

Annual Report 2022

Accelerating the
UN Sustainable Development Goals
in Africa's Borderlands



Africa
Borderlands
Centre





UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. The Africa Borderlands Centre offers specialized, expert knowledge and technical advice to enable the better design, implementation, and adaptation of development programmes for border regions across Africa.

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Ahunna Eziakonwa

UN Assistant Secretary-General,
UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Africa

Foreword

“ **2022 demonstrated how "thinking better" translated into 'doing better' for the borderland regions**”.

When the UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre (ABC) was launched in Lodwar, Kenya, in February 2021, we knew that we were on to a transformative contribution – investing in an area of development practice that had been left behind, almost entirely, compromising the 270 million people that live in Africa's borderlands. In just over two years, the ABC has institutionalized a living flag post for thought leadership, innovation and integrated programmatic impact. Consolidating 2021 gains, in 2022, the ABC built intimate relationships with border communities – harvesting invaluable development intelligence – and using this to fashion, and co – create – with communities, programmatic responses not least for the devastating socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the still – transmitting impacts of the war in Ukraine.

Through the work of the ABC, we have proven the concept: that investments in borderlands are quintessential to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa. The ABC's flagship research on sources of resilience for borderland agropastoralists and its complementary data dashboard have generated fresh insights into new opportunities for development partnerships. Other knowledge products provide first-hand accounts and perspectives on how borderlands stakeholders are driving their own development and the most catalytic areas for accelerating their development goals.

In 2022, the ABC demonstrated how "thinking better" can translate to "doing better" for

borderland regions. Through its research programming, innovation and community immersion exercises, and through close coordination with our UNDP Country Offices, ABC's Area-Based Portfolio Approach (APBA) integrated its development offer across different UNDP programmes – creating a stronger value proposition for results on the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) score.

Through its partnership work, ABC fostered numerous South-South and North-South dialogues – creating platforms for borderlands traders, peacebuilders, agropastoralists, community leaders and local administrators – to engage and broker solutions unique to their contexts. For policy makers, these discussions which offer first-hand insights into the complexities but also opportunities in borderlands, are a gem for next generation development solutions – for both Agenda 2063 and for the SDGs.

I am particularly excited about the ABC's work capacitating informal cross-border traders to build competitiveness, access finance and diversify their products – positioning to win in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). This is crucial for inclusivity. In addition, through its socio-economic programmes targeted at agropastoralists in the Sahel and Horn of Africa, the ABC's work is making catalytic contributions to Africa's food security at a time when the war in Ukraine has disrupted global food supply chains. Looking ahead, the ABC will deepen its programmatic investments through the ABPA, to strengthen results and impact. We will continue to invest in unleashing enablers for development in borderlands - like water, its' access and sustainable management. Our Trade for Peace focus will also be sharpened – as an antidote to conflict especially in at – risk areas especially in the borderlands of the Sahel, and the Horn of Africa.

I am privileged to present to you this annual report, and commend the ABC team for their dedication and marked contribution to advancing inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.



Zeynu Ummer, PhD

Team Lead and Senior Chief Technical Advisor
UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre

Executive Summary

“ In 2022, UNDP’s Africa Borderlands Centre built upon its foundational achievements of the previous year by continuing to improve the quality of life for African border communities”.

The Centre institutionalized its thought leadership on accelerated development for border communities through its bold propositions on sources of resilience for borderland agropastoralists. Through intimate conversations with thousands of agropastoralists in East and West Africa, the themes of facilitation of mobility, livelihood diversification and cross-border family support were identified as pathways for inclusive and sustainable development in borderlands. The Centre’s Borderlands Encyclopaedia Dashboard maps borderland resources in 106 border municipalities across the African continent, highlighting each border region’s demography, socio-economic endowments, natural resources and infrastructure.

The Centre’s conflict analysis of the Mandera Triangle, an area crossing Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, showcased how UNDP’s Sustainable Development Goals integrator role functions for inter-agency collaboration on the ground. The Centre’s support to an implementation plan for a Kenya-Uganda Cross Border Memorandum of Understanding showcased how it promotes local ownership of borderland development agendas.

The Centre completed its flagship programmatic interventions, Trade for Peace in the Sahel’s Liptako Gourma region and the Borderlands Socio-economic Development Project in the Karamoja Cluster in East Africa. The Centre

engaged in intimate scoping of programming opportunities in the borderlands of Senegambia, Chad-Cameroon and Burundi-Tanzania, including conducting several virtual consultations with the leadership of UNDP Country Offices. This process cascaded into technical support for UNDP Country Offices to prepare new area-based borderlands and cross-border programmes that will take place in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Togo and Uganda. Additionally, the Centre prepared an implementation plan for further work in the Karamoja Cluster, among other things.

Social innovation in 2022 focused on completing the previous year’s “innovation challenge,” which led to the generation of empirical evidence that catalyzes access to finance for informal cross-border traders. In Aflao, a good-sized town on the Ghana-Togo border, the social experiment led to a diversification of kente textiles into multiple products. This improved the competitiveness, profitability and financial literacy of producers, who had been contending with dwindling fortunes from their commodities. In Warawar, a market-town along the border of South Sudan and Sudan, the resilience, transparency, capitalization and accessibility of the traditional sanduk village saving system were boosted by introducing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) capacities to this indigenous practice. This represents a case in which the combination of indigenous and modern knowledge contributed to the deepening of development results in hitherto marginalized spaces. In Bamako, Mali, modernized bulking, processing and digital marketing of dairy products demonstrated the potential of innovative approaches to reduce wastage, improve nutritional health and stimulate sustainable livelihoods. In Victoria Fall- Livingstone, along the Zimbabwe-Zambia border, digitized village saving provided evidence of market potential for digital financial inclusion.

All these innovation challenges were co-created by users, private sector actors and local authorities. The results achieved are critical to understanding how to include borderland small

and micro-enterprises when implementing the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Though setbacks occurred, notably the not-too-successful digitized cross-border logistics in the Victoria Falls region of Zimbabwe, there was enormous learning on the complexities associated with transaction costs, cross-border legal frameworks and policies associated with informal cross-border trade.

Beyond the above social experiments, the Centre co-created an integrated pathway for digital financial inclusion through the agency of village savings and loan associations in the borderlands, with a wide array of experts to improve their competitiveness in AfCFTA.

During the year, the Centre drew upon lessons learned and experiences gained working across several borderlands to prepare the first iteration of its model development offer for border regions. This new model is called the Area-Based Portfolio Approach. This approach stipulates multi-sectoral, integrated programming to promote value-chain development for agropastoralists, digital financial inclusion and entrepreneurial capacity for informal cross-border trade, climate-smart infrastructure development and social cohesion and peacebuilding.

Forming partnerships and mobilizing resources represented an essential part of the Centre's 2022 engagements. In close coordination with the UNDP Regional Programme for Africa Strategy document (2022-2025), the Centre co-created exchanges and programmatic platforms to accelerate the results of the African Union Border Strategy, starting with civil society coalition-building in East Africa. The Centre took advantage of the platform of the African Union Policy Conference on Promoting the Peace, Security and Development Nexus to popularize and advocate for practical implementation of the African Union Border Strategy, particularly the sections on mobility facilitation. The Centre's engagements with the leadership of African Union Commission, UN Special Envoys in West Africa and the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Central Africa provided much-needed synergies to strengthen the integration of United Nations programming in borderlands. Its engagement

with multilateral and bilateral partners, including through the Centre's Project Board, led to up-to-date information exchanges and guidance on improving project implementation.

The Centre coordinated joint reflections with regional economic communities, including the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Common Market for Southern Africa (COMESA), towards strengthening the policy influence role of the Centre. These partnerships allowed the Centre to contribute to important policy advocacy and to take part in joint programmes that promote growth and peace in Africa's borderlands.

Perhaps most importantly, the Centre elevated the voices of borderland stakeholders by providing platforms for them to tell their own stories. Audio-visuals were produced to share the everyday stories of borderlands agropastoralists while illustrative maps were provided as a first-hand resource for development practitioners to gain an intimate understanding of border spaces. The Centre redesigned, and thus rejuvenated, its social media accounts, leading to contemporary advocacy for borderlands. It employed mass media, social media and web platforms to tell stories of climate resilience, adaptive livelihood practices, women and youth leadership and agency, conflict resolution and cross-border resource management.



A farmer climbs a tree to harvest honey in Kacheliba village, Kenya-Uganda border



2022 Africa Borderlands Landscape

Mount Mtelo, Kitale,
Kenya-Uganda border

“ Globally, 2022 was characterized by both progress and complex challenges in several areas ” .

Socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic lingered, particularly for the poorest and most marginalized populations, in the face of challenging international solidarity on equitable vaccination. The developing world experienced increased macro-economic volatility, food insecurity and cost-of-living crises, spurred partly by supply chain disruptions occasioned by the war in Ukraine. At the same time, the year provided invaluable opportunities for adaptation, innovation and utilization of indigenous knowledge to solve developmental challenges by local stakeholders.

In Africa's borderland regions, 2022 witnessed the gradual reopening of many national borders that had been closed to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, some of the borders previously closed due to security and socio-economic considerations were reopened.

During the year, a Pan African Payments and Settlement System (PAPSS) was launched. This initially involves eight central banks, 28 commercial banks and six switches, with the goal of creating a centralized financial market infrastructure enabling the efficient and secure flow of money across African borders. These and other developments spurred gradual resurgence of informal cross-border trade volumes across several borderlands in Africa.

Summit diplomacy took centre stage in the year, with the African Union Commission providing a platform for African diplomats and stakeholders to discuss the peace, security and development

nexus in Tangiers, Morocco in September 2022. Voices of borderlands agropastoralists were heard directly by policymakers across the continent through this platform. Borderland voices were also elevated in North-South dialogues, such as the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation in Prague, Czech Republic.

Existing conflicts led to new cross-border forced displacements in the Sahel, Lake Chad and the Horn of Africa. Socio-economic challenges were worsened by new episodes of drought and famine across arid and semi-arid land border regions in the Horn of Africa. Concerns about safety and security persisted in many of Africa's borderlands, particularly for women involved in informal cross-border trade. Climate change and its devastating impact escalated cross-border clashes between farmers and pastoralist communities. These challenges increased the need for life-saving support for the most vulnerable and highlighted the criticality of integrated programming that is cognizant of the humanitarian-human rights-peace-development nexus. ABC implemented its integrated programming approach across these regions in 2022.

The Centre maintained close relationships with borderland communities and proactively created awareness among policy and programme actors of the strengths and resilience of these communities. The Centre scanned the horizons for new opportunities and entry points to maximize development impact based on the innovations and creativity of the communities themselves. The Centre retooled its capacity to anticipate challenges, forged partnerships to draw attention to them, engaged in deep dialogues to enhance ownership of development solutions by local stakeholders and primarily implemented programmes that responded to urgent needs while forging a pathway for sustainable development of borderland regions.

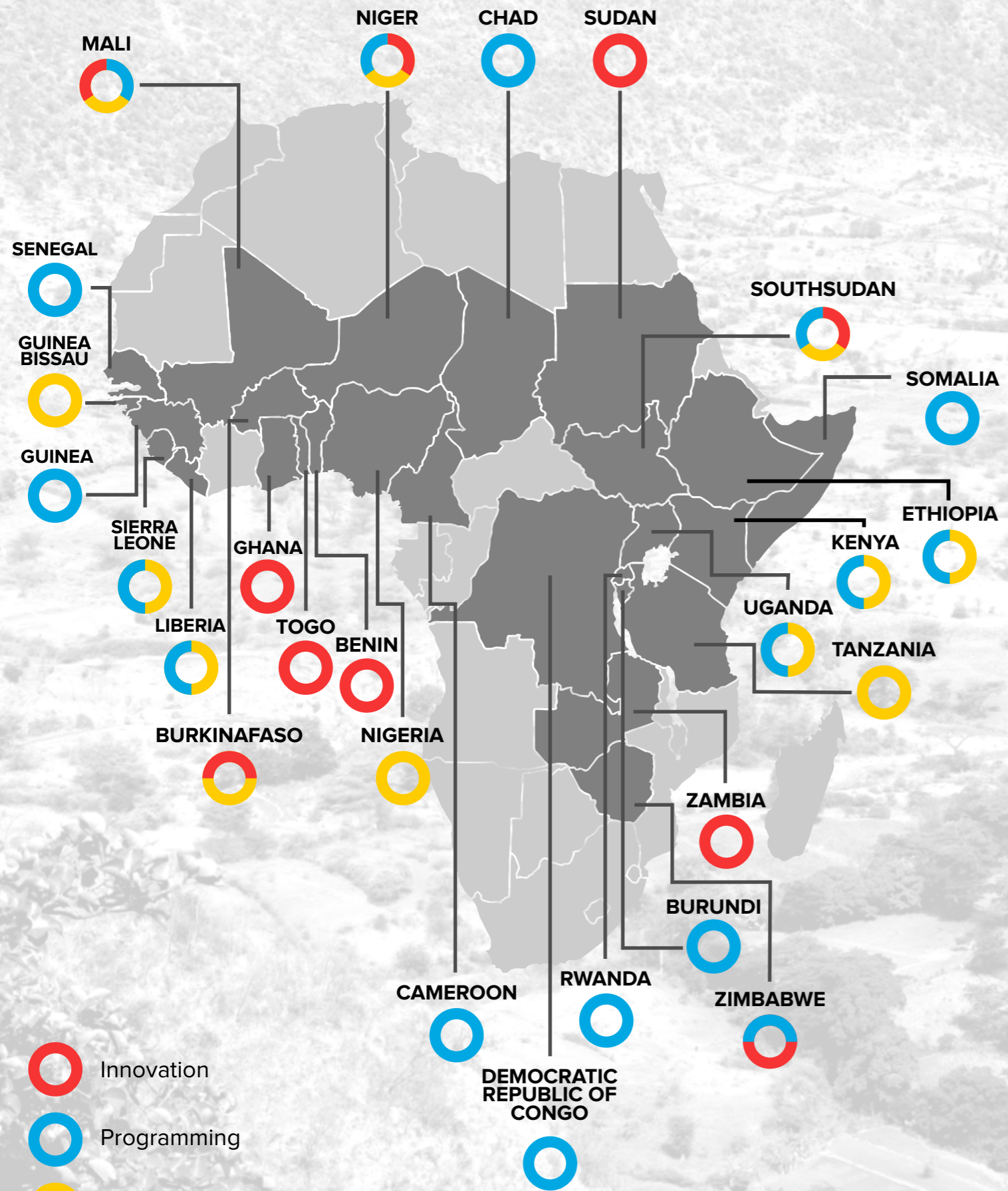
Our Footprint

“ We work tirelessly to respond to the challenges faced by these regions and to devise practical as well as innovative solutions to address them”

Since 2021, the African Borderlands Centre of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been committed to generating and expanding interventions that will promote growth and progress in the borderland regions of Africa. Our efforts aim to create a better life for the people and communities in these too-often marginalized areas. We believe this is essential to meet the development goals and promises for the African continent.

We work tirelessly to respond to the challenges faced by these regions and to devise practical as well as innovative solutions to address them. In the past year, we have consolidated our results-oriented foothold in borderlands straddling 28 African countries and our interventions to date have resulted in positive changes. We remain committed to our cause and will continue to work towards creating a better future for the borderland regions of Africa.

Chomyiot Women Group, Kongelai village, Kenya-Uganda border.



2,000+ Voices (50% Women) contributed to setting the agenda to attain the SDGs

7,000 Lives Directly Transformed

83% Female Traders Accessed New Capital

372.8% increase in Savings for cross border traders in Zambia-Zimbabwe borderlands

150 Farmers in Mali Trained on Milk Value Chain

80% Increase in Digital Platform Adoption in Warawar Borderlands

21 UNDP Country Offices Directly Engaged

20 million audiences reached through various media platforms



Interventions in 2022

A cross-border trader, Tudunma, Tanzania-Zambia border

1. Research

Summary of 2022 key outcomes



Over **2,000 voices** (50 percent women) directly contributed to setting the agenda for resilience pathways to attain the SDGs for Africa borderland communities.



Policy-level stakeholders from **55 African Union Member States** were made aware of how borderland agropastoralists would like to leverage mobility, labour diversification and cross-border family support to achieve the SDGs.



Cross-border family ties were uncovered to be the most viable pathway to form inclusive social protection systems that can fast-track poverty eradication in the borderlands.



Over **300 scholars** and policy actors on borderlands development became aware of the Centre's research and advocacy products.

In 2022, through its research workstream, the Centre addressed some of these challenges. Vulnerabilities faced by border communities were identified and analysed in order to formulate and promote evidence-based solutions to improve livelihoods and resilience. By leveraging its research expertise, the Centre spoke directly to thousands of people to map out sustainable and inclusive policies and programmes that benefit Africa's borderland communities and support achievement of the SDGs. Specific achievements made during the year are described below.



Influenced a shift in policies concerning Africa borderland agropastoralists.

The Centre completed its flagship research report titled **Promise, Peril and Resilience: Voices of Agropastoralists in Africa's Borderlands**. This 152-page report utilized case studies from 16 border communities spread across eight countries in East and West Africa to curate pathways to resilience building. The report was unveiled in December 2022, accompanied by a captivating photo and video exhibition showcasing the daily lives of agropastoralists in borderland regions. The launch event took place at the United Nations office in Nairobi (UNON), Kenya, bringing attention to the challenges, triumphs, and aspirations of these communities while highlighting the urgent need for support and collaborative action.

Achievements

Many inhabitants of Africa's borderlands rely on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods. These activities have the potential to boost Africa's economies and drive sustainable development, especially for borderland communities. However, numerous challenges, including environmental, economic and social issues, threaten the resilience of many of these inhabitants. The COVID-19 pandemic and other events, such as insecurity and drought, have only exacerbated these difficulties. The impact has been particularly felt by women and youth engaged in agropastoralism.



A cross-border trader, Kapenguria Town, West Pokot, Kenya-Uganda border



A home stead in Cheplat village, Pokot, Kenya-Uganda border

The report highlights the significance of mobility as a critical pathway for resilience and sustainable development in the borderlands. It notes how diversification of skill sets for agropastoralists could improve value-chain development, improve quality of life and mitigate the socio-economic impact of climate change. The report underscores the role of cross-border family ties as the nerve centre of social protection. Through the research, agropastoralists expressed the need to see the family play a more formal role in cross-border conflict risk mitigation, social protection, mobility facilitation and cross-border socio-economic development.

The report underlined the importance of joining up cross-border local governance systems to address the structural causes of conflict at local, bi-national and regional levels. It advocated practical ways to improve cross-border policy and legal frameworks that promote labour mobility across borders. The report found that addressing sexual and gender-based violence, which is still prevalent in the borderlands, is essential to women's inclusion in the borderland economy and development.

The Centre has been utilizing the report's findings to engage in targeted policy influencing with development actors, governments, local authorities and other partners.

The narrative captures original borderland perspectives based on the Centre's direct, in-person contact with over 2,000 persons through a partnership with the West African Network for Peacebuilding, Infotrak-East Africa, the African Union Commission, IGAD, ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Engaged in the co-creation processes were units within the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, the Regional Service Centre for Africa and the UNDP Hubs. The leadership and technical staff of UNDP Country Offices in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan and Uganda provided invaluable support to the completion of the research.

Articulated how indigenous social protection systems contribute to cross-border resilience building.

In 2022, the Centre completed a spotlight brief on indigenous social protection practices in borderlands, with a case study of the Kenya and Tanzania border region. The work examined how increasing economic shocks, political instability and environmental changes disproportionately affected border communities, increasing risk and vulnerabilities. The brief found that family-based support was the most impactful informal protection system for these communities, with specifically tailored needs of women and female-headed households being mainstreamed.

Beyond its poverty reduction role, indigenous systems were found to forge an improved sense of belonging and togetherness, contributing to social cohesion. The study recommended creating stronger synergies between

informal and formal social protection systems (the latter being restricted in scope, reach and impact). It offered practical ideas for enhancing legal, policy and institutional reforms across borders to enhance comprehensive social protection coverage for the most vulnerable persons.

A similar study was jointly implemented by the UNDP Inclusive Growth Unit of the Regional Service Centre for Africa, UNDP Country offices in Liberia and Sierra Leone and the Africa Borderlands Centre to provide insights for cross-regional comparative analysis of indigenous borderlands social protection systems. The research report is to be finalized in 2023.

Predicted the future roles of resilience and innovation in informal cross-border trade in East Africa.

The study entitled "Trends and Patterns in Resilience and Innovation by Informal Cross-Border traders in East Africa: Case Study of youth and female-owned businesses before and post COVID-19" targeted small-scale informal cross-border trade in the borders of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania to examine the roles of resilience and innovation in COVID-19 recovery and to identify critical factors that would enable traders to remain in business in the scenario of health-related disruptions to cross-border businesses in the future. The spotlight was on women and youth, as the former constitute 75 percent of informal cross-border traders.

Key coping factors for traders during the pandemic included modification of trade destinations, leveraging protections provided through pooled funding and collective procurement, usually through various cross-border traders associations, palliative support from local authorities to revitalize businesses and resorting to e-commerce. The possession of mobile phones and internet access were critical

to ensuring business continuity for informal cross-border trade during and the period immediately after the pandemic. These technologies also contributed to increased reporting of incidents of corruption and harassment at the borders.

On the roles of resilience and innovation for informal cross-border traders during future health-related emergencies, the study found that the most critical factors would be investment in ICT-based market information systems, facilitating interoperability of cross-border mobile payment platforms, acceleration of e-commerce platforms for buying and selling, modernization of village savings and loan associations (including enhancing their transparency and nimbleness), enabling seamless reporting and tracking of safety and security risks and improving collective advocacy to remove legal and policy barriers to cross-border trade through cross-border trade associations.

Adapted the SDG Investor Mapping Methodology for Africa borderlands contexts.

The Centre recognizes the importance of knowledge and data for incentivizing private sector impact and for-profit investments in the borderlands. In this regard, it partnered with the UNDP Finance Hub in Pretoria, South Africa, to adapt the standard SDG Investor Mapping Methodology to borderlands and cross-border contexts. The project, which commenced in 2022, is due to be completed in 2023. A Borderlands SDG Investors Guideline will provide step-by-step guidance on mapping investment opportunities in a manner that recognizes the peculiar spatial, economic, socio-cultural and security contexts of different borderland regions of Africa. The goal of project is to promote private sector participation and help borderland areas achieve the SDGs.

✔ Influenced interdisciplinary networks of borderland thought leaders.

The Centre participated in the Africa Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE) 2022 Annual Meeting from 19-20 September 2022. The theme was 'Security and Trade in Africa Borderlands.' The meeting was co-organized by ABORNE, the Sahel and West Africa Club of the OECD and the Sahel Research Group of the University of Florida. This influential network comprises hundreds of African scholars who shape discourse and advise governments on borderland policies.

One of the meeting highlights was the opportunity to explore the impact of political instability on trade facilitation initiatives, border cities and informal trade networks in African border regions. For the Centre, the meeting was an opportunity to gather innovative ideas, enhance networking and showcase its thought leadership on informal cross-border trade. The Centre presented a paper on "mitigating security risks to Africa's informal cross-border traders through e-commerce," highlighting e-commerce's potential to improve business processes and outcomes for traders. The paper showcases promising practices by UNDP and other actors, such as e-commerce's ability to facilitate secure

✔ payments, improve the transparency of business processes, de-risk borderland micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and reduce the need for physical travel by MSME businesspersons. The Centre's participation in the meeting improved the academic community's access to ideas, persons and platforms capable of improving the visibility of borderlands-related development issues on the continent.

Promoted social inclusion and gender equality.

The Centre achieved a 50:50 gender sample size parity in the consultations that formed the bedrock of its flagship research. 25 percent of the respondents fell within the age of 15-24. The Centre mainstreamed youth and women-related livelihood issues into the design of the research instruments and made specific recommendations on each.

On social protection, the agency of women and youth in sustaining indigenous practices was well analyzed. The informal cross-border trade study in East Africa acknowledged the role of women and youth in sustaining inclusive growth, leveraging ICT, and in policy and legal reforms.



Borderland local hunters, Sobukwo village, West Pokot, Kenya-Uganda border

Promise, Peril and Resilience: Voices of Agropastoralists in Africa's Borderlands captures borderland experiences



This story is just one of many that the Centre captured in its flagship research report. The report looks at how agropastoralists, like Zala and her friends, build resilience against the devastating socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, drought, famine, conflict, insecurity and other vulnerabilities in borderland communities. The book celebrates the incredible adaptability of borderland communities and amplifies their voices and demands for better governance to enhance their development potential.

Zala lives in a small rural village in the Oromia region in Ethiopia, near the border with Kenya. Zala and her friends work hard every day to provide for their families by growing crops and raising livestock. Life isn't easy for these agropastoralist women.

At the onset of the dry season in 2020, Oromia was hit with a severe drought. As the days went by, the sun beat down on the parched land with more intensity and the drought worsened. The crops withered and the livestock began to die from lack of food and water. Zala and her friends watched helplessly as their livelihoods slowly disappeared. It was even worse at home, watching their family not having enough clean water to drink.

Despite the challenges they faced, Zala and her friends refused to give up. After much searching, they found jobs at a factory on the other side of the border, in Kenya. Despite the low pay and poor working conditions, they were determined to make the best of a bad situation. They knew that they needed to keep working until the rains returned when they could go back to their homes and working on their land.

The report highlights the crucial role women and youth inclusion play in the economic viability and sustainability of Africa's borderlands. By sharing stories like that of Zala, the book puts a face to quantitative data contained within the Centre's Borderlands Encyclopaedia. It's a powerful reminder that behind every statistic are real people with real lives, facing real challenges and finding creative solutions to overcome them.

Through targeted mapping of data and gathering of stories from Africa's borderlands, the Centre is shedding light on the real-time challenges and opportunities in these often-marginalized regions. The research is a testament to the resilience and survivalist spirit of the people who call these places home and is a call to action for better governance and support to enhance their development potential.



Borderland local hunters, Sobukwo village, West Pokot, Kenya-Uganda border

2. Data

Summary of 2022 key outcomes



A coffee table book was produced featuring nine borderland regions in East and West Africa and highlighting their opportunities and challenges.



The Centre's Borderlands Encyclopaedia Dashboard mapped an estimated **316** refugee and internal displaced persons camps in **106** Africa borderland pairs and trios.



Visualization maps were created to provide user-friendly illustrated data for each of the **106** borderland pairs and trios.



On border infrastructure, the Dashboard mapped **786** hospitals, **762** primary and secondary schools, **563** universities and **574** police stations to the border municipalities across Africa .

Achievements



Enhanced and simplified access to borderlands data through the Borderlands Encyclopaedia Portal and Dashboard

The Centre worked with several stakeholders to co-create the Borderlands Encyclopaedia Dashboard which is a one-stop internet-based portal, including a dashboard, for several thousands of data on the borderlands. The interactive portal is designed to provide users with a comprehensive and easy-to-use interface for exploring a range of data related to borderlands issues. Its contents include geophysical, demographic, infrastructure,

socio-economic, humanitarian and border mobility data. To ensure that the Borderlands Portal and Dashboard meet the needs of stakeholders and users, it was prepared through a series of concerted consultations with UNDP data experts and external partners. By incorporating a wide range of input and feedback, the Centre created a user-friendly and informative portal.

The Borderlands Encyclopaedia Dashboard is an essential resource for anyone seeking to understand and address the complex issues facing borderlands communities. With its comprehensive data sets and intuitive interface, this platform is a powerful tool for researchers, policymakers and advocates working to promote positive change in the region.



Amplified the voices of borderlands communities through a coffee table book

To amplify the voices of borderlands communities, the Centre created a coffee table book in 2022. The book combines primary and secondary data with striking photographs and personal stories to give voice to borderlands communities and put their real-life experiences in focus. It builds upon the extensive data gathered by the Centre to provide an authoritative and comprehensive account of the borderlands communities' realities. The book offers a rich and multifaceted perspective on the complex social, economic and political dynamics that shape these communities. The book represents a significant effort to highlight the perspectives and experiences of individuals living in these communities, bring attention to their development resources and amplify their needs. The book covers eight countries in East and West Africa: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan and Uganda.

✓ Simplified data and information about the borderlands through factsheets, data visualization and illustration maps

In 2022, a comprehensive effort was undertaken to document the unique features, potential and opportunities for socio-economic development along 106 borders in East and West Africa. The outcome of this initiative was a collection of highly informative factsheets and illustration maps that capture the essence of each region in detail.

Cumulative distance shared by the 106 borderland pairs/trios in Africa is 89,038 kilometres and the average border length is 839 kilometres. The longest border is 2,646 kilometres; the shortest is only 0.2 kilometres.

These factsheets contain a wealth of relevant data essential for understanding each border's dynamics. They provide insights into the regions' cultural, economic and political landscape, including information on demographics, trade patterns, infrastructure and natural

resources. These resources are invaluable for policymakers, researchers and stakeholders who are invested in developing these regions.

✓ Promoted social inclusion and gender equality

In 2022, the Centre involved young people and women in various aspects of data mining, cleaning and visualization processes. Through the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV), young professionals played significant roles in the coding and analysis of data from several thousands of sources, which provides the building blocks for the Borderlands Encyclopaedia Dashboard. In addition, a boot camp was organized to co-create illustration maps with faculty and students from the University of Nairobi. 10 of 15 (or 67 percent) of the participants in the boot camp were young women. The involvement of young women and men as co-creators of ideas further demonstrates the Centre's commitment to promoting gender equity and youth empowerment and carving out opportunities for women and youth to contribute to finding solutions to development challenges in the



Cross-border traders, Nakonde, Zambia-Tanzania border



A Fish Farmer in Nakonde, Zambia-Tanzania Border. Fish farming is a popular trade in this border region



The Pokot people in Kenya-Uganda borderlands are known for their exquisite bead crafts

3. Social innovation in the borderlands

Summary of 2022 outcomes



The Centre's Social Laboratory collaborated with 10 UNDP Accelerator Laboratories (AccLabs) and five private sector start-ups to implement social experiments on access to finance for informal cross-border traders in border communities across Africa.



In Zambia and Zimbabwe, **83 percent** of female informal cross-border traders gained access to new sources of capital within the first two months of the social experiment, with incremental progression in access to capital within the next four month cycle.



In Zambia and Zimbabwe, village savings and loan associations that were migrated from analogue bookkeeping to a Village Savers digital app collectively recorded a **372.8 percent** surge in savings.



A digital app for the milk value chain in Mali led to the training of **150 farmers** on milk bulking, standardization and marketing.



In Aflao (Ghana-Togo border), kente cloth workers diversified their products into four major product streams (interior decoration, furniture, casual textiles and home accessories).



In the Warawar border area (South Sudan-Sudan), a social experiment in which three local sanduks (collective savings groups) were supported to migrate their operations to digital platforms spurred an **80 percent** increase in the switch to digital platforms by informal cross-border traders.

Achievements



Promoted innovation and entrepreneurship through practical and sustainable solutions to borderland challenges.

The Centre's Social Laboratory completed four social experiments, implemented in close coordination with 10 AccLabs, local authorities, traders and private sector actors, with the primary aim of identifying the most critical factors that accelerate access to finance for informal cross-border traders. These experiments were specifically designed to address the pressing issue of accelerating access to finance for informal cross-border traders, aligning with the initial call for proposals in 2021. In 2022, extensive co-creation took place, involving cross-border trade associations, local authorities, women traders' groups, and community leaders. The design of each experiment was based on the comparative advantage of actors in each border cluster, existing socio-economic resources, the preferences of informal cross-border traders and existing innovation capabilities.

Each experiment identified tipping points in wealth creation chains for maximizing profit and social impact for the clients (informal cross-border traders) and their secondary beneficiaries (immediate dependents and other stakeholders). For the purpose of the innovation initiative, an experimental group was identified for the direct testing of co-created hypotheses while a control group was cultivated (a group not involved in the testing) in each experiment. Interventions were implemented with the experimental groups and results on changes in saving culture, access to capital, systems and process change and improved profitability and social impact were tracked over a period ranging from six months to a year.

The four social innovation experiments are described below.

01 Zambia-Zimbabwe Innovation Challenge

The Zambia-Zimbabwe Innovation Challenge was to digitize the movement of goods across Zambia-Zimbabwe borders while ensuring safety, efficiency and timely delivery of goods. The experiment digitized the age-old practice of table banking to enhance transparency and encourage a savings culture among members. The experiment was conducted over several months ending in mid-June 2022. A post-experiment survey conducted in Livingstone-Victoria Falls in October 2022 revealed that the experiment successfully improved participants' digital literacy and bookkeeping skills, as 85 percent were extremely familiar with the Village Savers App and the same percentage were extremely familiar with bookkeeping rules. Of the female informal cross-border traders, 83 percent gained access to new sources of capital within the first two months of the social experiment, with incremental progression in access to capital within the next four-month cycle.

The experiment resulted in increased financial inclusion as 75 percent of previously unbanked participants now have business bank accounts. Furthermore, the experiment showed a positive correlation between digitization and increased savings among participants, with one of the village saving groups increasing their savings from US \$300 to an unprecedented \$1,700 within a period of six months. Cumulatively, village savings and loan associations that were migrated from analogue bookkeeping to a village savers digital app collectively recorded a 372.8 percent surge in savings.

02 Burkina Faso-Mali-Niger Innovation Challenge

Dairy production plays a crucial role in sustaining the livelihoods and economies of borderland communities in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The innovation experiment in this region leveraged data mined from a business case analysis developed by the UNDP AcCLabs in the three countries on the milk value chain in the border towns of Dori (Burkina Faso), Tera (Niger) and Menaka (Mali). This was agreed after insecurity in the border regions made it impossible to implement the original ideas on small ruminant marketing through a digital platform.

Of the three border areas, Dori has the strongest milk value chain. However, the average milk production of 610 litres per annum falls short of the world's best practice of 8,000 litres. The milk potential of the tri-border area is estimated at 267,638,834 litres. The lack of bulking equipment poses a challenge for stocking and transporting milk over long distances, leading to losses. Only less than 10 percent of the milk produced is processed, with a mere three percent being value-added into cheese, butter and ghee, indicating a significant opportunity for accelerated value addition.

Based on the study, training was conducted for 150 smallholder milk farmers in the borderlands of Menaka on modern milk bulking, hygiene, standardization and transportation of milk products from the border to milk collecting centres in cities. Further to this, the milk marketing centres in Bamako, Mali, were engaged to develop a digital platform for the sale of milk products in a way that enhances improved access to market. To facilitate this, the Centre supported the design, test-run and utilization of the La Translait App in close coordination with 2scale, the largest incubator for inclusive agri-business in Africa, and the La-Translait Milk Corporation. Training sessions were conducted for sellers, transporters and resellers on the use and navigation of the La Translait App for improved sales. This was followed by simulation exercises, which showcased the market potential of the digital marketing platform. From the simulation, the platform facilitated the

sale of five products—fresh milk, fene, wagashi (cheese), ghee/sirime (clarified butter) and plain yoghurt. Over a period of three weeks, 24 traders interacted with the app, making 57 orders out of which 47 were successfully transacted, with 10 unsuccessful transactions largely due to technical glitches. The successful transactions were facilitated by the Orange Money mobile payment platform, which was linked to the La Translait App. In terms of market potential, in the immediate vicinity of the simulation (Commune n6- Bamako) transactions among 24 patrons generated a turnover of FCFA179,500. With an estimated three million inhabitants in need of dairy products on a daily basis, the market potential of the digital platform is enormous.

03 Ghana-Benin-Togo Innovation Challenge

The Ghana-Benin-Togo AcCLabs undertook a project to enhance the kente cloth value chain at the Aflao border, focusing on product diversification. Kente cloth is traditionally woven in strips and then sewn together to create larger pieces of cloth used for decoration and cultural celebrations by men and women. Although the production method has remained unchanged for generations, the kente industry has evolved into a modern value chain, with more actors involved in the trade.

The project improved the skills of kente weavers by providing training in quality kente weaving and entrepreneurship, as well as guidance in designing, developing and diversifying kente products and marketing. Four new products with proven market potential were developed, namely interior decoration, furniture, casual textiles and home accessories. A total of 44 kente weavers were trained in capacity-building activities, quality systems and standardized kente and modernized weaving processes. While the project faced significant delays due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, it was finally completed in December 2022.

04 South Sudan-Sudan Innovation Challenge

The lack of banks and other financial institutions in the rural borderlands of South Sudan limits access to affordable capital for business growth. In Warawar, a market of traders from both countries, traders face challenges such as low income, inadequate business skills, poor financial and digital literacy and poor record keeping. To address these challenges, 131 traders were trained in basic business skills, financial literacy and digital literacy, including the use of mGurush, a mobile money application.

The training improved the capacity of six business savings in basic business management, financial and digital literacy and gender cultural sensitivity. Booster packages and small phones were provided to the trained groups. The social experiment supported three local sanduks to migrate their operations to digital platforms which spurred an 80 percent increase in the switch to digital platforms by informal cross-border traders. Figure 1 shows that 72 percent of the informal cross-border traders were reached with digital and financial training skills while 87 percent feel safe using the digital sanduks.



Kente weaving is popular in Aflao, Ghana-Benin-Togo border

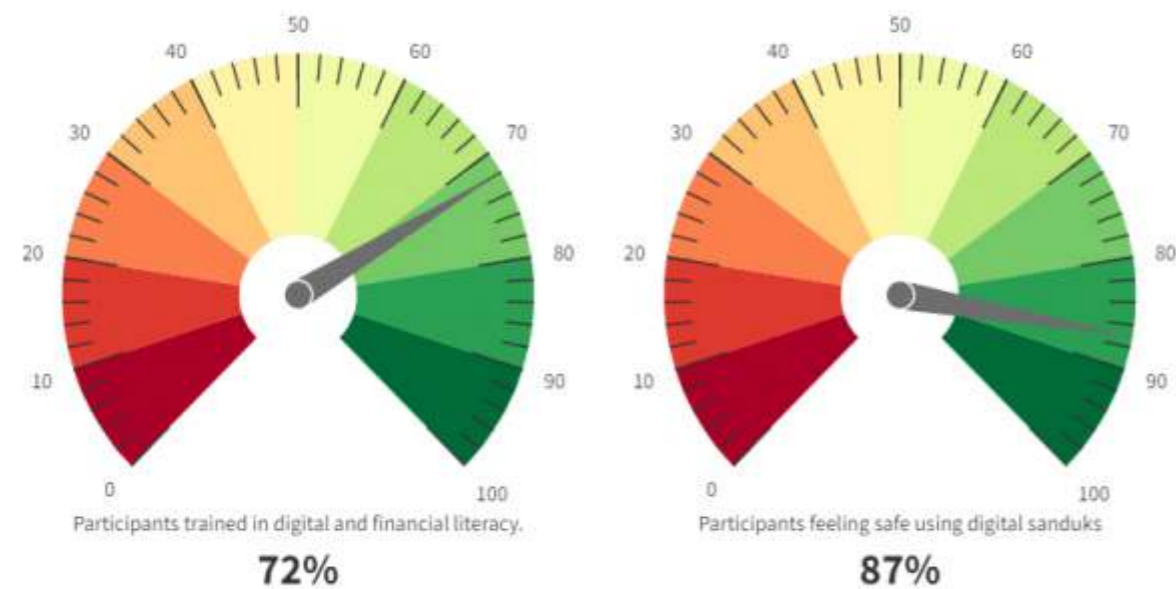


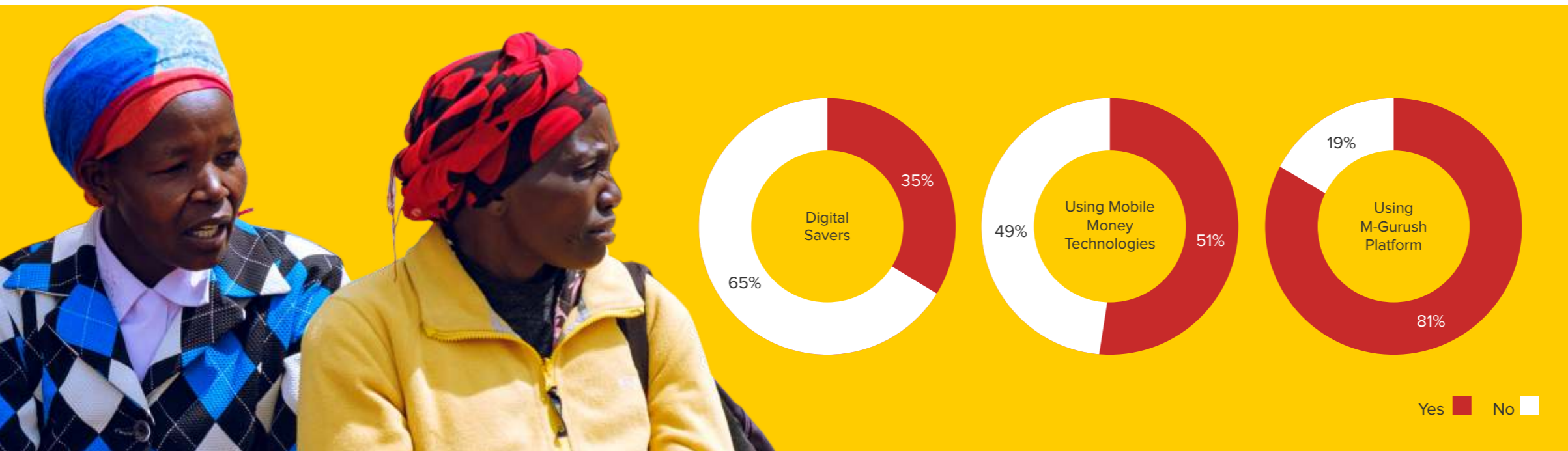
Figure 2 (below) shows changes in behaviour toward the use of digital saving systems, mobile money technology and the mGurush platform by informal cross-border traders in South Sudan. The experiment recorded an increase in weekly contributions. Initially, weekly contributions were

between South Sudanese pound 400-4000, but by the end of the experiment, they had increased to South Sudanese pound 17,500. The increase in weekly contributions showed that digital sanduks encouraged participants to contribute more regularly and in larger amounts.

inclusion model for improving prosperity and social impact in borderland contexts.

Based on literature reviews and direct engagements with informal cross-border traders across Africa borderlands, access to finance has been identified as a major impediment to their livelihoods. However, good practices identified indicate that community cooperative unions, working closely with village savings and loan associations, are the most critical stakeholders with the capacity to improve access to finance. Furthermore, integrating fintech into decades-old local and informal village savings and loan association structures could increase the competitiveness and credibility of these local structures and improve access to financial resources for their clients. Innovation holds the key to reaching the last mile and finding workable solutions that are contextualized to border settings.

The collective intelligence session led to the design of a model of engagement with development finance institutions for use in cross-border contexts, targeted primarily at informal cross-border traders, agropastoralist-related businesses and micro-industries. The model combines the capacity of fintech actors with village savings and loan associations to provide inclusive financial services that can reach the last mile in borderland areas. The model uses the following pillars: mapping and evidence generation; documentation and business development service delivery; entrepreneurship development training; beneficiary selection and loan management; analytics and lessons learned. Integrated services to be provided through the model include credit facilitation, improved digitized saving culture, cashless payment solutions and ease of cross-border transactions.



✓ Promoted social inclusion and gender equality.

The Centre recognizes the importance of social inclusion and gender diversity in its innovation experiments. As part of this effort, the Centre focused on empowering women and youth traders through various training programmes. In South Sudan, for instance, a total of 131 traders participated in training, 85 of whom were women (65 percent).

The training programmes further enhanced social inclusion and gender equality by providing participants not only with essential skills in basic business management, financial literacy and digital literacy (including in South Sudan training on mGurush, a mobile money service), but also in gender cultural sensitivity.

✓ A model of engagement was designed for development finance in cross-border contexts.

Based on evolving lessons from the innovation experiments, the Centre's Social Laboratory held a collective

intelligence session in Naivasha, Kenya in May 2022, with over 30 private sector participants from village savings and loan associations, cooperatives, cross-border trade associations, banks, fintech and other financial institutions. This session led to the design of a digital financial

The Centre's innovation partners



2SCALE



UNDP Accelerator Laboratories

This UNDP initiative focuses on promoting innovation and entrepreneurship for sustainable development. With a network of labs across the globe, AccLabs identify and support innovative solutions that address development challenges, particularly in thematic areas such as poverty eradication, climate change and social inequality. By fostering collaboration between entrepreneurs, startups and local communities, UNDP AccLabs provide a platform for testing and scaling up innovative ideas that have the potential to create positive social impact.

mGurush: This mobile money transfer service available in South Sudan enables individuals to send and receive money securely and conveniently using mobile phones. mGurush leverages the widespread adoption of mobile technology to provide financial inclusion to those who lack access to traditional banking services. Through partnerships with mobile network operators and financial institutions, mGurush facilitates safe and affordable money transfers, empowering individuals, families and businesses to manage their finances efficiently and participate in the formal economy.

Village Savers App: This mobile application is designed to promote financial literacy and savings in rural communities. The app empowers individuals in underserved areas by providing them with a user-friendly platform to learn about financial management, set savings goals and track their progress. The app offers educational content, interactive tools and peer support networks to encourage a culture of saving and economic empowerment at the grassroots level. The Village Savers App helps individuals foster sustainable financial habits and improve their financial well-being.

2scale: This social enterprise focuses on sustainable agriculture and food production. Through innovative technologies and farming practices, 2scale addresses food security and environmental sustainability challenges. The organization works closely with smallholder farmers, providing them with training, resources and access to modern agricultural techniques to improve productivity and reduce the ecological footprint. 2scale contributes to building resilient and inclusive agricultural systems that benefit both farmers and consumers.

Thumeza: This Zimbabwean female-founded startup is an on-demand logistics platform that connects businesses and individuals with reliable delivery services in urban and rural areas. Leveraging mobile technology and a network of local couriers, Thumeza streamlines the delivery process, making it faster, more affordable and accessible to a wide range of users. The platform offers a user-friendly interface, real-time tracking and secure payment options, allowing efficient and transparent delivery services. Thumeza plays a crucial role in supporting local businesses, e-commerce and last-mile logistics, contributing to economic growth and enhancing connectivity in the communities it serves.

Spotlight:

The resilience and ingenuity of Ghana's kente weavers

In Ghana, a country known for its beautiful fabrics, the art of traditional weaving called kente holds a special place. But kente weavers have faced difficulties with cheap imported cloth and clothing taking over the market, making it hard for them to earn a living. However, a remarkable story of strength and innovation emerged from the innovation challenge in Ghana.

As mentioned above, for years, kente weavers have struggled as the demand for their traditional cloth declined. Imported fabrics offered cheaper alternatives and economic constraints hindered their ability to compete. The weavers also faced a shortage of skilled workers and the negative impacts of climate change on their raw materials. They yearned for a way to breathe life back into their art and revive their dwindling craft.

In 2021, a ray of hope arrived in the form of an innovation experiment supported by the Centre, UNDP Ghana and UNDP Togo AccLabs. The project empowered kente weavers to foster creativity and find new avenues for growth. Through the experiment, the weavers embarked on a journey that would redefine their craft and uplift their communities. Weavers, experts and others worked together in workshops and sessions to learn from each other and come up with fresh ideas. Participants discovered new techniques, created modern patterns and embraced eco-friendly practices.

Weavers became more skilled and started making kente designs that appealed to younger people. They used natural materials and dyes to protect the environment. The weavers supported one another and realized that unity was crucial in restoring their craft.

Participants in the experiment, such as Emmanuel Kumedzna, experienced revived interest and increased sales. "I was giving up on kente due to the high cost of yarns, dwindling profits and the collapse of the kente market in the border area. However, through the innovation experiment, I received training on marketing and access to yarns. My interest on this craft is now revived," Emmanuel said.

Through the support of the Centre, UNDP Ghana and UNDP Togo AccLabs, these artisans have embraced change, revived their craft and embarked on a journey toward a brighter future. This innovation experiment laid the foundation for a sustainable future, showcasing the potential for the revival of the kente textile industry. However, continued support, collaboration and private sector involvement are crucial for the weavers' to achieve continued success and for the industry to grow.



A Cross-border trader, Nakonde, Zambia-Tanzania border

4. Programming

Summary of 2022 outcomes



7,000 lives were directly transformed through the Trade for Peace initiative in the Liptako Gourma region in the central Sahel.



21 UNDP Country Offices engaged on borderland issues.



7 UNDP Country Offices supported preparation of new project proposals and engaged in resource mobilization processes.



2 UNDP Country Offices supported preparation of full project documents on borderlands development.



The Karamoja Borderlands Peace and Development Project addressed climate change, livelihoods, peace and security issues in the Kenya-Uganda border region.



An implementation plan was prepared for the Kenya-Uganda Memorandum of Understanding in the Karamoja Cluster.



An integrated conflict analysis on the Madera Triangle was conducted in close coordination with the Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa and other United Nations agencies.

Achievements

The Centre's catalytic programming investments served as the foundation for a series of community immersions and scoping missions across borderland regions in 2021 and 2022. Working closely with UNDP Country Offices and regional partners, the Centre generated a robust pipeline of new borderland and cross-border

initiatives in 21 countries. These efforts demonstrated that borderlands are viable contributors to achieving the SDGs and sustaining national, regional and global economies.

In 2022, the Centre focused on the completion of the Trade for Peace initiative, with funding from the government of Japan, and a sustainable peace and development project in the Karamoja Cluster. Based on the Area-Based Portfolio Approach designed in 2021, the Centre provided technical assistance to UNDP Country Offices to prepare new project proposals and full-length project documents. Below are highlights of the Centre's programming achievements during the year.



Enhanced the resilience and socio-economic recovery in Liptako-Gourma through the Trade for Peace initiative.

The Trade for Peace initiative, launched in 2021 by the Centre with support from the government of Japan, enhanced resilience and facilitated socio-economic recovery in the borderland communities of the Liptako-Gourma region. This was done through support to livelihood and income-generating activities, capacity building, skills development and intercommunal dialogue opportunities. The project's focus on addressing food insecurity as a root cause of conflict and supporting women and youth proved successful and impacted over 7,000 direct beneficiaries, including 3,000 traders, farmers and herders, and helped prevent violent conflict in the region. Co-implemented with UNDP Country Offices and other organizations, the project is seeking funding for Phase 2, which aims to expand the initiative to other vulnerable borderland communities in West Africa affected by war and climate change. The project's objective is to provide inclusive economic opportunities, promote cross-border trade and investments, enhance the resilience of communities and prevent violent conflict while promoting economic growth.



Validation workshop for cross-border implementation framework Kenya-Uganda, Lodwar, Kenya

Supported a Memorandum of Understanding for sustainable peace and development in the Uganda (Karamoja) - Kenya (West Pokot, Turkana) borderlands.

The Karamoja sub-region in Uganda and Turkana and West Pokot Counties in Kenya are interconnected regions with immense opportunities for peace, social cohesion and wealth creation. The region shares a common language and culture and has potential for cross-border trade and regional economic integration, particularly in the livestock trade. To better embrace these opportunities, Kenya and Uganda signed a Memorandum of Understanding in support of the Kenya-Uganda (Karamoja) Cross Border Programme for Sustainable Peace and Development.

UNDP Kenya, UNDP Uganda and the Centre are supporting the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding through quick impact initiatives, an independent gender and conflict analysis and the preparation of a fully costed implementation plan. The initiatives aim to provide livelihood assets, rehabilitate schools, strengthen water access, promote cross-border peacebuilding dialogues and provide a comprehensive understanding of complex cross-border conflicts and gender dynamics. The implementation plan will guide local, national and regional initiatives in the two countries' borderlands.

With IGAD, designed a regional project to address multi-dimensional challenges faced by agropastoralists in East Africa's border communities.

Agropastoralists in East Africa's Karamoja and Borena regions are grappling with a multitude of challenges, ranging from recurring droughts and the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 to livestock raiding, food insecurity and limited economic opportunities. The potential of borderland communities across Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda remains vastly untapped, with inadequate support for the region.

To address these issues, UNDP partnered with IGAD to develop a new three-year regional project to improve production capacities and livelihoods, supporting small-scale businesses and trade actors and fostering social cohesion to mitigate food insecurity. The project will enhance IGAD's capacity to conduct analysis, research and programming in support of agropastoralist communities in East Africa. An IGAD-UNDP technical working group established in 2021 jointly designed the programme document and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Djibouti in August 2022, formalizing UNDP's close collaboration with IGAD.

Prepared a project to address multi-dimensional challenges in the borderlands of Cameroon and Chad.

Borderland communities in Chad and Cameroon face numerous challenges, including protracted conflict, violent extremism, food insecurity and climate-related disasters. National development agendas have not adequately served these communities, particularly in times of crisis, and limited access to basic services further compounds their struggles. The war in Ukraine has driven up global prices of staple foods, fertilizer and oil, exacerbating the already difficult situation. Additionally, Chad and Cameroon are home to large populations of internally displaced persons and refugees. The security situation in the region has deteriorated in recent years due to the spillover effects of violent extremism and terrorism in neighbouring countries.

To tackle these security, development and humanitarian risks, the Centre conducted a mission to the region and hired a consultant to collaborate with UNDP Chad and UNDP Cameroon in designing a multi-year regional borderlands project. The project will enhance production capacities and livelihoods, support small-scale businesses and trade actors, promote governance and service delivery and foster social cohesion in the borderlands of Chad and Cameroon. Fundraising for the project is currently underway.

Designed a programme to harness innovation and resilience for socio-economic development in the borderlands of Burundi.

Burundi's borderland regions possess immense potential for socio-economic development and innovation. To tap into this potential and address their challenges, UNDP's Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 seeks to utilize a portfolio approach, which understands problems from a systems perspective and leverages

relationships between interventions to achieve broader goals. Building on this approach, the UNDP Burundi Country Office undertook a "deep demonstrations" process to explore development options for border communities, leading to the design of a dedicated borderlands development programme. The programme focuses on the Commune of Nyanza Lac, which borders Tanzania and Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Centre provided technical support and hired a consultant to prepare an area-based portfolio programme for borderlands development. The programme document was created in partnership with local communities and authorities and a multi-stakeholder workshop was held to share and inform the area-based portfolio approach. The programme aims to invest in the resilience of Burundi's borderlands to promote socio-economic development and peace in the country.

Laid the groundwork for an initiative to promote socio-economic development and prevent violent extremism through trade for peace in the borderlands of Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo.

Borderland communities in Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo face common challenges, such as deficient local governance, widespread unemployment and the lure of violent extremism. These challenges are compounded by climate change, slow recovery from COVID-19, challenging political conditions and increasing food prices due to the war in Ukraine.

To prevent the crisis from getting worse, communities in the borderlands need to strengthen local governance, build resilience, help with socio-economic recovery and improve human security. The Centre, together with other UNDP offices, has proposed an initiative focusing on enhancing production capacities and livelihoods, promoting local

governance and service delivery to foster social cohesion in the borderlands. A concept note is currently under discussion with the European Union Delegation in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso.

Prepared an options paper to promote trade for peace in the borderlands of Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.

The Great Lakes Region is full of opportunities, with abundant natural resources, including minerals, wildlife, land and water resources and is home to a growing workforce. However, it faces challenges, such as poverty, inequality, underemployment, climate change, weak governance and chronic violence.

The Centre and UNDP Country Offices in Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda prepared an options paper for a potential multi-year regional project to enhance livelihoods, support small-scale businesses, promote governance and foster social cohesion in the borderlands of Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. The project aims to deepen economic integration through cross-border trade, dialogue between border communities and strengthening food security, livelihood and income opportunities, particularly for women and youth. The options paper is currently under discussion with the European Union.

Prepared a concept paper for a regional project on socio-economic development and peace in the border regions of Guinea, Mali and Senegal.

The border regions of Guinea, Mali and Senegal are confronted with several challenges, such as poverty, limited access to social services and public investment directed towards urban centres. To address these challenges, UNDP Mali, UNDP Guinea and UNDP

Senegal, in partnership with the Centre and UNDP's Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (based in Dakar, Senegal), prepared a concept for a multi-year regional project to promote socio-economic development, strengthening productive capacities and livelihoods and fostering social cohesion in these regions.

Due to the high poverty rates and limited access to basic social services in these landlocked regions, it is essential to provide a tailored response that meets their specific needs. This proposed project will promote sustainable development by addressing these challenges and prioritizing the needs of the borderland regions, which are often overlooked in public investment decisions. Ongoing discussions with partners, including the European Union, aim to bring this project to fruition.

Prepared a Horn of Africa Drought Resilience Programme.

The Horn of Africa is facing a severe drought due to the worst performing rains in 73 years and five successive failed rainy seasons, impacting over 36 million people with more than 20 million persons facing food insecurity. The frequency and severity of drought are increasing, making it harder for people to recover between shocks. More than 36 million people are affected, with more than 20 million in the highest categories of food insecurity, with women and girls disproportionately affected by the direct and indirect impacts of drought.

The Centre, along with other partners, prepared a Horn of Africa Drought Resilience Programme to be launched in the second quarter of 2023. The programme will build resilience and reduce the severity of impact on the people of the Horn through increased coherence of policy frameworks and financing mechanisms for climate risk, implementation of IGAD-United Nations

Drought Resilience Action Plans in selected target areas and the inclusion of a development lens in resilience-building approaches. The programme will include area-based interventions focused on the borderlands of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

Prepared a programme for peace and economic development through cross-border trade in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Liberia and Sierra Leone remain fragile and impoverished, with high rates of poverty. The two countries face ongoing challenges, including violent conflicts, Ebola and COVID-19 and global economic factors, such as the war in Ukraine and increases in the price of staple foods. Cross-border trade, particularly informal and small-scale trade, provides a significant livelihood for many, especially women. The Mano River Union was established to promote regional integration through trade, but this potential remains largely untapped.

A draft programme concept, "Promoting peace through inclusive cross-border trade between Liberia and Sierra Leone," has been formulated by UNDP Liberia and UNDP Sierra with the support of the Centre, drawing on lessons learned from a similar project in the Sahel region. Fundraising is currently underway for the programme.



Trade for Peace Technical Committee meeting, Niamey, Niger

Assisted with the launch of Horn of Africa Borderlands Civil Society Platform in collaboration with the African Union and Life and Peace Institute.

The Centre partnered with the African Union Border Programme and Life and Peace Institute to establish the Horn of Africa Borderlands Civil Society Platform. The platform aims to strengthen inclusive engagement and create a mechanism to connect civil society organizations in the borderlands of East Africa and the Horn of Africa with key African Union, IGAD and United Nations policy-making processes.

Building on the African Union Border Programme's long-standing work, the African Union launched its Integrated Border Governance Strategy in March 2021 to promote peace, security, stability and cross-border integration through the use of borders as entry points. However, implementing this ambitious strategy will require close partnerships with member states, regional economic communities, the United Nations system and borderlands civil society organizations. These organizations have longstanding knowledge and experience of borderlands and are critical stakeholders in the border and cross-border cooperation discourse.


To tap into the potential of borderlands civil society organizations, the African Union Border Programme and the Life and Peace Institute led a highly inclusive and consultative process to identify and train borderland civil society organizations in East Africa. The report laid out governance arrangements for the Horn of Africa Borderlands Civil Society Platform.




Family connection is a common feature in Africa Borderlands

5. Partnerships and advocacy

Summary of 2022 key outcomes

- 

African Union Commission and RECs engaged on borderlands development
- 

Integrated analysis strengthened partnerships between UNDP, United Nations, African Union in the borderlands of Cabo Delgado.
- 

UNDP RRs in the Horn of Africa sensitized partnership opportunities in the borderlands.
- 

North-South dialogue and learning facilitated.
- 

The Centre contributed to climate resilience dialogue in the borderlands, in close coordination with key partners.

Partnerships are crucial to addressing the multifaceted challenges facing borderland communities in Africa. The Centre's partnership approach is inclusive and comprehensive, involving development partners, the African Union, Regional Economic Communities, the United Nations system, the private sector and local and national authorities. This approach recognizes that tackling the complex issues facing borderlands requires a collective effort that brings together diverse perspectives and expertise. Highlights of the Centre's work include:

Partnership with the African Union

As a collaborative effort between the Centre and the African Union Commission, the Centre closely works with the African Union Border Programme to co-create research and policy and coordinate partnerships and programmes.

Throughout 2022, the African Union has been actively engaged in all major events and activities of the Centre through the Steering Committee and Technical Committee.

One such event was the Tangier Forum, with the theme "Promoting the Peace, Security and Development Nexus: The Promise of Regional Integration." The Centre participated in the forum and hosted a panel titled "Promise and Resilience: Agropastoralists and the Peace, Security and Development Nexus in Africa Borderlands," at which the Centre presented the key findings of its new flagship research report.

Through its close partnership with the African Union Commission and its active involvement in various events and activities, the Centre aims to promote regional integration and address issues related to peace, security and development in the borderland communities of Africa.

The Centre's engagement with regional economic communities and mechanisms

In 2022, the Centre took proactive steps to engage with regional economic communities and mechanisms in Africa. The Centre worked closely with IGAD in the Horn, preparing a joint programme for the Karamoja region. The Centre participated in workshops on Trade in East Africa organized by the Economic Commission for Africa and closely engaged with COMESA to create a joint strategic dialogue for 2023.

In the Sahel, the Centre worked closely with the Liptako-Gourma Authority to design and implement a Trade for Peace initiative in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The Centre engaged with the Lake Chad Basin Commission to prepare a new Chad-Cameroon cross-border project. The Centre met with the Manu River Union during discussions for a Sierra Leone-

Liberia programme. Furthermore, the Centre conducted an in-depth analysis of options to strengthen UNDP's partnership with SADC.

✔ **Strengthening partnership for United Nations/UNDP engagement with the African Union and SADC in Cabo Delgado crisis response**

The Centre, in partnership with UNDP Mozambique Country Office, commissioned an integrated regional analysis and overview of strategic options for United Nations/UNDP engagement with the African Union and Southern African Development Community (SADC) in response to the complex situation in Cabo Delgado, Northern Mozambique, and border communities in neighbouring countries (Comoros, Madagascar, Malawi and Tanzania).

The report provides an examination of the legal framework for SADC's engagement in response to the crisis in Cabo Delgado, along with a brief analysis of key stakeholders' interventions and responses, identifying gaps and challenges. It outlines potential scenarios for SADC/SAMIM sustained engagement and presents recommendations on strategic entry points or options for United Nations/UNDP engagement with the African Union and SADC.

Moreover, the report includes a section on practical lessons from current initiatives led by the African Union, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms in response to acute crises such as violent extremism in Africa, for instance, in Somalia, the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin. This report underscores the importance of strengthening partnerships and collaboration among organizations to address complex humanitarian crises effectively.

✔ **Analyzing the context and programming entry points of the Madera Triangle for Joint United Nations engagement**

The Madera Triangle, an area encompassing the borders of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, is a strategically important region due to its location as the interface between three countries in the Horn of Africa. The region faces many socio-economic challenges, including livelihood vulnerabilities, low education, food insecurity and reliance on natural resources. Pastoralism, agropastoralism, small-scale irrigated agriculture and cross-border trade are the major livelihoods in the area.

In partnership with the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy, Life and Peace Institute and BORESHA, the Centre conducted an independent qualitative analysis of the Madera Triangle's context. The report identified programming entry points for joint United Nations sub-regional and cross-border engagement, building on existing initiatives to mitigate the region's challenges. The report is set to be launched in Q2 2023 by the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa.

✔ **Other collaborations with the United Nations system**

The Centre closely collaborates with its United Nations partners to coordinate its data, research, programming and policy work. For instance, it partnered with the Office of the United Nations Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa to conduct an entry point analysis for the Madera triangle, focusing on conflicts and programming. The Centre worked with the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, which has now prioritized borderlands initiatives.

The Centre engaged with various United Nations agencies, such as UNISS, OCHA, IOM, UNHCR and WFP, and gave briefings to the Special Envoys for the Sahel and Great Lakes. Furthermore, the Centre is in close partnership with United Nations Country Teams and Resident Coordinator Offices across the 30 countries in which initiatives of the Centre are ongoing.

The Centre collaborates with the World Bank through exchange of research and policy insights and jointly co-chairs the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative workstream on borderlands.

✔ **Deepening collaborations with development partners**

In 2022, the Centre further deepened its technical and financial cooperation with key development partners. A strategic core partner was the government of Sweden and SIDA, both of which provided catalytic funding for the Centre's work in the Sahel and Horn of Africa. The Centre conducted a joint mission to Kenya and Uganda with the Swedish Embassy in Kenya and SIDA Sub-Saharan Africa team in Addis and briefed the Swedish embassy in Bamako on the ongoing work to support the milk-value chain in Mali. The Centre engaged closely with the Japanese embassies in Addis, Nairobi and Ouagadougou as Japan continues to be a close partner of the Centre, funding the Trade for Peace initiative in the Liptako-Gourma region.

The Centre deepened engagement with the European Union, including making a dedicated mission to Brussels, with a focus on sub-regional and cross-border programmes in the Sahel and Horn of Africa. The Centre engaged closely with the French Foreign Ministry, conducting a joint technical dialogue in Paris with a focus on identifying platforms to exchange best practices on cross-border cooperation between Europe and Africa. The Centre briefed the Crown Princess and Crown Prince of Sweden and Norway during a joint mission to Kenya.

The Centre provided a joint briefing with IGAD and the African Union to development partners on planned engagements in the Horn of Africa. The Centre conducted a series of bilateral meetings with key partners, including Germany, GIZ, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States to brief partners on ongoing and planned work on borderlands.



Zeynu Ummer, Team Lead and Senior Technical Adviser, ABC, on behalf of the RBA Director, exchanges MOU with Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary of IGAD in Djibouti

Partnership to address climate-forced migration and displacement in Africa's borderlands

Together with the World Bank, the Centre co-led the borderlands workstream of the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative, a consultative research and policy process on climate mobility in Africa to inform COP 27 in Egypt. Over 50 development practitioners across Africa were convened by the Centre to discuss the research and modelling carried out by Columbia University and the Mixed Migration Centre. Scenarios were explored in which climate change could interact with human mobility in Africa's borderlands. The input from this consultative process was directly incorporated into the 2023 comprehensive report, "African Shifts," which addresses the challenges of climate-forced migration and displacement in Africa.

Strengthening Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and UNDP partnership in West Africa's borderlands

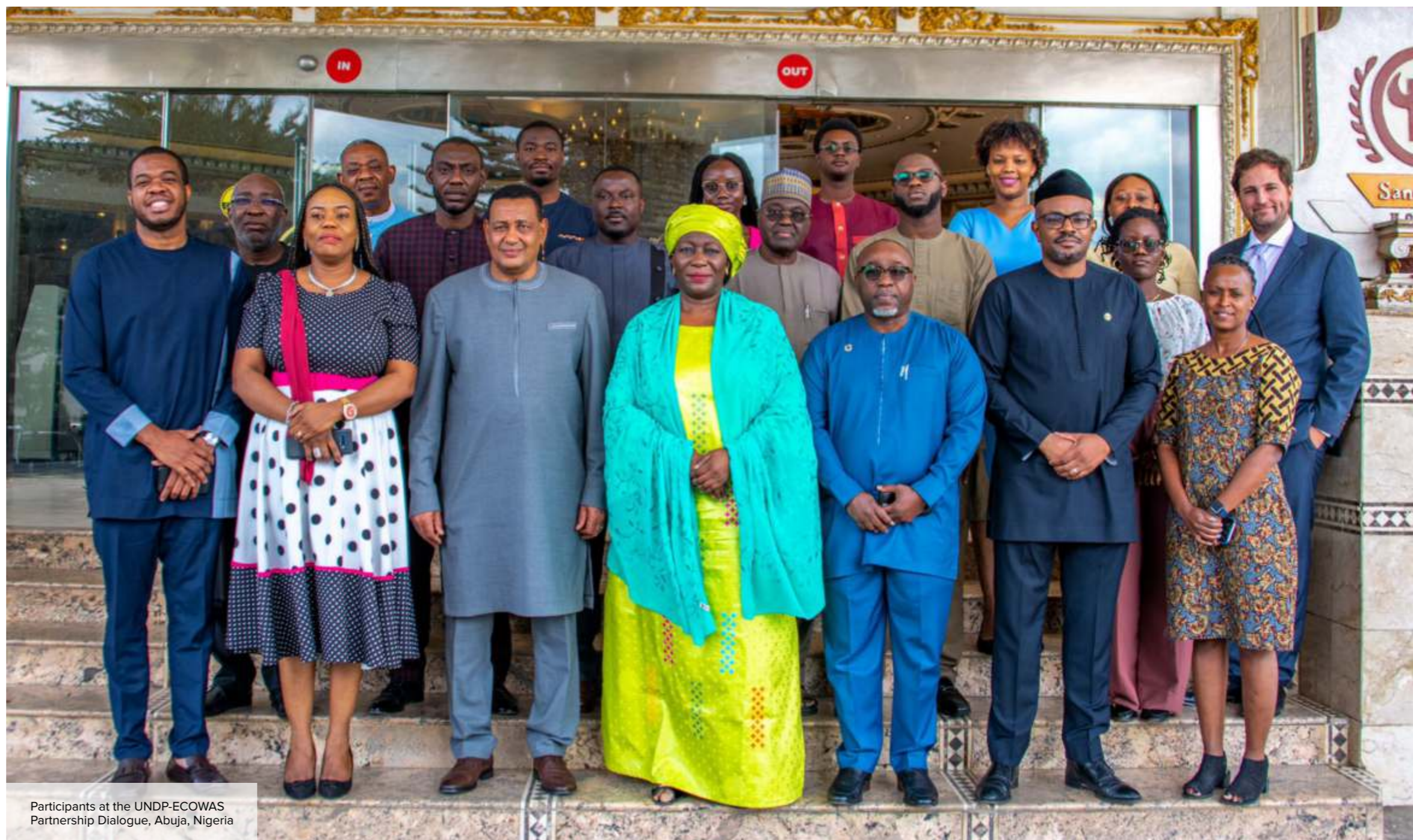
As part of its efforts to promote sustainable development in the region, UNDP is partnering with ECOWAS to support initiatives that strengthen governance, promote inclusivity and enhance resilience to shocks and threats. The two organizations held a technical-level partnership dialogue in Abuja on 4–5 July 2022. The dialogue focused on how the organizations can collaborate more closely in data, research, policy and programming to address the challenges and opportunities in West Africa, including its borderlands.

The Centre played a key role in facilitating the partnership dialogue, providing technical support and expertise to identify priority areas for programmatic collaboration. The dialogue resulted in the identification of several thematic areas on which UNDP and ECOWAS can work together more closely, including promoting cross-border trade and economic integration, enhancing regional governance and peacebuilding and strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations in the borderlands.

Engagement with the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa UNDP Resident Representatives

At the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa cluster retreat in Nairobi, the Centre actively participated in the Great Lakes Regional Representatives Forum. The forum identified opportunities for collaboration among UNDP's Country Offices, the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes and UNDP's regional presence, including the Centre. During

the meeting, several priority areas for collaboration were identified and UNDP's efforts on borderlands development and cross-border cooperation were presented. The meeting positioned UNDP as supportive of the United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategy. In addition, the Centre participated in the virtual Horn of Africa Regional Representatives Forum, during which UNDP Country Offices were briefed on the Centre's work in promoting borderlands development and cross-border cooperation in the region.



Participants at the UNDP-ECOWAS Partnership Dialogue, Abuja, Nigeria



Nakonde Cross-border Traders Association Zambia-Tanzania border

6. Communications

2022 key outcomes



Reached an impressive audience of 20 million people through strategic communication initiatives, generating positive media coverage.



Shared expert knowledge through various channels, such as blog articles, research papers, opinion pieces and media interviews, highlighting key issues affecting Africa's borderlands.



Engaged with local and international news agencies, resulting in high media reach and mentions, showcasing the Center's commitment to collaboration and partnership.



Documented impactful stories from Africa's borderlands through multimedia products to demonstrate the positive impact of development in the borderlands.



Leveraged the power of social media to increase the reach and impact of the Center's message, fostering awareness, mobilizing support and promoting open and inclusive dialogue on critical issues related to African borderlands.

Achievements

Effective communication is critical to the success of the Centre's mission. A commitment to collaboration and partnership required the Centre to keep its stakeholders and the public well-informed and engaged with the Centre's activities and progress. In 2022, the Centre continued to prioritize communication efforts and successfully

disseminated crucial information about the Centre's work in Africa's borderlands through various digital and mainstream media channels.

Through strategic communication initiatives, the Centre reached an impressive audience of 248 million people in 2022. The coverage generated from these efforts was overwhelmingly positive, with 38 media reports highlighting the impact of the Centre's work in the borderlands. This widespread coverage allowed the Centre to connect with diverse audiences, including policymakers, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies and borderland communities, helping build trust and credibility as an organization.

Communication efforts in 2022 were multifaceted, encompassing a range of activities, including press releases, media interviews, social media outreach and website updates. By leveraging the power of these platforms, the Centre's message was conveyed clearly and effectively to a wide range of audiences. Communication efforts inspire more people to join the mission and create a better future for those living in Africa's border regions.



ABC intensified its communication efforts to reach more people in the borderlands in 2022

Shared expert knowledge for lasting impact.

In 2022, the Centre took remarkable strides towards sharing expert knowledge. This was achieved through various channels, including publishing six blog articles and five policy briefs that garnered significant attention from the target audiences. The Centre authored several compelling opinion pieces that provided expert perspectives on various issues affecting Africa's borderlands. The Centre's experts made multiple appearances on renowned national and international radio and TV channels, including the BBC, KTN News, KBC, Capital FM Kenya and others. Our flagship research publication, titled "Promise, Peril and Resilience: Voices of Agropastoralists in Africa's Borderlands," garnered significant media coverage and was featured on 38 prominent media platforms. This extensive coverage included appearances on television, radio broadcasts, and prominent newspaper publications. The widespread dissemination of the knowledge product ensured that the voices and experiences of agropastoralists in Africa's borderlands reached a diverse audience, fostering greater awareness and understanding of their challenges and resilience.

The Centre's media outreach efforts and commitment to enhancing collaboration with local and international news agencies and journalists was evident in the high media reach and mentions recorded throughout 2022 (see the graphic below). With the Centre's unwavering dedication to knowledge sharing, these efforts will continue to foster even greater partnerships and reach even more people in the years to come.



Nakonde Cross Border Traders Association Zambia-Tanzania Border

Documented impactful stories from Africa's borderlands.

Over the past year, the Centre made significant strides in delivering evidence-based outputs that promote sustainable development across Africa. As part of the Centre's commitment to showcasing the positive impact of development in Africa's borderlands, the Centre engaged Dinovate Solutions, a multimedia company, to document stories from the region covering several themes such as cross border resource management, climate resilience, adaptive livelihood practices, women and youth leadership and agency, and conflict resolution. The resulting products, which will be delivered in 2023 will include a docuseries, audio podcasts, short videos and impact pictures, will help make a persuasive case for development through the voices of those directly impacted by it. These products will be widely distributed across various media platforms, ensuring that the message reaches as wide of an audience as possible.



Nakonde Cross Border Traders Association Zambia-Tanzania Border

Leveraged social media for impactful outreach.

In 2022, the Centre took significant steps towards increasing the reach and impact of their message by leveraging the power of social media. The team worked diligently to formulate and execute a comprehensive social media strategy, including the creation of engaging and informative content, strategic use of hashtags and targeted outreach to followers and broader online communities. Through these efforts, awareness was raised and support mobilized for critical issues related to African borderlands. The goal was to establish a digital presence that effectively communicates with target audiences and the creation of platforms for meaningful dialogue.

Building strong relationships with online audiences and fostering open and inclusive dialogue through social media channels was recognized as highly important and strategic. The Centre's efforts to amplify borderland voices through social media have been a crucial component of sharing the broader mission of promoting greater awareness and action on key issues related to African borderlands. Through continued dedication and innovation using a social media strategy, the Centre is confident that its reach and impact can expand even further in the years ahead.

Delivering Our Message in 2022



Our team

The members of the Centre's team are highly valued assets and a source of hope for the communities we serve. Our team comprises skilled professionals who work tirelessly towards reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development in the borderlands of Africa.



Zeynu Ummer
Team Lead and Senior Chief
Technical Advisor



Samuel Godfrey
Senior Water Advisor for Africa



Kehinde Bolaji
Programme Advisor/Manager
Technical Advisor



Kristoffer Tangri
Partnerships and Programmes Specialist



Lily Murei
Research and Policy Specialist



Enoch Omweri
Solutions Mapping Analyst



Confred Nzau- Mwangambo
Programme Associate



Antony Mutungi
Data Analyst



Oratile Moloko
Data Innovation Analyst/ Fellow,
African Young Women Leaders (AFYWL)
Fellowship Programme

Our idea co-creators



Our funding partners





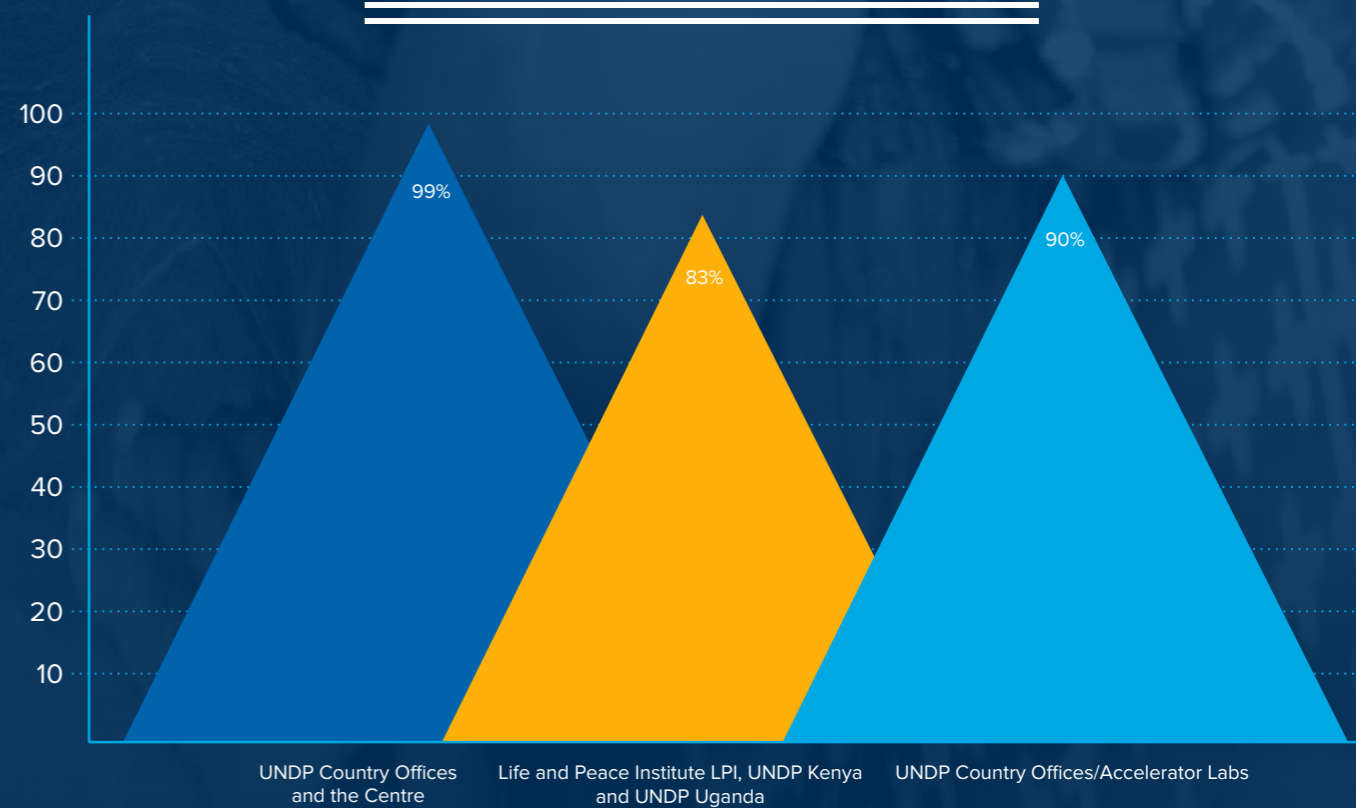
Financial Accountability in 2022



BUDGET SOURCE



IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS DELIVERY (AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2022)





Africa
Borderlands
Centre

