

Africa
Borderlands
Centre



Africa Borderlands Centre's Innovation Facility

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Innovation Challenge

THEME: IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS FOR
INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER TRADERS
AND BORDERLANDS TRADING COMMUNITIES



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

A. INTRODUCTION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE AFRICA BORDERLANDS INNOVATION FACILITY

What is the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge?

The Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge is a dedicated funding window to support borderlands' stakeholders in scaling impact, unlocking development finance, catalyzing behavioral change, improving the efficiency of social services, and exploring frontier technologies through social innovation. The overall objective of the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge is to improve the quality of life of borderlands' communities and to ensure that they maximize their benefits from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

What is unique about Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge?

Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge is dedicated to innovation within marginalized communities cutting across a minimum of two (2) border pairs. It focuses on partnering with them to maximize the social, environmental and economic benefits of cross-border activities. It emphasizes the elevation of the "voices" and capabilities of locally formulated developmental solutions to complex challenges.

How is the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge financed?

Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge is at its initial phase of implementation. This stage is funded through the core funding of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Programme for Africa (RPA). Eventually, the facility is expected to benefit from funding support from multilateral partners and development organizations.

What is Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge's decision making process?

Applications to the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge is considered by a Grants Award Committee (GAC), which serves as the decision-making mechanism of the facility. It is established in line with UNDP Policies and Programme Procedures (POPP). Membership of the GAC is drawn from UNDP's Africa Borderlands Centre (ABC), the Regional Programme for Africa (RPA), Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) and the UNDP Kenya Country Office. GAC members can be viewed on the ABC website.

What is the Programme Implementation Mechanism?

Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge's Grants is managed and supervised on a day-to-day basis by the Programme Implementation Unit (PMU) of the ABC. It implements the decision of the GAC on the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge. The PMU is led by the Team Leader of the ABC.

Who owns the intellectual property of the innovation challenge?

The intellectual property ownership fully by the local implementing partners that are collaborating with the ABC and AccLabs. However, beyond the life of the project, AccLabs and COs shall take due diligence to ensure that it is not used for profit-making.

B. FUNDING MECHANISMS AND ELIGIBILITY

What is the application cycle for Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge?

Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge has a 10-month innovation cycle, with focus on specific thematic issue. The cycle opens with a call for proposal around in April and ends with submission of specific innovation report in December.

Who is eligible to apply to the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge?

Only UNDP Country Office, through their respective Accelerator Labs in the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) countries, are eligible to apply. However, applications to be accepted, must be jointly authored by at least two (2) UNDP Accelerator Labs. They must also be thematically focused on borderlands innovation. It is recommended that applications have strong focus on elevating the works of borderlands innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, community leaders, and other key stakeholders. It is important to demonstrate that implementation will be in strong partnership with borderlands partners and/or research institutions.

What types of innovation activities are eligible for funding?

Innovation that are based on scientific evidence of potential impact for the improvement of quality of life of borderlands' communities; innovations that are new and capable of generating a new model of solving a problem; activities that demonstrate that they can be easily scaled to achieve maximum impact; activities that can generate new knowledge on solving old/complex problems; activities that can be successfully applied/replicated/prototyped in different borderlands contexts; activities with clear and viable exit strategy for UNDP AccLabs/Country Offices; activities that are led and driven by local borderlands inhabitants with skills to deliver; activities that promote social cohesion through creative entrepreneurship models; activities that are ready for investment, with potentially strong consumer demands and particularly interesting to investors from the private sector; activities that are sustainable based on the social capita and limited resources of the borderlands' communities.

What category of innovation can be funded?

Testing & Transition Innovation: Ideas that already demonstrated promise, with potentials for expanding to scale and financial viability. The primary focus shall be on the households, particularly informal innovation of new products within families and homesteads, which are capable of providing creative solutions for rural households exposed to multidimensional social and economic challenges, poverty and most vulnerable to climate change impact, including rain-dependent farmers; refugees and internally displaced persons households; and female headed households. The Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge may in future, support pilot activities that have not been proven to have social and financial viability, as well as ideas that are meant to achieve long-term growth.

What types of innovation activities are ineligible for funding?

These include experimental sciences project without social impact; innovation activities within a single country (i.e. without cross-border dimensions); innovation activities that neglects to mainstream conflict sensitivity, youth and gender dimensions to them; activities that promotes religious, political and ethnic objectives; activities that are against the local laws; activities that exacerbates climate change impact and that disrespects the "Do No Harm" principle in development assistance.

What are the causes of unsuccessful applications?

Applicants that do not meet the criteria as stipulated in the Guidelines & Eligibility Form will not be accepted. . Also, applications that are not submitted in line with the stipulated procedures shall also be ineligible for support. Please note that some of the criteria are subjected to change on an annual basis, due to the thematic focus of the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge's Annual Innovation Challenge. Submissions of supporting documents that are not in line with the templates in the online application form will be disqualified.

C. APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ABIF

How can my AccLab/CO Apply for Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge?

AccLabs and COs can apply using the Africa Innovation Challenge Application Form and following the Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria provided on the this [link](#)

When can applications be submitted?

The Innovation Challenge application window is from Monday, 10 May 2021 to Sunday, 30 May 2021 at Midnight EAT. Therefore, deadline for the application is Sunday, 30 May 2021 at midnight EAT.

What funding support can be provided by the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge?

Each proposal submitted is expected to have the maximum value of US\$200,000 (inclusive of GMS). Payment of salaries, allowances for staff and recruitment of consultants are not eligible for the funding. Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge shall extend a grant of US\$160,000 to each successful application based on qualifying criteria.

What matching fund requirements are expected from applicant AccLabs/COs?

Each joint applicant is required to show that it has liquid (matching) fund of **US\$40,000** dedicated to the implementation of its proposed activities.

What is the selection process of Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge beneficiaries?

The successful applications shall be selected through the following steps:

- Screening of applications based on adherence to the criteria stipulated in the RFP;
- Submission of eligible applications to the GAC;
- Review and decision on successful grants by the GAC;
- Provisional Approval of four (4) Proposals;
- Solutions Mapping Exercise in 8 border communities (Filed Visits);
- Further screening of Proposals;
- Final decision by GAC;
- Final Approval of 3 Proposals.
- Release of grant funds.

Successful applicants will be notified by the Africa Borderlands Centre's PMU.

What is the role of recipient AccLabs/COs?

The recipient AccLabs (on behalf of themselves and their pairs) are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the approved Work Plan and financial management. They are also held accountable for the achievement of the results relating to the innovation challenge.

What is the role of the GAC?

The GAC is responsible for deciding on the successful applications. It is also responsible for the review of the outputs from the implementation of the innovation challenge.

What is the role of the ABC?

The ABC's PMU is responsible for providing overall though-leadership for the innovation process. Its specific roles include coordination of the co-creation and solutions mapping workshops in the implementing border communities; development and application of monitoring and evaluation tools for the innovation challenge; provision of quality assurances for the implementation; overall management of accountability of the resources extended to recipient AccLabs/COs; etc.

The project implementation shall be facilitated by the ABC, specifically through the conceptualization and design; transparent governance of the process; technical advisory and guidance; funding support; oversight and quality assurances; and provision of visibility.

What languages are eligible for consideration?

The eligible languages for the application shall be English and French.

What are the feedback mechanisms for successful and unsuccessful applications?

Email shall be sent to all AccLabs/COs that have submitted application, providing feedbacks on their status.

Is there support available from the Africa Borderlands Team during the Application process?

The Africa Borderlands Centre shall provide technical support to each Country Office applying to this innovation challenge, through series of **Clinic Sessions**, based on demands. This provides a forum for clarifying unclear issues related to the process, but not the substance, of the application. The Clinics will be open on **Friday, May 14th and Wednesdays May 19th and 26th thereafter**. Country Offices/ AccLabs interested in such session should send an email request at least 48 hours to each session through: hello.africaborderlands@undp.org. Please note that a maximum of 30 minutes will be dedicated to address request pertaining to a proposal.

How can I provide feedbacks to the Africa Borderlands Innovation Challenge and/or ask any other question?

You may provide feedback through the email hello.africaborderlands@undp.org.

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