Research Group/Network
Social Epidemiology, Population Health and Violence (SEPHV)
RESEARCH GROUP/NETWORK DESCRIPTION

I. THE SEPHV RESEARCH GROUP/NETWORK

The research group (network) Social Epidemiology, Population Health and Violence (SEPHV) aims at advancing research on the determinants of health inequalities and determinants of interpersonal violence globally. In addition it aims to promote research on interventions and policies to eliminate those inequalities (especially inequities). The network relay on different disciplines and methodologies such as Medicine, Epidemiology, Social Medicine, Statistics, Demography, Psychology, Caring Sciences, Ethnology, Anthropology, Sociology and Political Science.

The group’s main goal is to increase understanding of the determinants of population health and health inequalities in developed and developing countries (low and middle income) which operate at multiple levels and promote effective action to improve overall population health. In addition, the group also investigates the impact of societal factors on interpersonal and collective violence and injury throughout the life span in developed and developing countries as well as violence across specific groups and promote intervention research aimed at reducing violence, abuse and neglect.

II. CURRENT RESEARCH

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Infant and child mortality has declined in many low-income countries. However in many parts of the world and particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, childhood mortality still very high. We use data from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS Measure+) to assess social determinants of child morbidity and mortality.
Current studies focus on determinants of child survival in developing countries with emphasis on the millennium development goals, diarrheal disease, malaria, pulmonary infections and malnutrition in Mozambique and Ghana.

Regarding adolescent health, there has been increased interest in understanding the determinants of health and health behaviour among adolescents throughout the world. However the bulk of knowledge on the issue comes from developed Countries. We are carrying out research on determinants of health behaviour among school children (12-14 years of age) in Teheran. The project is expected to help decision makers in designing appropriate interventions to modify lifestyles among young people. Furthermore, the group will use data to compare health and health behaviour among school children in developed (e.g. Lithuania) and developing countries (e.g. Iran)

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND DISEASE AMONG ADULTS

Cardiovascular disease

In this area, the group’s research is carried out within several areas such as cardiovascular disease (coronary artery disease, coronary artery syndrome, myocardial infarction); and congenital heart disease among adults.

Although cardiovascular mortality has decreased by approximately three-quarters over the past three decades in high-income countries, mortality rates have increased over the same period in many low- and middle-income countries. It is estimated that by 2030, the number of cardiovascular deaths will increase to 23 million, with about eighty-five percent occurring in low- and middle-income countries. Another greater cause of concern is the early age of cardiovascular disease in developing countries compared with developed countries. Our studies aim at
investigating the mechanisms through which social and economic factors influence the risk of CVD in developing countries. Currently studies are underway in Iran using both hospital and population based data.

**Quality of life among adults with congenital heart disease**

In regard to congenital heart disease, it is well known that although medical and surgical advances have resulted in most children with congenital heart disease surviving to adulthood. However, little is known about day to day functioning and wellbeing of adults with congenital heart disease in developing countries. Thus, the ongoing project on quality of life among adults with CHD is expected to provide the first insights on the overall quality of life among adults currently living with congenital heart disease in Iran.

**Studies of association between labour market and health**

D. Employment, Working Conditions and Gender Inequalities in Health in the Mid-Sweden Region (The EWGIHMS Project)

This project investigates the impact of employment and working conditions on gender inequalities in physical and psychological health in the Mid Region Counties of Jamtland and Västernorrland. The project will apply multilevel methodology to account for inter-country variations in health outcomes. The project is carried out in Collaboration with the two County Public Health Centers, and Mid-Sweden University. International partners in the project are the Department of Epidemiology, University of Porto and Kaunas University of Medical Science.

**ELDERLY HEALTH**

This area encompasses studies on quality of life, migration and physical activity among elderly people in developed and developing countries.
SOCIO-Epidemiological Studies of Interpersonal Violence

There has been a long history in sociology of viewing social and economic conditions as general determinants of violence behaviour but recently epidemiologists have come to view socioeconomic factors as explanatory variables contributing to causations for violence instead of only use them as controlling variables. The SEPHV group is interested in understanding the mechanisms through which upstream determinants are related to victimization as well as physical and psychological health outcomes. We use data from European, middle and low-income countries to investigate the role of socioeconomic status, context, and neighbourhood deprivation on victimization and health outcomes across life span (childhood, adulthood and among elderly). Currently we are conducting research in Sweden and other EU countries (8), Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. Mozambique), Latin America (Colombia); Asia (e.g. Bangladesh).

Injury Prevention and Safety

This area includes studies regarding child injury and safety, epidemiology and prevention of fall injuries in elderly populations as well as studies of safety community evaluation.

Public Health and Sustainable Development Studies in Developing Countries (The SOSUSTHM study): the research aims to investigate the relationship between corporate social sustainability and stakeholders health in context of poverty reduction and health promotion. In the first phase, data collection is taking place across fifteen large companies in Mozambique. The project is carried out in collaboration with
researchers from Eduardo Mondlane University and the National directorate of work, Ministry of work affairs.

EUROPEAN STUDIES

The Research group is involved in 5 EU projects:

EU-ABUEL Project (Sweden, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Spain and Portugal) which investigated Abuse and Neglect among elderly. The research group is the overall coordinator for this project.

EU-PROMO Project which is investigating best practices in mental health among six marginalised groups (UK, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Austria, Sweden, Poland, Check Republic, Lithuania, Portugal, Ireland, Germany, Hungary). The research group is a partner and coordinator for WP4.

EU-Dove Project (Portugal, Sweden, Hungary, Belgium, UK, Germany) which investigates domestic violence in Europe whit the research group as partner and coordinator of WP

EUGATE Project (best practices of mental health for immigrants in 14 EU countries. The data collection within all projects has ended. However, data analysis and dissemination of results is still unfolding.

III.EDUCATION
The research group provides three courses within its research domain: (1) Demography and Health; (2) Social and Economic Determinants of Health in Developing Countries and (3) Violence, Society and Health (Developed Countries). The three courses were approved by KI board of Education, are listed in the KI Catalogue and have been given since 2008. The group is progressively developing other courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

IV. GROUP MEMBERS

a) Senior researchers

- Gloria Macassa MD, MPH, PhD Epidemiology, Professor of Public Health Sciences and Epidemiology, Leader of the Research Group/Network: She is a medical doctor and holds a MPH with emphasis in Demography from Karolinska Institute and a PhD in Epidemiology from the Centre for Health Equity Studies (CHESS), Karolinska Institute/Stockholm University Her research interests focus on social determinants of health and population health. Central to this research is the application of social epidemiologic methods to study different exposures and outcomes.(from child survival, health systems research, life-course epidemiology, spatial epidemiology, interpersonal and collective violence) in developing and developed countries. She is involved in several EU and international projects (e.g. ABUEL, PROMO, EUGATE and DOVE) and International projects (e.g. Public Health Leadership competencies project). Currently she is affiliated to the Department of Health Sciences at Mid-Sweden University, Department of Occupational and Public Health sciences, University of Gävle, Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institute and Epidemiology Unit-ISPUP, University of Porto Medical School. E-mail glamaa@hig.se; gloria.macassa@miun.se.
• **Örjan Sundin PhD, Professor in Clinical Psychology:** Professor Örjan received his psychology training at Uppsala University and has worked for several years in the field of clinical psychology. He is currently the Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at Mid-Sweden University and Chair of the discipline of psychology, Division of Psychology, Mid-Sweden University. His research interests include emotion (anxiety, anger), pain, applied psychology and psychophysiology. He is the Swedish Partner Coordinator for the EU-Dove project which investigate domestic violence among people aged 18-64 years of age in 8 EU countries. E-mail: orjan.Sundin@miun.se

• **Joaquim Soares PhD, Professor in Psychology and Professor in Public Health Sciences:** He is a PhD in Psychology, a licensed psychologist, psychotherapist and Professor in psychology and public health sciences at Mid-Sweden University and Karolinska Institute. His research interests include musculoskeletal pain, man and women’s health situation, violence, burnout, hopelessness and anxiety disorders in the general population. He is an expert in violence research and is involved in four EU-Projects (PROMO, DOVE, EUGATE and ABUEL). He is the coordinator of EU-ABUEL. Professor Soares have published more than 200 peer reviewed books and articles and is the editor in chief or the Mid-Sweden Journal of Public Health. E-mail: joaquim.soares@miun.se

• **Eija Viitasara, PhD, Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences:** She holds a PhD in Social Medicine Sciences from Karolinska Institute. Her research interest focuses on violence in working life and determinants of health. Currently, she is the Chair of the public health discipline at the Department of Health Sciences, Mid Sweden University. E-mail: Eija.Viitasara@miun.se;
• **Antonio Ponce de Leon, PhD, Professor of Statistics:** He holds a PhD in Statistics from London School of Economics and Political Science and he is Professor in Statistics at the University of Rio de Janeiro (Institute of Social Medicine) and a Guest Associate Professor at the Division of Social Medicine, Karolinska Institute and Center for Health Equity Studies (CHESS). His research interests include the effects of air pollution on population health, multilevel modelling, analysis of longitudinal data and inequalities in health and health care in developed and developing countries. E-mail: [Antonio.Ponce.De.Leon@ki.se](mailto:Antonio.Ponce.De.Leon@ki.se)

• **Bahareh Eslami, PhD, Senior Lecturer in Public Health Sciences.** Dr Eslami is a trained medical doctor and holds a PhD in Health Sciences from Mid-Sweden University. Her research focus on the quality of life of adults with congenital heart disease as well as elderly abuse in Europe.

• **Niclas Olofsson, PhD and Senior Lecturer in Public Health Sciences:** Dr Olofsson received training in public health sciences at Linköping University. He is a senior statistician at the Center for Public Health, Västernorrland County Council and a senior lecturer in Public health. His main research interests are statistical modelling and violence research.

• **Kamal Yassin MD, PhD in Molecular Medicine.** Dr Yassin holds a MD from Khartoum University and a PhD from Karolinska Institute. His research interests include studies on factors modulating glucose homeostasis in diabetes. Furthermore, his research includes the area of migration and quality of life among the elderly.
• **Gebrenegus Ghilagaber, PhD, Professor in Statistics:** Dr. Ghilagaber holds BSc and MSc degrees (AAU), and PhLic, and PhD degrees in Statistics (Uppsala University) as well as PhLic degree in Demography (Stockholm University). Currently, he is the Director of the Department of Statistics, Stockholm University. His research interests include Survival Models (Event-History Analysis), Multilevel and Multiprocess Models, Selection and Causality, Bayesian Methods, and applications of these models/methods in Demography, Public Health, and related areas in developing and developed countries. E-mail: Gebre@stat.su.se

• **Nicola Graham-Kevan PhD in Psychology, Professor of Clinical Psychology.** She is a reader in the psychology of aggression at the University of Central Lancashire and Mid-Sweden University. Her research interests include sex differences in aggression, physical aggression between young men, family violence and women’s offending behaviour, bullying and attributions towards sex abuse.

• **Ismail Yahaya, MD, PhD. Dr Ismail** Yahaya holds a PhD in Health Sciences from Mid-Sweden University. His research addresses child sexual abuse in developing countries. In addition Dr Yahaya has a great experience in systematic reviews using Cochrane typology.

• **Luciana Tricai Cavalini, Professor of health informatics.** Prof Cavalini is with the Department of Information Technology and Education at the University of Rio de Janeiro (URJ) and Department of Epidemiology and Statistics at the Institute of Community health at the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Brazil. Her research interests include health informatics (e-health, health economics and social epidemiology.)
• **Hamid Reza Kankeh, RN, PhD, Associate Professor in Nursing:** He is an Associate Professor in nursing education at University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation in Teheran. He is head of the Disaster Research Group the University University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation in Teheran and a guest researcher at the Division of Social Medicine, Karolinska Institute and Dept. of Clinical Science and Education, Karolinska Institutet Södersjukhuset His research interests and expertise include qualitative research and health care services during disaster times. **E-mail:** hamid.khankeh@ki.se

• **Olalekan Uthman, MPH, PhD, Assistant Professor in Public Health:** He is an Assistant professor in Research Synthesis at the Warwick - Centre for Applied Health Research & Delivery (WCAHRD) Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick and Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, UK.. **His research interests include** evidence-based medicine and social determinants of population health. In addition he is interested in mathematical modeling of infectious diseases as well as mathematical models to understand epidemiology and control of infections of humans.

• **Diego Arturo Sarasti Vanegas, MD, MPH, Professor of Social Paediatrics:** DASV is a trained physician and professor of social paediatrics at the University of Antioquia. Research interests are the impact of social stratification on family violence in Colombia.

• **Mahmoud Rezagoli PhD, in Economics:** He is an Economist with a PhD in Occupational Health from the University of Gävle. Dr Rezagoli’s research centers on means economic evaluation of methods and strategies at measuring physical workloads. Currently he is carrying
studies about economic decision of interventions in working environment. It involves assessment of social costs caused by work-related disorders and rationalization of decision-making.

b) PhD Students

1. **Seyed Hesameddin Abbasi**, MD, Director of the Research Department, Tehran Heart Center, Tehran University of Medical Sciences. Thesis title: Social Inequalities in Coronary Heart Disease in Iran

2. **Afroza Begum** BSc, MPH, Associate Professor, Maternal and Child Health Unit. Thesis title: Suicide Ideation among Adolescents in Rural Bangladesh

3. **Maryam Ramzayan** Msc Health Economics, Iran Ministry of Health. Title: Determinants of Health and Health Behaviour among School Children in Tehran

4. **Esmatossadat Hashemi** MD, MPH. Thesis Title: Child injuries and safe community in Tehran. The results from an evaluation program.


7. **Reza Ziaei**, MD, MPH. Thesis title: Global School-based student health survey Epidemiology and Mental Health)


Master students
- **Rocio Winnersjö BSc KI. Social epidemiology of violence. MIUN** and the National Board of Health and Welfare

- **Kingsley Ayuk- NSok**, BSc Anthropology, MPH (Health Promotion), Master Student in Mental Health. *Topic: Suicide Ideation and HIV among Adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. Registered at Uppsala University, Department of International Health*

- **Jennie Ukala, BSC Public Health, KI**: Master student in Population/Public Health at the Center for Health Equity Studies (CHESS). *Topic: Determinants of health care seeking behaviour in Uganda (Registered at CHESS)*

- **Therese Andersson, BSc MIUN** Attitudes, knowledge and practices regarding malaria prevention and treatment among pregnant women in Ahanta district Ghana

**Guest Researchers**

- **Mariona Pons i Viques** MSc, PhD student; Pompeu Fabra University, Spain *Topic: Social Inequalities in Breast Cancer in the Barcelone Region*

- **Harry Cepahs Charmsmar**: He holds a MPH from KI and MSc in Political Science (with major in International Politics and Relations) From Stockholm University. Currently he is MSc candidate in Demography at Stockholm University. He has worked as Research Assistant at University of Southern Denmark, Unit for Health Promotion Research. His research interests include Health and Safety Promotion, Politics of Health, Sovereignty and globalization, Migration and Health. He is currently investigating the “widening of the gap in life expectancy between women and men in high income countries” (with emphasis to Sweden). *Topic: Morbidity and Mortality decline in Developed Countries*
- Muhammad Navid Tahir, BSPT, MPH (Health Promotion) 2011- current He is Physiotherapist and holds a Master Degree in Health Promotion from Karolinska Institute. Currently; he is work as a Research Officer in Punjab Emergency Service (Rescue 1122) in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. Also he is affiliated with the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Australia. His research interests are HIV/AIDS, Emergency Medicine, Emergency Services, Road Traffic Accidents, Road Safety, Disaster Management, Fire Safety and any other health promotion topics. **Topic:** Traffic injuries managed by Emergency Service (Rescue 1122) in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. Currently he is a research fellow at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Australia.

- Jude Awuba: He is a Scientific Program Analyst at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, USA. His research areas and interests include the impact of public policy on population health. He has also published in the areas of access to mental health care, the intersection between HIV/AIDS and mental health, and gender and socio-economic risk factors for HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Mr. Awuba holds a master’s degree in public health and a bachelor in History and Political Science

- Johana Aspelin, BSc. **Topic:** Employment Status and health in Västernorrland County, Sweden


V. RESEARCH GRANTS

The research carried out by the SEPHV group is funded among others by the European Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) and DG Sanko (for EU projects); SIDA-SAREC and
through Local Governments (Ministries of Health, Universities and Research institutes) for projects in developing countries. Approximately 30 million SEK 2010-2016.

VI. RESEARCH PARTNERS

The research network maintains research collaboration with several partners around the world.

National partners

Mid-Sweden University, Department of Health Sciences Department of Psychology and Department of Caring Sciences; Karolinska Institute, Department of Public Health Sciences; University of Örebro, Department of Health Sciences; Center for Public Health, Västernorrland County Council

International partners

Mozambique Ministry of Health (Martinho Dgedge, PhD); and Department of Community Health, Faculty of Medicine. Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique; Deartment of Chemical Engeenering, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique (Professor Jose da Cruz Francisco and Professor Elsa Maria Salvador); Iranian Ministry of Health, Teheran (Dr Maryam Ranzameyan); University of Colombo, Sri Lanka (Professor Samath D. Dharmaratne. Head, Associate Professor in Community Medicine and Consultant Community Physician, Senior Fellow, Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM), University of Colombo, Sri Lanka); Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB), Fazlur Rahman, PhD, Professor, Chair, Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB), House B 162, Lane 23, New DOHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1206, Bangladesh, Email: fazlur@ciprb.org; CISALVA Institute, Universidad del Valle, Colombia, Maria Isabel Gutierrez M. MD, MSc, PhD, Director & Professor, CISALVA Institute, Universidad
del Valle, WHO/PAHO Collaborating Center in Injury & Violence Prevention, Safe Community Certifying Centre, Cali, Colombia, Email: maria.gutierrez@correounivalle.edu.co; Teheran Heart Center, Iran (Dr Hesamedin Abassi and Dr Karimi); Institute of Public Health, University of Porto, Portugal (Professor Henrique Barros, Director of the IPH); Kaunas University of Medicine (KMU), Lithuania (Professor Mindaugas Stankunas); Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry (Queen Mary, University of London), UK; Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium (Professor Vincent Lorant); Maison Blanche Hospital (Etablissement public de santé Maison Blanche), France; Project team at Charité, University Medicine Berlin, Clinic for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Germany; The National School of Public Health (NSPH) in Athens, Greece (Professor Eli Ionidi); The University of Debrecen (UD), Hungary; Agency for Public Health of Lazio Region – Italy; Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL); Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology, Warsaw, Poland; The Barcelona Public Health Agency (ASPB), Spain; Charles University, Czech Republic; National Institute for Health Development, Hungary; The Health Promotion Research Centre (HPRC), Ireland; Department of Psychiatry, Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam, Netherlands; I. N. R. C. A. – Italian National Research Center on Ageing, Ancona, Italy (Maria Gabriela Melchiore, PhD; Giovani Lamura, PhD); Protestant University of Ludwigsburg, Department of Public Health Sciences, Germany (Prof Jutta Lindert); University of Granada, Faculty of Medicine at University of Granada, Spain (Prof Paco); International Centre for Reproductive Health (ICRH), Universiteit Gent, Belgium; Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences, Kingston University and St George's, University of London, UK; Magyar Tudomnyos Akademia Szociolgiai Kutatintzet, Budapest, Hungary; University of California, Los Angeles, The Charles Drew/ UCLA Medical Education Program (Shahrzad Bazargan-Hejazi, PhD, Associate Professor, Chair CDU/UCLA ; The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of
VII: PUBLICATIONS (selected)


economic hardship: Results of a population-based study. *International Journal of Medical science and Public Health*, vol. 5: 1


occupation serves as preventive measures?. *International Journal of Preventive Medicine*, vol. 6


- Nachega Jean B, Adetokunboh Olatunji, Uthman Olalekan A, Knowlton Amy W, Altice Frederick L, Schechter Mauro, Galárraga Omar, et al. 2016. "Community-Based Interventions to Improve and Sustain Antiretroviral Therapy Adherence, Retention in HIV Care and Clinical Outcomes in Low- and Middle-Income Countries for Achieving the


- Zachor Hadas, Machekano Rhoderick, Estrella Michelle M, Veldkamp Peter J, Zeier Michele D, Uthman Olalekan A,


VIII. CONTACT US

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