Bognan Valentin Kone, et al. (CSRS, Côte d’Ivoire): “Co-production of knowledge in stakeholder engagement workshops in health research in Côte d’Ivoire”

Blessings Kapumba, Deborah Nyirenda, Nicola Desmond and Janet Seeley (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK): “‘Guidance should have been there 15 years ago’: Research stakeholders’ perspectives on ancillary care in the Global South – a case study from Malawi”

10.15-10.45 *Coffee break*

10.45-12.00 *Panel 6: Policy and international health interventions on the ground (part 1)*

Chair: Julia Tischler (University of Basel, Switzerland)

Danelle van Zyl-Hermann (University of Basel, Switzerland): “Global circuits, local conditions? TB-related knowledge production in 1950s Kenya”

Simplice Ayangma Bonoho (Université de Yaoundé, Cameroon): “The circulation of international health policies in Africa: Between appropriation, hybridisation and rejection”

12.00-13.00 *Lunch break*

13.00-14.15 *Panel 7: Policy and international health interventions on the ground (part 2)*
Chair: Christian Burri (Swiss TPH, Switzerland)

Doris Osei Afriyie (Swiss TPH, Switzerland): “Using health insurance to improve equitable access to quality services in low and middle-income countries”

Ayotunde Ojo (University of Manchester, UK): “Nigerian agency and the expansion, adaptation and variation in the WHO malaria campaign in colonial and independent Nigeria, 1952-1969”

14.15-14.45 *Coffee break*

14.45-16.15 *Roundtable: Science, policy, and society*
Moderation: Julia Tischler (University of Basel, Switzerland) and Jérôme Chenal (EPFL, Switzerland)

Bassirou Bonfoh, Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques en Côte d'Ivoire, Director of the Afrique One consortium

Margaret Gyapong, University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS), Ghana

Matt Harris, Imperial College London

Brama Koné, WHO-AFRO (Brazzaville)

16.15-16.30 *Concluding remarks*

18.00 *Dinner*
