African Union Border Programme (AUBP) - FROM BARRIERS TO BRIDGES

Delimitation and Demarcation of all African Borders, which have not yet been demarcated, by 2017

The AUBP assists the Member States of the AU in all issues relating to the delimitation, demarcation and management of their borders. In this vein, the Programme supports those States having requested assistance, in the set-up of national or joint boundary commissions, and in the mobilisation of the necessary resources and expertise needed to delimit, demarcate and reaffirm African boundaries by the deadline of 2017, agreed upon at the 17th Ordinary Session of the AU, held in Malabo in 2011.

Cross-Border Cooperation

Cross-border municipalities and populations are the primary drivers and beneficiaries of cross-border cooperation. The AUBP is working closely with the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and with Member States to facilitate local initiatives which promote the development of cross-border areas. In May 2012, the Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation, the so-called Niamey Convention, was formulated during the Third Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Border Issues. In addition to this, the AUBP plays a coordination role and facilitates the exchange of experience and good practice regarding cross-border cooperation initiatives. In this context, the first Cross-Border Health Centre of its kind in Africa, established with support from the AUBP and the German Cooperation through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, was inaugurated at the border between Burkina Faso and Mali in 2012. This cross-border infrastructure constitutes a milestone between two States having previously engaged in armed conflicts, now united by the joint objective of peaceful coexistence and development for the direct benefit of both States’ local communities.

Capacity Building

The AUBP assists its Member States in the development of capacities concerning all areas of border management in collaboration with relevant institutions, such as African universities, professional training centres and specialised institutes. In practice, the AUBP has facilitated various trainings and workshops related to delimitation and demarcation, on the one hand, and boundary information systems, on the other. Thus, the AUBP aims to provide broad access to skills training and knowledge linked to border management, also in the context of its significance in the technical, legal and economic realm.

Besides, the AUBP has obtained all historical archives related to African borders from the former colonial powers. These archives are accessible for all Member States for the purpose of consultation.