



About u'Good!?

The National Research Foundation (South Africa), Fondation Botnar (Switzerland), and the Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa) have partnered to implement a research programme on young people and relational wellbeing (RWB) in urban and peri-urban environments, to be implemented during 2023-2027. The concept of 'relational wellbeing' builds on two decades of research in Global South contexts about how people come to live decent, satisfying lives while navigating challenges. While relational wellbeing includes having enough (material wellbeing), and feeling good (subjective wellbeing), it is ultimately about how life is lived as a series of shared interactions, connections, and strategies that take place in multiple domains, and at interlinking levels – the personal, societal and environmental.

Through the adoption of a RWB framework, u'Good!? embraces people-centred, collaborative and participatory approaches to conducting research to generate insights into how the relational aspect of multiple domains may make contributions to wellbeing.

We are primarily interested in studying the lives of young people aged 10 to 24 years. In contemporary societies, this age group faces significant challenges, which are exacerbated among young people in the Global South. This includes unprecedented challenges about their future, uncertainty and precariousness regarding livelihoods, social inequalities to accessing food, water, healthcare, the effects of the climate crisis, global economic turbulence, opportunities and risk associated with digitalisation and mental health concerns like increasing rates of anxiety, depression and suicides.

By centring young people, we hope to generate insights into what youth wellbeing looks (and should look) like across different contexts, what challenges youth face, and how best to advance the wellbeing of young people in the Global South. We will also learn about the value of a relational approach to both understand and cultivate youth wellbeing, and to work in partnership and collaboration with youth and related stakeholders towards the advancement of youth wellbeing in the Global South.