



Call for Papers

African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE) Annual Meeting

In partnership with

UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre (ABC) and The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC)

*“Resilience and Social Cohesion in African Borderlands: The Role of Agropastoralist Mobility, Labour Diversification, Peace and Security in Regional Integration “
Nairobi, 11-13 September 2024*

Submission deadline: 12 April 2024

Contact and submission: abornetwork@gmail.com

About the ABORNE annual meeting

The African Borderlands Research Network ([ABORNE](#)) annual meeting is a leading event on interdisciplinary research on African borders and borderlands in the world. Since the ABORNE network was founded in Edinburgh in 2007, meetings and other related events have been held nearly yearly in Africa and Europe. In 2024, the conference will be held in Africa and co-hosted with the UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre (ABC) and The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) In Nairobi.

Important Dates

- Abstract submission due 12 April 2024
- Notification of acceptance: 3 May 2024
- Conference: 11-13 September 2024

Background

Africa's borders are home to some of the continent's most creative and resilient populations. However, inadequate curation of knowledge about the sources of their resilience is a significant gap in development practice. In 2021, UNDP's Africa Borderland Centre (ABC) commissioned a series of knowledge products to deepen practitioners' understanding of the borderlands' strengths and development trajectories. The projects enabled the curation of voices, graphics, pictures, and written works, representing the first-of-its-kind knowledge works in their granularity and originality.

The ABC flagship publication, [Promise, Peril and Resilience: Voices of Agropastoralists in Africa's Borderland Regions](#) was created and co-designed with UNDP country offices, borderland communities, AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, and other key stakeholders including ABORNE. The research was predicated on the need to understand what makes the borderland Agropastoralists tick, as contributors to food security, GDP growth, regional integration, and livelihoods, despite the multiple challenges and vulnerabilities they confront daily. The study took place in borderland regions across eight countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda in the Eastern Horn, and Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso in West Sahel Africa. The research aimed to proffer development solutions to build the resilience of farmers and herders against multiple vulnerabilities in Africa's borderlands. The research process and tools were subjected to a comprehensive review with research and technical experts in the research thematic areas. After successful participatory quality assurance and validation processes, the report was launched in December 2022. This was followed by a series of visibility, advocacy, and sharing of the findings in various policy fora such as the African Union Policy Forum in Tangier, Morocco, and the fourth Lake Chad Governors Forum in Ndjamena, Chad.

Informed by the foregoing background, ABC, IPSTC, and ABORNE are collaborating to co-host the 2024 Annual Conference in Africa. The conference will provide a space for sharing the flagship research findings, discussing comparative experiences across all African regions, and gaining insights from scholars on how to apply the policy recommendations with practical and impactful programmes, specifically in accelerating the SDGs in Africa's borderlands. Although agropastoralism in borderlands provides the thematic core of the conference, we welcome contributions on African borderlands generally.

Scientific objective

The three-day conference will, firstly, share UNDP's research findings, provide updates on the resilience of borderland Agropastoralists and promote insights into applying evidence-informed programmatic pathways to support borderland communities. Secondly, it will afford an opportunity for borderland researchers to share their own findings on related issues of common concern with an audience straddling academia and the worlds of policy and practice. Thirdly, the conference will provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on innovations and lessons from the field and identify areas where peace and resilience actors and agencies in borderlands development have had a notable impact, and areas where interventions can be improved. Finally, it will provide an opportunity to strengthen partnerships and collaboration in the areas of research, training, policymaking, programming, and advocacy, with a view to advancing the debate on the opportunities for development in Africa's borderlands.

The conference will feature a broad range of sessions including high-level policy panel discussions, keynote speeches, abstract-driven presentations, and plenary sessions. The specific themes will cover, but not limited to the following proposed themes and subtopics:

Theme 1: Mobility, Social Cohesion, and Regional Integration

- The role of labour diversification in promoting cross-border Integration
- Ties that bind: kinship, networks and social cohesion in promoting cross-border integration
- Persons of concern and populations in movement: capabilities and culpabilities in promoting cross-border integration.
- Border festivals, social ties, and integration from below
- Cross-border mobility, silencing the guns, and building resilience in African borderlands

Theme 2: Cross-Border Value Chains and Markets

- The role of cross-border value chains in enhancing Agropastoralists' resilience
- Financing for resilient borderlands: opportunities for risk-informed investments and sustainable value chains
- Border urbanism and the rural edges: cross-border markets, transport and livelihoods

Theme 3: Gender Dynamics, Women and Youth in African Borderlands

- Women and youth: agency and challenges in fostering the borderlands economy
- Integrating gender dynamics into Agropastoralists' conflict prevention practices to enhance social protection for at-risk stakeholders

Theme 4: Climate, Security and Peacebuilding in African Borderlands

- Climate resilience, resource conflicts, security dynamics and mobility in borderland regions
- Agropastoralists and cross-border natural resource management
- Role of traditional conflict prevention and management structures as a platform for promoting cross-border security

Scientific Committee

- Professor Paul Nugent, University of Edinburgh
- Dr. Hugh Lamarque, independent consultant
- Professor Wilma Nchito, University of Zambia
- Professor Isabella Soi, University of Cagliari
- Professor Inocent Moyo, University of Zululand
- Dr. Olivier Walther, University of Florida
- Dr. Willie Eselebor, Universal Research and Training Institute
- Emeritus Professor Anthony Asiwaju, University of Lagos
- Maj (Dr.) Obwogi, IPSTC /National Defense University-Kenya

Submission

All papers presented during the annual meeting will be subject to peer review. Interested participants will submit a half-page abstract including a title (roughly 300 words in all) mentioning their name, address, and affiliation, written in English, to abornetwork@gmail.com. Submissions should indicate which specific themes and sub-topics (from the list above) the presentation relates to. This will provide the basis for composing panels. Applicants may indicate if there is another proposal being submitted that it links to, which might inform this process.

Abstracts will be selected on the basis of originality, relevance, and clarity of presentation.

Following a review of abstracts by the scientific committee, authors will be invited to present a paper. Paper submission implies that at least one of the authors will be physically present at the conference to deliver the paper.

For ABORNE members, all paper-givers will need to be up to date with the payment of annual their fees. Payments may be made via the website: <https://www.aborne.net/join>

Language

The language of the conference is English. All papers must be presented in English.

Registration

The conference will bring together a maximum of 40 participants. All participants whose papers will be accepted must register in advance.

Conference venue

The in-person conference will be held in September 2024 in Nairobi with a field visit to Namanga, Kenya-Tanzania Border.

Contact

Please contact us at abornetwork@gmail.com