

Pioneering Futures of Health and Well-being: Actors, technologies and social engineering

Background

Sustainable Development Goal number 3 is to *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*. According to that goal, “many more efforts are needed to fully eradicate a wide range of diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues.”¹

There are exciting new developments in the domain of healthcare and public health. For example, e-healthcare solutions that have the potential to change the health landscape. This CRG will, among other things, search for such innovations and delve their socio-political and economic dynamics.

In the past, several senior ASCL researchers have conducted research on health related issues. For example, Marleen Dekker and Rijk van Dijk co-edited *Markets of well-being: Navigating health and healing in Africa* (African Dynamics 2010), the topic of health insurance has been explored by André Leliveld and Marleen Dekker; and in 2014 the ASCL produced the Ebola portal and hosted a roundtable at Africa Works! Currently, there is work being done in the M-Health project, led by Mirjam de Bruijn and André Leliveld; Karin van Bommel (PhD student) has just defended her PhD on Nodding syndrome in Uganda and Gitty Petit’s PhD research focuses on the topic of health and material culture.

Now is the moment for the ASCL to take a more structured approach to the issues of health and well-being. We can add a multi-disciplinary approach to health related topics, for example issues such as diagnostics, public health, M-health, psychosocial care, meta data, etc.

Objectives

The main objective of this new Health and Well-being CRG is to bring together ASCL-based staff and others to explore the points where health and well-being within African societies are entering pioneering and uncharted territories. This will bring closer to innovations. In the first year, we will discuss the focus of the CRG. This will be an exploratory phase as the topic still needs to be rooted in ASCL. There are many related topics covering domains as diverse as social, economic and political life. Therefore, we will explore issues such as health insurance, inclusiveness, maternal & child mortality, the involvement of new technologies (as in the M-health project) and demographic issues (population explosion). In particular, we will examine questions that produce CRG activities that add value to existing research on health and well-being.

¹ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/health/>

The focus in the coming years will be:

1. Start-up discussion on the topic of health and well-being, what should our initial focus be?
2. offer a reading-group forum for (PhD-)students and (senior)researchers looking for feedback or wanting supervision;
3. organize two workshops: one in 2018, one in 2019, on a sub-theme with one or two speakers from outside the ASCL to inform and inspire us;
4. organize a Panel at ECAS 2019 in Edinburgh;
5. submit a research proposal on a health and well-being related topic in 2019/2020