



WHAT IS OLA?

Depression and anxiety are leading causes of youth disability worldwide. Adolescents and young adults who live in big cities more commonly experience stressful events such as **violence, poverty, substance misuse and social isolation**, which puts them at greater risk of developing one or both conditions.

This includes adolescents and young adults from **Latin America**, which is one of the most urban parts of the world with approximately **80% of the population** living in large cities. In addition, young people represent a **¼ of the population** in Latin America. Estimated levels of depression and/or anxiety for adolescents and young adults within the region range from **17% in Colombia** to **26% in Argentina**. Although many individuals experience stressful events, most do not develop depression and/or anxiety. Of those who do experience mental distress, evidence suggests that **50-60% of individuals recover after one year** without accessing treatment from mental health services.

The **OLA study** is taking place across **under-resourced** areas of three large Latin American cities: **Buenos Aires (Argentina), Bogotá (Colombia) and Lima (Peru)**. The overall aim of the programme is to identify which characteristics, resources and activities help young people living in urban environments in Latin America to prevent and recover from depression and/or anxiety, using **4 Work Packages (WP)**.

IN THIS ISSUE

WHAT IS OLA?

PROGRESS
UPDATE

ARTS
PARTNERS

INTERVIEW
WITH
FERNANDO
ESNAL

PROGRESS UPDATE

Study aims of OLA:

- ✓ **WP1:** Develop appropriate methods for assessing resources in young people.
- **WP2:** Determine if resources differ between young people with and without depression and anxiety.
- **WP3:** Identify which resources are linked with recovery from depression and anxiety in young people.
- **WP4:** Exploring examples of what works for young people either to prevent depression and anxiety, or in supporting them to recover.



Stefan (Chief Investigator) is currently in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Here is a photo of Luis Brusco, Tomás Brusco, Fernando Carbonetti, Jorge Pasquini, Fernando Esnal and Santi Lucchetti with Stefan (centre) during his trip.

Pilot Study (WP1) - *Phase completed*

Cross sectional study (WP2) - *In progress*

- **WHAT:** Participants will complete the questionnaires developed in WP1.
- **WHO:** 2,040 young people (15-16 years old and 20-24 years old) across the three countries: 1,020 participants experiencing depression and/or anxiety and 1,020 without.
- **WHY:** to understand if characteristics, resources and activities are different in young people who are, and are not experiencing depression and anxiety.

Longitudinal cohort study (WP3) - *In progress*

- **WHAT:** Participants will complete a short number of questionnaires after 6 months and then all questionnaires again after a period of 12 months.
- **WHO:** 1,020 young people (aged 15-16 years and 20-24 years) across the three countries, who took part in the cross-sectional study and who were experiencing depression and/or anxiety when they joined the study.
- **WHY:** to understand which characteristics, resources and activities in young people are linked to recovery from depression and anxiety.

Updates per country

Colombia and the Peru team have completed the main ESM study! The Argentina team are not far behind, with only 3 more participants left to recruit. A huge well done to all teams for all their hard work these last couple of months!

- **Colombia** have completed baseline data collection with 692 participants, and a total of 70 participants have completed the 6-month CRF.
- **Argentina** have completed baseline data collection with 437 participants, and a total of 40 participants have completed the 6-month CRF.
- **Peru** have completed baseline data collection with 563 participants, and a total of 92 participants have completed the 6-month CRF.

OLA...

Update on Trial Within a Cohort

A new additional work package has been added to the OLA study - Trial Within a Cohort (TWIC).

A total of two TWICs will be conducted between March 2022 – June 2022:

1. Testing **music workshop in Bogota (Colombia)** for **adolescents** with anxiety and/or depression.

Led by: Fundación Batuta

2. Testing **creativity workshop in Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Lima (Peru)** for **young adults** with anxiety and/or depression.

Led by: Crear Vale La Pena (Argentina) and Teatro La Plaza (Peru)

Updates:

- We had our first TWICs meeting of the year with the arts organisations and research teams, chaired by Paul Heritage and Stefan Priebe, on Monday 14th February. All teams are very enthusiastic about getting started!
- Paul will visit each arts organisations this year in order to observe their work, developing the ways in which we can share understanding of each organisation's artistic methodologies across the OLA network and to a wide range of international audiences.
- **Ethics approval:**
 - **Argentina:** The team are still waiting to hear back from their IRB.
 - **Colombia:** The IRB approved the TWIC protocol last week, the team are waiting for the approval letter.
 - **Peru:** The team have a meeting scheduled with their IRB on Tuesday 8th March 2022.

Arts partners involved:



Pontificia Universidad
JAVERIANA
Colombia

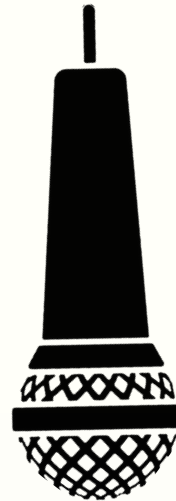


Queen Mary
University of London



Facultad de Medicina
UNIVERSIDAD DE BUENOS AIRES

INTERVIEW WITH...



— “

From your knowledge/experience, why do you think building resilience in youths living in Latin America is important?

Latin America is a very complex land. It presents for the people who live there a lot of experiences where poverty, insecurity and adversity are very common. This is accentuated much more in the most vulnerable territories. For this reason, it seems very important to me that young people have tools that allow them to get ahead and be resilient despite their unfavorable context.

” —

— “

What do you hope will be the impact of OLA?

I would like the impact of OLA to be to raise awareness of how important mental health is in young people. In this way, we can make problems visible in order to generate more effective long-term solutions and generate an improvement in the quality of life of our society.

” —

— “

What is the biggest challenge you've encountered so far working on the OLA project?

I think the biggest challenge I've found so far is for young people to feel involved in what we're doing and the change we're trying to make. Being able to make visible issues about the mental health of our young people seems to us of vital importance to be able to understand their problems and what strategies to address for a better future.

” —



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