

*“Engaging Higher Education and Research in, on and with Africa”*



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*Annual Report 2023 for Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies*

# ***Practicing Partnerships, Coordinating Clusters***



**Uppsala, June 2024**

## **Introduction**

Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies is a centre with a broad mandate to develop and strengthen research and higher education initiatives in, on, and with Africa. The Forum is organizationally located within the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, but with the broad aim to engage with research and higher education across disciplines, faculties, and disciplinary domains. It should facilitate contacts and the exchange of research information within and outside the university, and with universities and research institutes on the African continent. To do this, the Forum organizes lectures, seminars, round-tables, film screenings, workshops, undergraduate courses, etc. It runs research projects in collaboration with different stakeholders. The Forum leads a number of collaborative projects with partners in African countries.

In 2023, Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies was "re-launched" with a new Board that comprised representatives of the University's three disciplinary domains: Humanities and Social Sciences, Science and Technology, and Medicine and Pharmacy. The Forum thereby became a University-wide centre supported by the UU/Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Funding. The new mission is to support and facilitate the University's strategic, thematic, and practical collaborative initiatives. Building on the last decade of activities, projects, and initiatives developed, the Forum is taking steps to become a strong cluster developed around a Graduate School of Africa Studies, alongside other strategic foci, such as strengthening our engagement in, on, and with Africa. As will become clear in this report, this has improved the capacity of Forum to be a central actor for Africa research; in November, the Vice-Chancellor added core-funding to support the three clusters of the Guild-ARUA Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence. In addition to the core funding, the Forum pursued work with two important projects: the VR-funded Decolonizing Research Methodologies with Burkina Faso, Mali, and Tanzania; and the Sida-funded Citizen Perspectives in Mali.

During the year, the Forum hosted, co-hosted or sponsored 33 public events, including symposia, conference panels, research seminars and book launches. Most importantly, we organized a one-week International Workshop between Malian and Swedish Researchers in Bamako in April 2023, and a two-week Fieldwork Seminar with 25 participants in Tanzania in October-November 2023. This annual report summarizes activities carried out in 2023. The appendices include a list of all activities and meetings, a list of people involved, and a list of externally funded projects.

## **Organization and Scope**

Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies (*Forum för Afrikastudier vid Uppsala universitet*) aims to facilitate collaboration, communication and research between scholars and institutions inside and outside of Uppsala University, so as to favor the consolidation of research environments, the development of courses focusing on Africa, and collaborations with colleagues at African universities and research institutes. It functions as a platform for interdisciplinary exchange, critical reflection, collaborative work, and publication.

From January 2023, Forum was transformed with a new Board with three representatives of the Humanities and Social Sciences, two representatives of Science and Technology, and Medicine and Pharmacy respectively (Appendix 3). The Board met four times during the year

(Appendix 2). The Forum's Director (Sten Hagberg) led the daily management in collaboration with the Coordinators: Oulia Makkonen, Kajsa Hallberg Adu, and Jecinta Okumu (Appendix 4).

In December 2022, the Africa Network at UU (*Afrikanätverket*) was founded, and from mid-2023, the Forum took on a coordinating role. The network aims to foster communication between researchers and administrators when it comes to UU's multiple African engagements. Staff from the International, and Planning Divisions, participate alongside with International Science Programme, SWEDESD, and the Forum. In 2023, four meetings with the Africa Network at UU were held (Appendix 2)

### **Inside and outside of the university**

The Forum for Africa Studies works actively with communication through its website ([www.afrikastudier.uu.se](http://www.afrikastudier.uu.se)) and its [Facebook page](#), as well as its email list with more than 300 subscribers. Currently, we have 2,700 followers on Facebook; our publications about events and activities often reach more than 1,000 viewers, and occasionally up to 5,000. Our Facebook account notes a 6.1% growth, and an organic reach of 38,900 viewers. We also collaborate with the University's Communications Unit in relation to media coverage and public relations.

In addition to its everyday presence in Uppsala (as well as occasionally at Campus Gotland), the Forum organizes events, workshops, and sometimes conferences on the African continent. One network includes activities and initiatives carried out in West Africa. The [\*Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Comparative, Engagée et Transnationale \(LACET\)\*](#) is an institutional framework agreement between Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies, the Institut des Sciences des Sociétés in Burkina Faso, and the Institut des Sciences Humaines in Mali; the LACET is currently composed of 40 researchers mainly from these countries (<https://www.lacet.org/>). Second, the Forum collaborates with the West African research network Mande Studies Association (MANSA), as Sten Hagberg, was the MANSA President until the end February 2024. The International Conference hosted in Bamako in June 2024 will be a major activity of the West Africa network. Another network is the research training collaboration with Mozambique, notably three programmes with Eduardo Mondlane University under the auspices of Sida. Forum's is involved in programmes focusing on [Municipal Democracy and Local Development in Mozambique](#) (Cultural Anthropology), on [Bio-Cultural Heritage](#) (Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology), and on [Population Dynamics and Socioeconomic Wellbeing](#) (Global Health, Cultural Anthropology). Other networks include the Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD), and the South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF), and [AEGIS](#), originally an acronym for "Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies."

### **Major Events**

Since its launching in March 2012, Forum has hosted some 330 public events, including seminars, lectures, round-tables, film-screenings, book launches, symposia, and international conferences. Each year we organize some major events, such as international conferences (SANORD in 2016, MANSA in 2021). In 2023, we hosted or co-hosted some 30 public activities and events (Appendix 1). The Forum's staff also gave presentations of the centre on several occasions, including when Uppsala University received visits from Africa or pertaining to Africa. Since early 2023, much work has focused on the International Conference on Mande Studies in Bamako, Mali, in June 2024.

The theme of the conference is “Towards a Decolonization of Knowledges in West Africa: History, Actors, and Productions.” Sten Hagberg is the president of the conference executive committee.

### Launching the New Uppsala University’s Forum for Africa Studies in April 2023

On Friday 14 April 2023, Vice-Chancellor Anders Hagfeldt launched the New Forum, followed by a note by Forum’s Director Sten Hagberg on what to do and where to go in the coming years. The inaugural session was chaired by Kajsa Ahlstrand, the Chair-person of Forum. Six PhD Students/postdocs then presented a variety of current Africa research at Uppsala University; Board-member Birgitta Essén chaired that session. The Round-Table with invited speaker Ludovic Kibora, Institut des Sciences des Sociétés, Burkina Faso, and Board-members Ashleigh Harris, Meena Daivadanam, and Carla Puglia, addressed the question of “How to engage with higher education & research in/with Africa?” Amanda Hammar, University of Copenhagen, gave a key note on *A Spanner in the Machine/s: Why Critical African Studies Matters (in Sweden and Everywhere)*, chaired by Board-member Anders Themnér. The launching ended with concluding remarks by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Erik Lindberg.

### Fieldwork Seminar in Tanzania in October-November

In October-November 2023, the Fieldwork Seminar of the [Research School Programme Decolonizing Research Methodologies](#) was organized in Tanzania. The aim was to bring together participants from the six partner universities: Université Nazi Boni, Burkina Faso; Institut des Sciences Humaines, Mali; University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden; Stockholm University, Sweden; and Uppsala University, Sweden. In total, the Fieldwork Seminar in Tanzania brought together 41 participants: 26 of the participants were PhD Students or Post Doc. Candidates, 12 Researchers (including the programme coordinators), and three additional members of the organization team of the University of Dar es Salaam. The Seminar consisted of two-week intense course on decolonization in practice and on collaborative fieldwork methodology. The thematic focus was Religious Co-existence. Seminars, lectures, round-tables, workshops, walk-and-talks, were all combined with fieldwork in four villages of the Bagamoyo District.



### International Workshop between Malian and Swedish Researchers

Between 24 and 28 April, the Forum organized the first Swedish-Malian Research International Meeting at the Institut des Sciences Humaines (ISH) in Bamako, Mali. The purpose was to present ongoing research work, approaches and conceptual and methodological tools with Malian and Swedish researchers in order to identify common interests for the development of potential joint seed projects. The Meeting worked with “match-making” between the researchers, so as to support the formation of Swedish-Malian teams. A dozen Swedish researchers participated in the workshop, two of whom did so online, and some 20 Malian researchers presented project proposals/research interests. In December, seven seed money projects were granted funding.



### Sahel Symposium

On 14-15 December, the Sahel Symposium – jointly organized by the Forum, and the Sahel and West Africa Programme of the Swedish International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) – took place on the theme “Public Services and Citizen Perspectives in Times of Crisis.” It brought together researchers doing research in the Sahel. Yet several West African participants could not attend due to visa issues. Twenty researchers presented research, and engaged in joint discussions. In addition, the first day was hybrid, and we noted strong participation from Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. The Symposium was part of the work to mobilize researchers at

Swedish universities, for the second round of seed money applications. It followed up the December 2022 Mali Symposium on “Citizen Perspectives in Mali: An International Symposium on Way(s) Forward”.



### Webinar

On 27 September, Forum co-hosted a Webinar on “Mines, Profits, and Popular Struggles in West Africa” as part of the release of the *Mande Studies* 24, 2022. Some 40 people attended.

### West Africa Day

On 30 September, the Forum organized a thematic day on WEST AFRICA IN SWEDEN, SWEDEN IN WEST AFRICA. The Forum, and the Swedish West African Chamber of Commerce and Culture (SWACC) co-hosted the event that included research presentations, conversations about West African literature, and of doing business with West Africa, etc. Some 30 participants attended.

### **Friday seminars 2023**

This year, the Friday Seminar in Africa Studies saw more presentations from domains outside the Humanities and Social Sciences in line with the broader focus of the Forum. In total, we had seven seminars, particularly in the Fall of 2023, on topics such as film and digital storytelling as well as protests, riots, claiming space and liberation struggles. Participants and presenters from universities across the African continent as well as from Europe and the Nordic countries, came together for the Friday Seminar in Africa Studies. Upholding its tradition of informal and inclusive presentations and discussions, the seminar is open to the public with no registration needed, irrespective of the format. This accessibility has enhanced engagement, fostering lively discussions and enriching the diversity of perspectives shared.

### **Citizen Perspectives on Societal Challenges in Mali**

The implementation of the project *Perspectives citoyennes des défis de société au Mali*, funded by the [Embassy of Sweden in Bamako](#) on behalf of the [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency \(Sida\)](#), and led by Uppsala University’s Forum for Africa Studies officially began on 1 July 2022. The project was developed by the Forum, which is in charge of implementation, monitoring, and overall management of the project. The main Malian partner is the [Institut des Sciences Humaines](#), a public research institute in the humanities in Bamako,

particularly by means of the research lab, the [Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Comparative, Engagée et Transnationale](#) (LACET). Other Malian actors are researchers at public universities in Bamako and Ségou, as well as non-state organizations, such as Centre Djoliba and the [Studio Tamani](#). Swedish partners are researchers and research teams at universities and research institutes.

The project aims to promote citizen perspectives through the implementation of engaged research, the organization of citizen debates and the capacity building of young researchers in Mali. A particular focus is to promote women leaders as researchers, teachers and opinion leaders, in short, as “public intellectuals.”

The Official Launching took place at the Institut des Sciences Humaines in January 2023 by the Minister of Higher Education and Research, and the Ambassador of Sweden in Mali. More than 100 people attended the event that was mediatized by Malian media outlets. The International Workshop of Malian and Swedish Researchers in April, and the Sahel Symposium in December were other high-points (see Major Events). The project is composed of two main components:

- Studies. The implementation of strategic studies and citizen debates, in particular the documentation and analysis of citizen perspectives on the challenges of Malian society. The results will be presented to the general public, and published in the form of books accessible to non-specialists, “briefs” or podcasts/television programmes. In January, the study of Malian women’s political participation was launched with a pre-field research workshop in Bamako. The research team was composed of two senior researchers (Félix Koné and Sten Hagberg) in charge of the scientific coordination, and 11 researchers (seven female, and four male researchers). Between February and April, fieldwork was carried out in 20 municipalities across Mali; in addition, one team focused on national women leaders and networks. Two post-fieldwork workshops were hosted in May and August. The editing of the study began in late 2023, and publication is planned for 2024.
- Partnerships. The strengthening of networks between Malian and Swedish educational research institutions in order to develop partnerships between research teams from the two countries. The project will organize on-site training workshops in Mali on research methodology, project conceptualization, data analysis and scientific writing. In 2023, most work focused on developing partnerships between Malian, and Swedish researchers. In January-February, calls were published for Swedish and Malian researchers respectively to submit projects to be presented at the International Workshop. Joint teams that developed seed money projects were also formed. After a thorough evaluation and monitoring process, the grant decision was taken to fund seven seed money projects with 300.000 SEK/team.

In January, the coordination-team of three part-time staff was finally in place: project leader, and in charge of Component 1 (Prof. Sten Hagberg, 35%); coordinator, and in charge of Component 2 (Dr. Oulia Makkonen, 60%); and financial officer (Ms. Aksana Mushkavets, 25%). Yet in May, the financial officer went on sick leave, and was unable to work with the project for the rest of the year. By the end of June, a new financial officer (Ms. Marja Fahlander) started to work with the project.

On 21 December 2023, the Government of Sweden decided to phase out development cooperation with Mali, meaning that all ongoing programmes must finish in December 2024. Hence, our five-year programme will be reduced to 2.5 years (1 July 2022-31 December 2024).

### **Decolonizing Research Methodologies**

The project *Decolonizing Research Methodologies* is funded by the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) 2022-2025. It aims to support the creation, organization, and the implementation of an interdisciplinary research school by bringing together Burkinabe, Malian, Swedish, and Tanzanian researchers and research projects in a common collaborative framework to strengthen conceptual, theoretical, methodological and practical work for decolonizing research methodologies.

The project is built around qualitative empirical research, and societal engagement through the development of PhD courses (both *in situ/in persona*, and online), the organization of summer schools in the collaborating countries, regular online seminar series, joint analytical workshops, and collaborative publications. It seeks to foster a critical, and yet practically oriented academic culture among PhD students and faculty. The partners involved in the project are: [Laboratoire d'études rurales sur l'environnement et développement économique et social](#), Université Nazi Boni of Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso; [Institut des Sciences Humaines](#), Bamako, Mali; [Society and Religion Research Centre](#), University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; [Department of Urban and Rural Development](#), Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences; the [Department of Social Anthropology](#), Stockholm University; and, finally, the Forum for Africa Studies that also coordinates the project.



In March, a mission to Tanzania took place with Sten Hagberg, Oulia Makkonen, and Patrice Toé, in order to prepare with Thomas Ndaluka at University of Dar es Salaam to plan the



upcoming Fieldwork Seminar place in October-November and gathered some 40 participants (see Major events). Much work was invested in budget, programme, buying flight tickets, etc. prior to the Fieldwork Seminar itself.

In September, the project also hosted virtual seminars on decolonization and decoloniality in practice. One seminar focused on Spirituality and Religion on the Swahili Coast with Paula Uimonen and Hussein Masimbi.

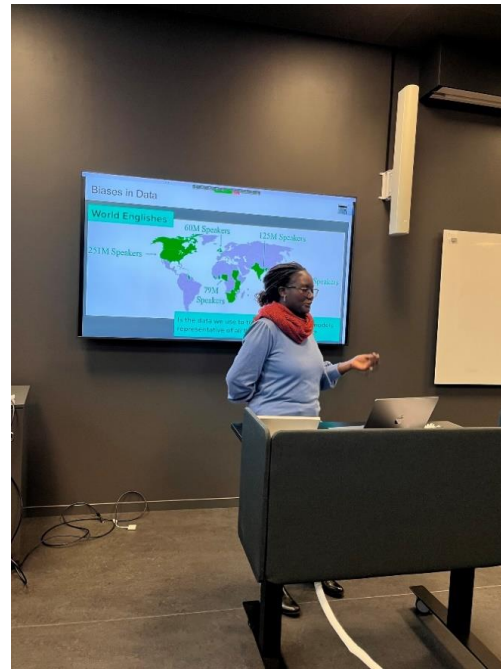
### **ARUA-The Guild Clusters of Research Excellence (CoRE)**

In 2023, Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies started to provide support to three out of the 20 [Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence \(CoRE\)](#) created by the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) and The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities. The CoREs were launched in 2023 to address societal and scientific challenges framed by the AU-EU Innovation Agenda. The newly recruited Research Coordinators (Kajsa Hallberg Adu, and Jecinta Okumu) started to work with the three clusters where UU is lead: Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, and Theoretical and Computational Thinking (Hallberg Adu); Food Environment Actions for the Promotion of Health (Okumu); and Migration and Health (Okumu). The [CoREs](#) seek to bring together some of the best researchers from both continents, striving for equitable partnerships in an unequal world. Their launching was enabled by resources committed by our institutions to address UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through excellent research, education, capacity building, mobility and innovation. Twenty CoREs were proposed by academics and selected according to the excellence of their 10-year collaborative plans, which contribute to the four priority areas of the EU-AU Innovation Agenda: Public Health, Green Transition, Innovation & Technology, and Capacities for Science.

### Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, and Theoretical and Computational Thinking (CoRE AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) methods have become powerful tools for addressing societal challenges in almost all areas of life. This development is fuelled by improved connectivity, increased computational power, and data access. Applications are expected to play an essential role in achieving many of the SDGs by tackling problems in a multitude of areas, like climate change, food security, education, public health, access to energy and clean water, and, in the areas in the social sciences and humanities, social justice to name a few. While the SDGs and many connected societal challenges are global, the capacity for utilising AI methods and research in AI and Data Science still needs to be improved in Africa. The goal of the Cluster is to strengthen the capabilities for research and postgraduate training in these areas at key universities in Africa and initiate research projects in areas of global relevance. Since June 2023, the CoRE AI has met weekly to organise the work and has decided on an iterative approach of trying collaborative forms, starting with hybrid Masterclasses. The Cluster organised four online course meetings, simultaneously broadcast to all 11 campuses and reaching a total of more than 400 students on topics from sports analytics to bias in data science. Between 16, and 17 November, a kick-off for the Cluster was hosted at Uppsala University with 23 incoming participants from all seven of the African Partner universities and one European university, in total with participation from Uppsala University 35 researchers. The programme included research presentations, a PhD-student track as well as a fruitful brainstorming session for Cluster research which saw nine discrete projects formulated. All of them are described on the [web](#). External communication has been carried out

predominately on LinkedIn, where the <https://www.linkedin.com/company/core-ai-africaeurope/> page had 82 followers on Dec 31, 2023 and had in 2023 organic engagement with 992 unique views, 119 unique visitors and 274 page views. Francesco Petruccione, Stellenbosch University and David J.T. Sumpter, Uppsala University, lead the cluster, which is provided coordinating support by the Forum (Kajsa Hallberg Adu).



### Food Environment Actions for the Promotion of Health

The triple burden of malnutrition implies that three themes driven by urbanisation, food systems transformation and socio-economic inequalities. This CoRE comprises three core ARUA institutions, two core institutions from The Guild and other public, private and nongovernmental organisation from both Africa and Europe. It seeks to advance the study of food environments through cutting-edge research, develop the next generation of scholars through an equitable capacity-building programme with support for early career researchers and engage in collaborative research, education and policy-related activities to enhance food environments. The disciplinary and sectoral diversity represented by this CoRE supports local research and engagement, while at the same time developing collaborative engagements to understand food environment drivers and their implications for planetary and human health. Jane Battersby, University of Cape Town and Meena Daivadanam, Uppsala University lead the cluster, which is provided coordinating support by the Forum (Jecinta Okumu).

### Migration and Health

Migration – involving diverse movements of people within and between countries and regions, including refugees – is a key determinant of health but evidence-informed policy and programme responses to address migration and health remain limited. In line with The Guild Position paper on health research (2022) and the AU-EU Innovation Agenda, Migration and Health CoRE addresses the key scientific challenge of MH across the AU-EU migration corridor. This corridor

is associated with multiple health concerns determined by a range of structural and social factors that are experienced differently by diverse migrant groups and communities, through which they move, live and work. The Migration and Health CoRE will develop collaborative research to generate evidence-informed, cross-country policy approaches to support good health. The focus is on migrants and migration-impacted communities along the AU-EU migration corridor, as well as efforts towards Universal Health Coverage. Jo Veary and Carren Ginsburg, both University of Witwatersrand and Soorej Jose Puthooppambal, Uppsala University, lead the cluster, which is provided coordinating support by the Forum (Jecinta Okumu).

### **Research Training Collaboration in Mozambique**

The Forum for Africa Studies is involved in three research partnerships with Mozambique.

#### Strengthening Municipal Democracy and Local Development

The Forum coordinates one programme in partnership with Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) and the Dept. of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology at Uppsala University. Two PhD students in Cultural Anthropology (Paulo Mahumane and Book Sambo) are supervised by Sten Hagberg. In 2023, both Mahumane and Sambo had their 80% Seminars. The UU/UEM Virtual Seminar held two sessions in 2023.

#### Population Dynamics and Socioeconomic Wellbeing

The project is carried out in partnership with Eduardo Mondlane University, Umeå University, University of Witwatersrand, the Dept. of Women's and Children's Health, the Dept. of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, and the Forum with PhD student Márcia Manhique, Cultural Anthropology. Board member Birgitta Essén is coordinating programme activities in Global Health at the Department of Maternal and Child Care.

#### Biocultural Heritage in Mozambique

In partnership with the Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History, and the Dept. of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, the Forum is in charge of training a PhD student in Cultural Anthropology: Jossias Humbane. Anneli Ekblom coordinates this programme of the Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History.

### **Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Comparative, Engagée et Transnationale (LACET)**

In 2018, the Forum for Africa Studies (Uppsala), the Institut des Sciences des Sociétés (Ouagadougou) and the Institut des Sciences Humaines (Bamako) founded a French-speaking research laboratory on engaged, comparative and transnational anthropology. The LACET aims to foster strong and dynamic research environments engaging with pertinent societal challenges. The research lab operates 'on a shoestring' (*lacet*=shoestring in French) with a minimal budget but maximal engagement!

In 2023, the LACET was heavily involved in the scientific leadership of the Mali-project. In addition, the lab welcomed 20 new members, and organized a General Assembly in September. One LACET Virtual Seminars was hosted in 2023 with Burkinabe Anthropologist Sidi Barry on his successfully defended PhD on security challenges in Northern Burkina Faso. As already

mentioned, the LACECT is on charge of scientific leadership of the Citizen Perspectives on Societal Challenges in Mal-project (see above).

### **Participation in networks**

The Forum is actively involved in a wide range of research networks. In addition to those detailed above, we are particularly focusing on SANORD, and AGEIS.

#### Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD)

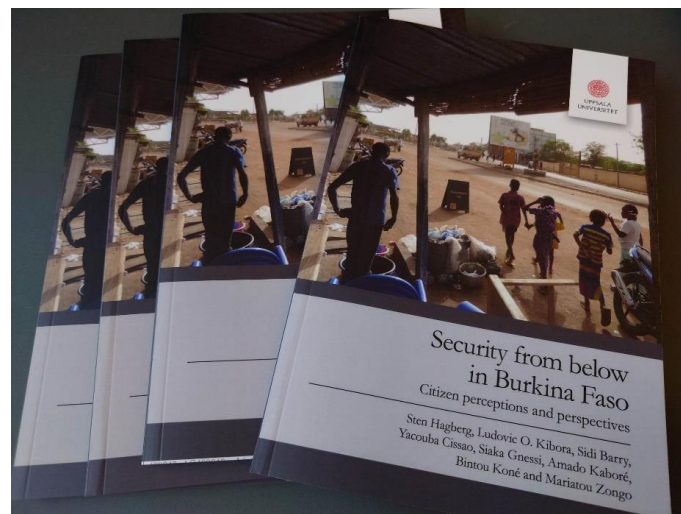
Since 2013, the Forum for Africa Studies is actively involved in SANORD, with Uppsala University's organization of the 2016 SANORD Conference where the Forum took the lead as a high point. In September, Kajsa Hallberg Adu and Jecinta Okumu participated in the SANORD Conference in Hamar, Norway.

#### AEGIS

Since 31 May 2023, the Forum is a full member of AEGIS, originally an acronym for Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies. AEGIS is a network organization made up of more than 40 Europe-based member institutions connected to research and education on and in Africa and African Studies. AEGIS hosts the biannual European Conference in African Studies. Forum's Sten Hagberg and Oulia Makkonen presented the Forum's membership application at the General Assembly of AEGIS in Cologne, Germany in conjunction with the European Conference on African Studies.

### **Publications**

In 2017, the Forum for Africa Studies launched the publication series [Uppsala Papers in Africa Studies](#), with the aim to publish, disseminate and increase the visibility of Africa research carried out at Uppsala University. Uppsala Papers in Africa Studies is published online and as hard copy. The collaborative dimension – across disciplinary borders and in joint research work with African colleagues – is a leading ambition. Publication languages are English, French and Swedish. In 2023, the issue #7 was published on Security from Below in Burkina Faso.



### **Courses in African Studies**

In the Spring, Forum's Sten Hagberg and Ulrika Trovalla led the course African Studies (30hp). Other Forum members involved in teaching were Anneli Ekblom, Nicklas Hållén, Oulia Makkonen, and Kajsa Hallberg Adu. [A list of courses focusing on Africa](#) is available at Forum's web site.

### **Student engagement**

In the Fall, the Forum took steps to engage more with African students at UU. On 27 October, students were invited to a research lunch where discussions were held on what students expected from a university-wide Forum for Africa Studies, and how events could be more inclusive. Some 20 students and a few faculty/staff from all knowledge areas participated.

### **Other externally funded projects**

The Forum was involved in some individual research projects too. Anthropologist Marie Deridder obtained a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Post-Doctoral Fellowship entitled NEGOMOB: Negotiating Mobility in Mali and Burkina Faso 2020-2023. Oulia Makkonen and Ulrika Trovalla received start-up grant from Indevelops U-landsfond at Uppsala University for a project on Skinlightening.

### **Strategic work: Uppsala Graduate School in Africa Studies**

Since early 2021, the Forum has been working on developing the Uppsala Graduate School in Africa Studies as to develop, consolidate, and further strengthen a transdisciplinary cluster in research, higher education, and institutional collaboration in and with Africa at Uppsala University. The graduate school aims to provide the appropriate institutional and academic framework for consolidating and creating synergies between activities and projects, initiatives and networks. It will be organized around seminars, courses and supervision team arrangements, and rely on various funding sources, such as the bilateral research collaboration with Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, etc., and the collaborative programme with Mali.

In 2023, the Forum pursued the work by carrying out a mapping exercise on ongoing research and higher education in, on, and with Africa. Kajsa Hallberg Adu, and Jecinta Okumu are in charge of this study that will be finalized, and published in 2024.

### **Concluding remarks**

Since the launching in March 2012, the Forum has organized or co-organized 330 events, in the form of seminars, lectures, round-tables, workshops, and conferences. In January 2023, the Forum was transformed into a University-wide centre with additional funding from Vice-Chancellor's strategic funding. The [new mission](#) is broadened, while building on activities, projects, and initiatives developed since 2012. By doing this, the Forum is developing towards a strong cluster around a Graduate School of Africa Studies. The Mali-project is, the Decolonizing Research Methodologies Research School, and the Guild-ARUA Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence represent important steps in that direction. The more mundane Africa Network at UU is another concrete strategic way to work within Uppsala University itself. Taken together, conditions seem to be put in place to further strengthen Uppsala University's African Engagements, despite the cutting of development research funding by the Swedish Government in January (Sida's Research Development), and June 2023 (VR's Development Research).

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: List of Public Events 2023

-Friday 17 January, Project Launching in Bamako, Mali: *Citizen Perspectives on Societal Challenges in Mali*. Some 100 people attended the event, including the Ambassador of Sweden in Mali.

-Thursday 26 January, International Workshop: Fieldwork in Anthropology and Linguistics, where Forum's Sten Hagberg presented a paper. One invited speaker was Prof. Friederike Lüpke, University of Helsinki, and Chair of Forum's sister centre: AFRISTADI.

-Friday 27 January, Friday Seminar in Africa Studies: *Decolonizing Research Methodologies: Language in International Collaborations* with Oulia Makkonen from Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnography, Uppsala University.

-Tuesday 7 March, Virtual Seminar UU/UEM: Representation in Gender and Development with Diana Højlund Madsen, Nordic Africa Institute, and Sandra Manuel, University of Eduardo Mondlane

-Friday 14 April, Launching of the New Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies, by Vice-Chancellor Anders Hagfeldt. Other speakers from Uppsala University were: Kajsa Ahlstrand, Sten Hagberg, Birgitta Essén, Emy Lindberg, Emma Sundström, Rosie Duivenbode, Kalkidan Yohannes Olkamo, Mary Karanja Muthoni, Gbemisola Allwell-Brown, Ashleigh Harris, Meena Daivadanam, Carla Puglia, Anders Themnér, and Erik Lindberg. Externally invited speakers were Professors Ludovic Kibora, Institut des Sciences des Sociétés (Burkina Faso), and Amanda Hammar, University of Copenhagen (Denmark).

-Tuesday 18 April, Seminar in Africa Studies: Burkina Faso seen from below in 2023 with Ludovic Kibora, Institut des Sciences des Sociétés, Burkina Faso.

-Monday 24 April-Wednesday 26 April, International Workshop of Malian and Swedish Researchers in Bamako, Mali, with 12 Swedish and 20 Malian Researchers presenting projects as part of match-making.

-Tuesday 2 May-Thursday 4 May, Post Fieldwork Workshop in Bamako with Sten Hagberg and Félix Koné as part of the study of Malian Women's Political Participation.

-Wednesday 17 May, Research Seminar in Africa Studies with Samira Mechri, University of Tunis El Manar (Tunisia) on Culture at the Crossroads.

-Thursday 8 June, Seminar in Africa Studies with Jackson Tamunosaki Jack, the Federal University Otuoke in Nigeria, on Surviving Ecological Precarities: Livelihood Responses and Adaptive Capacity to Environmental Degradation in Nigeria's Niger Delta.

-Tuesday 13 June, Virtual seminar: Decolonizing Research Methodologies with Vincent-Paul Sanon, Université Nazi BONI, on Research on traditional fisheries practices: transition and implications in Burkina Faso / Recherche sur les pêcheries traditionnelles : transition et implications au Burkina Faso

- Tuesday 4 July, Séminaire virtuel du LACET with Sidi Barry, Université KI-ZERBO on the Security Crisis in Burkina Faso.
- Tuesday 5 September, Séminaire virtuel du LACET with Sten Hagberg: Revue de projets en cours.
- Friday 8 September, Roundtable on Research and Higher Education as Global Exchange, co-hosted by the Democracy and Higher Education programme, and the Forum for Africa Studies, with Ruth Busch, Sten Hagberg, Ashleigh Harris, Stefan Helgesson, Friederike Lüpke, and Oulia Makkonen.
- Friday 15 September, Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Cultural Avenue on My Story + Your Story = Our Story: Digital Storytelling as Community-Building Practice in Uganda.
- Friday 15 September, Virtual seminar: Decolonizing Research Methodologies with Paula Uimonen and Hussein Masimbi, on Spirituality and Religion on the Swahili Coast
- Tuesday 19 September, Nordic Africa Research Network Seminars with Sten Hagberg and Oulia Makkonen on *How can we decolonize in practice?*
- Wednesday 27 September, Webinar on *Mines, Profits, and Popular Struggles in West Africa*. Co-hosted with Mande Studies Association.
- Saturday 30 September, Temadag: Västafrika i Sverige, Sverige i Västafrika. Co-hosted thematic day with Swedish West African Chamber of Commerce and Culture.
- Friday 13 October, Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Sam Kniknie, University of Ghent, on *Claiming space in urban extensions; rebellious riots in Goma, D R Congo*.
- Thursday 19 October, Past Legacies, Contemporary Challenges, Ways Forward: A Webinar on 60 Years of Ethnographic and Collaborative Transformations of Uppsala Cultural Anthropology and African Studies, with Sten Hagberg, Rosa de Jorio, University of North Florida, Márcia Manhique, UppsalaU/UEM, Mozambique, Daniel Ndagala, UU Alumn/Former Comm. of Culture, Tanzania, and Paul Richards, WageningenU, Netherlands; NjalaU, Sierra Leone
- Monday 23 October-5 November, Fieldwork Seminar in Tanzania: Decolonizing Research Methodologies. Forty-one participants attended the two-week seminar combining on campus learning and fieldwork practice.
- Friday 27 October, Friday Seminars in Africa Studies: The Third Wave of the Liberation Struggles in Africa: From Anti- to De-Colonisation with Akinbode Fasakin, Swedish Defence University.
- Friday 27 October, Research Lunch Meet-Up with Students interested in Africa Studies.
- Thursday 16 November-Saturday 18 November, Cluster of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence (CoRE-AI) Kick-off.
- Friday 17 November, CoRE AI Seminar on Responsible AI, bias and fairness with Joyce Nakatumba-Nabende and Dr. Andrew Katumba, both from Makerere University.

-Wednesday 29 November, CoRE AI Seminar: *High-performance computing architecture and parallel computing* with Onime Clement (ICTP) and Solomon Gizaw, Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia).

-Tuesday 5 December, Virtual seminar: Decolonizing Research Methodologies with Gaoussou Dembele and Philibert Sylla, Institut des Sciences Humaines (Mali).

-Wednesday 13 December, CoRE AI Seminar: *A framework for developing an AI gender auditing tool* with Mary Akinyemi, Chika Yinka-Banjo, Olasupo Ajayi, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

-Thursday 14 December-Friday 15 December, Sahel Symposium: *Public Services and Citizen Perspectives in Times of Crisis* jointly organized by Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, with participant researchers from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Germany, and Sweden. Launched by Anders Hagfeldt (Vice-Chancellor, Uppsala University), and Dan Smith (Director, SIPRI), the symposium included presentations by Sten Hagberg, Virginie Baudais, (SIRPI), Oumarou Hamani (LASDEL), Valérie Rouamba (CGD), Gabriella Körling (FOI), Bintou Koné (UBayreuth/ISH), Yaouaga Félix Koné (ISH), Diana Højlund Madsen (NAI), Thomas Ouédraogo (CGD), Kadari Traoré (CEDA), Virginie Baudais (SIRPI), Shourjya Deb (SIPRI), Joschka Philipps (UBayreuth), Mats Utas (UU), Marte Beldé (UGhent), and Oulia Makkonen (UU)



## **Appendix 2: List of Board, Africa Network, Coordinators' Meeting, etc.**

- The Africa Network (Afrikanätverket) established in December 2022 to strengthen information exchange between researchers and administrators at UU when it comes to Africa Initiatives had five meetings in 2023: 23 February; 17 April; 6 September; 17 October; and 27 November)
- Four Board Meetings were held in 2023: 3 February; 14 April, 11-12 September; and 11 December. The September meeting was located to Sigtunastiftelsen and comprised two days (lunch-to-lunch meeting)
- On 31 May, Sten Hagberg and Oulia Makkonen presented the Forum's membership application to the AEGIS at the General Assembly in Cologne, Germany.
- On 6 December, the Coordinators Club Meeting was hosted by the Forum (Kajsa Hallberg Adu).

## **Appendix 3: The Board and the Management/Coordination 2023**

### The Board

Professor Kajsa Ahlstrand (Humanities and Social Sciences), Chairperson  
Associate Professor Anders Themnér (Humanities and Social Sciences)  
Lecturer Niklas Edenmyr (Humanities and Social Sciences)  
Professor Birgitta Essén (Medicine and Pharmacy)  
Associate Professor Meena Daivadanam (Medicine and Pharmacy)  
Professor Carla Puglia (Science and Technology)  
Dr. Bengt-Ove Turesson (Science and Technology)  
Student representative (TBA)  
Professor Sten Hagberg (Director)

### Management/Coordination

Director Professor Sten Hagberg  
Coordinator Dr. Oulia Makkonen  
Coordinator Dr. Kajsa Hallberg Adu  
Coordinator Dr. Jecinta Okumu  
Financial Officer Ms. Aksana Mushkavets (Jan-April)  
Financial Officer Ms. Marja Fahlander (July-Dec)

## **Appendix 4: Externally funded projects hosted by Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies**

- Four research training programs with Mozambique, totaling 8 MSEK (2017-24). Coordinator: Sten Hagberg. NB The total amount of the programmes in which Forum is involved is 40 MSEK.
- One Marie Skłodowska-Curie Post-Doctoral Fellowship entitled NEGOMOB: Negotiating Mobility in Mali and Burkina Faso, totaling 305,778 euros (2020-2023). Project leader: Marie Deridder. 3.5 MSEK
- Decolonizing Research Methodologies-project is funded by Swedish Research Council (VR), and aims to support the creation, organization, and the implementation of an interdisciplinary research school with Burkinabe, Malian, Swedish, and Tanzanian partners. 6 MSEK
- Perspectives citoyennes des défis de société au Mali is a five-year project funded by the Embassy of Sweden in Mali on behalf of Sida 2022-2026. It is led by the Forum for Africa Studies at Uppsala University, and will be implemented in collaboration with Swedish and Malian partners. 20 MSEK
- Three clusters of the Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence of the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) and The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities are being led by UU with coordination support from Forum for Africa Studies

# Do you want to know more?

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