

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



Annual Report 2025 for Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies

Building Infrastructure for Collaboration – Uppsala School for Africa Studies



Decolonizing Research Methodologies workshop in Humanistiska Teatern. Photo: Sten Hagberg.

Uppsala, 26 May 2026

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 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 provides coordination to important research clusters, notably the Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence. Furthermore, the Forum runs research projects, including a number of collaborative projects with partners in African countries.

In 2025, Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies organized the Africa Days at Uppsala University in June, and launched the Uppsala School for Africa Studies in September. In October, it organized the Third Fieldwork Seminar in Decolonizing Research Methodologies. In Jan., our [new web site](#) was launched.

During the year, the Forum hosted, co-hosted or sponsored some 25 public events, including the Africa Days, a two-week fieldwork seminar, public lectures, research seminars, and book launches (App. 1). The Forum received international visits (App. 4), wrote several research applications to international, national and internal funding opportunities (App.7), and attended important conferences and meetings abroad (App.3). This annual report summarizes activities carried out in 2025.

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.

Since January 2023, the Forum's Board represents the whole university 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 4 times in 2025 (App. 5). The Forum's Director (Sten Hagberg) led the daily management in collaboration with the research coordinators: Kajsa Hallberg Adu, Jecinta Okumu, and Nadia Lovell, and Jennifer Lorin (App. 5).

The Africa Network at UU (*Afrikanätverket*) pursued its work 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, SWEDSD, and the Forum. In 2025, three meetings with the Africa Network at UU were held.

Inside and outside of the university

The external communication of the Forum includes a mailing list which has 420+ subscribers, an active Facebook page with 166 followers joining the about 3,100 Followers resulting in a 5.8 %

growth. About half of followers come from Sweden. Three biggest countries follow after that are Burkina Faso, Mali and the USA. In addition, personal communication occurs across social media platforms by the board, director and research coordinators. The website was migrated to the Sitevision system and has been completely reorganized. Even though the migration was done by a hired consultant, the director and the research coordinators are in charge of the web.

In addition to its everyday presence in Uppsala (and occasionally at Campus Gotland), the Forum also organizes public events in Africa and Europe. 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 the Forum, and 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/>). The Sahel/PAX is a recent offspring of the LACET (see AEGIS). Other networks include the research training collaboration with Mozambique, notably three programs with Eduardo Mondlane University under the auspices of Sida. Forum's is involved in programs 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), the [ENLIGHT](#), and [AEGIS](#), African Studies in Europe.

Major Events

Since its launching in March 2012, Forum has hosted some 380 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, and 2024, the Africa Days in 2025). In 2025, we hosted or co-hosted some 25 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 (App. 4), or in conference and meetings abroad (App. 3).

Africa Days at Uppsala University

Between 9, and 10 June, the Forum organized the first edition of the Uppsala Days at Uppsala University on the theme [Strengthening Research Collaborations with Africa in Challenging Times](#). Inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Anders Hagfeldt, the Africa Days showcased Collaborative Research Presentations in the three disciplinary domains: Humanities and Social Sciences, the Medicine and Pharmacology, and the Sciences and Technology. Early career scholars from the whole University briefly presented their research. The Africa Days also hosted the Swedish Premiere of Dani Kouyaté's film Katanga – the Dance of the Scorpions. A key note address was delivered by George Bob-Milliar, Associate Prof. in African Studies (Politics & History) at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana; Adjunct Prof. at the Centre for Africa Studies, Copenhagen University; and Visiting Fellow at Nordic Africa Institute on "Democracy and Academic Spaces: Political Parties' Invasion of Higher Education in Africa".



Photos: Sten Hagberg, and Kajsa Hallberg Adu

Fieldwork Seminar in Decolonizing Research Methodologies, Sweden, Oct. 2025

The Third Edition of the Fieldwork Seminar in Decolonizing Research Methodologies 13-24 October 2025 brought together 14 early career scholars from 12 countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Sweden, Tanzania, Bolivia, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, and Tunisia). This course combines on-campus activities (plenary lecture, text seminars, workshops, library visits, book launch, etc.), and joint fieldwork in four parishes (*socknar*) of Gotland: Burgsvik, Klintehamn, Östergarn, and Fårösund.

The theme of this year's Fieldwork Seminar was **Rural resilience and resistance**, focusing on ongoing processes of change in rural areas of Gotland with the help of conceptual, and methodological work on decolonization, and decoloniality. Conversations, observations, and engagements in these parishes allowed to approach decolonization and decoloniality through

social practices, and to experience anthropological team research methodology. On Thursday 23 Oct, an open Seminar was hosted at Campus Gotland, Uppsala University, where research findings were discussed in dialogue with the hosts of our field sites.



Fieldwork in Storsudret, the Southern tip of Gotland.
Photo: Sten Hagberg.



Fieldwork in Klintehamn.
Photo: Kajsa Hallberg Adu

The week after the end of the Fieldwork Seminar (27-31 Oct.), a Coordinators Meeting was organized to discuss lessons learned and future plans: Sten Hagberg (Head of Project, and Coordinator, Uppsala University); Baba Coulibaly (Coordinator, Institut des Sciences Humaines, Mali); Thomas Ndaluka (Coordinator, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania); Emil Sandström (Coordinator, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences); Patrice Toé (Coordinator, Université Nazi BONI, Burkina Faso); Paula Uimonen (Coordinator, Stockholm University); Jennifer Lorin (2025 Fieldwork Seminar Coordinator); and Oulia Makkonen (2022, and 2023 Fieldwork Seminar Coordinator).



Group photo at Campus Gotland with most participants, and faculty on the final day.

This VR Research School project *Decolonizing Research Methodologies* (2022-2025) ended with the 2025 Fieldwork Seminar. The partners involved in the project were: [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 that also coordinated the project.



Coffee Break during the Fieldwork Seminar illustrating the slogan: “Institutions don’t drink coffee, people do”.
Photo: Sten Hagberg.

Uppsala School for Africa Studies

A new program for graduate students and early career scholars at UU, or UU affiliated ones, saw the light of day this year. The Uppsala School for Africa Studies (hereafter “the School”) brings together PhD students and postdocs working in and on Africa. Yet the School is not a degree-awarding entity but a platform for cross-, inter- and transdisciplinary encounters, themes, and approaches. It adds value to existing UU programs pertaining to Africa. Students and researchers enrolled in the School will get their respective degrees from specific programs while obtaining a certificate for their participation.

A call was shared in June, an online info session was held ahead of the deadline in August. Out of the 53 applications, 31 people were enrolled in the first cohort 2025-2026. The first iteration of Uppsala School for Africa Studies started with a welcome week in September and seminar activities. In addition to the welcoming week and a mailing list, a WhatsApp group was created as a more accessible networking tool. The year-long program ends with the enrolled scholars making a presentation at the Uppsala Africa Days in the Spring 2026. This both strengthens the profile of individual scholars and creates a natural link to the important role of early career scholars in the Forum.



Uppsala School for Africa Studies welcome Week. Photo: Kajsa Hallberg Adu.

From the strong interest in applications, we can see there is a demand for this type of program. To accommodate the interest, we expanded the intake from the planned 20 to 31 individuals. We also accepted UU affiliated researchers, not based in Uppsala or not based in Uppsala over the entire year.

Friday Seminars in Africa Studies

In 2025, the Friday Seminar in Africa Studies successfully advanced knowledge exchange across thematic areas ranging from the application of AI to health and technology, conflict over space, and power dynamics in West Africa among others. The participation of external scholars and the inclusion of multi-presenter formats contributed to a dynamic and collaborative academic environment, bringing together seasoned and young scholars. The seminars serve as an important platform for interdisciplinary engagement and capacity building.

In 2025, 13 Friday Seminars were organized, covering a diverse range of thematic areas relevant to contemporary research at UU. They fostered interdisciplinary dialogue and strengthen collaboration across institutions, focusing on several emerging and critical topics, including 1) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its applications in health and veterinary sciences, with discussions exploring both opportunities and ethical considerations; 2) Conflict over space, examining how competition for land, resources, and territory shapes social and political relations; and 3) Space and power dynamics in West Africa, with attention to historical, political, and socio-economic dimensions influencing regional governance and mobility.

A notable feature of the seminar series was the emphasis on multi-voiced dialogue. Most included two or more presenters, enabling comparative perspectives and interdisciplinary exchange. Eight Friday Seminars featured contributions from scholars outside UU, including visiting researchers and international partners. This strengthened the global reach and enriched discussions with diverse academic viewpoints.

Citizen Perspectives on Societal Challenges in Mali

The main objective of the Sida-funded project *Perspectives citoyennes des défis de société au Mali* (2022-2024) was to promote citizen perspectives through the implementation of engaged research, the organization of citizen debates and the capacity building of young researchers. The project had two main components: 1) **Studies** on social and political transformations, on women in politics and/or in the public sphere, and on the withdrawal of development donors were those focused; and 2) **Partnerships** between Malian and Swedish researchers; eight research teams working on the vulnerability of displaced people, perceptions on MINUSMA, and Barkhane, land degradation, words and discourse of security/insecurity, bloggers and democracy, gendered climate change, and artisanal goldmining.

While the project was developed as a five-year commitment, the Swedish government's decision to phase out bilateral cooperation with Mali in 2024 implied the close-down of the project set-up in 2024. In 2025, much work was spent on reporting, publishing, and auditing the project. The book on Malian Women's Political Participation was published in September, and officially launched in October.

Yet, the Forum's commitment to engaged research in the Sahel remains intact. In June-July, Malian Professor Yaouaga Félix Koné made a three-week mission to Sweden, Germany, and the Czech Republic: first, he made a presentation at the Forum; then, he made a joint presentation on collaborative research with Sten Hagberg at Bayreuth University; and finally, both gave different papers on the decoloniality of research methodologies in the Sahel (Hagberg), and female leadership models in Mali (Koné) in a panel of the ECAS in Prague, 25-28 June 2025 (see AEGIS). In October 2025, other key participants in the Mali-project 2022-2024 (Baba Coulibaly, Mahamadou Kante, and Bintou Koné) attended the Fieldwork Seminar in Decolonizing

Research Methodologies. In July, the AEGIS General Assembly approved the Collaborative Research Group, entitled *Le monde du Sahel/Promoting Academic and Collaborative Spaces* (Sahel/PAX) proposed by Sten Hagberg (Uppsala University), Muriel Côte (Lund University), and Éric Hahonou (Roskilde University). And in October-November, planning started for the Fourth Sahel Symposium to be held in March 2026.

Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence

Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies is providing coordination support for four out of 22 [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](#).



<https://www.the-guild.eu/africa-europe-core/>

The CoREs are a new form of collaboration between researchers from both continents, striving for [equitable partnerships in an unequal world](#). Their launch has been enabled by resources committed by member institutions, including UU, to address UN Sustainable Development Goals through excellent research, education, capacity building, mobility and innovation. The 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.

UU is co-lead for four CoREs: 1) Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, and Theoretical and Computational Thinking (CoRE AI); 2) Food Environment Actions for the Promotion of Health (CoRE FE4H); 3) Migration and Health (CoRE M&H); and 4) Mathematics (CoRE-Math). While the CoRE AI, the CoRE FE4H, and the CoRE M&H started in 2023, the CoRE Math was approved in 2025.

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

The cluster is led by Francesco Petruccione, Stellenbosch University and David J.T. Sumpter, Uppsala University and supported by the Forum's Research Coordinator Kajsa Hallberg Adu. Cluster communication happens internally through weekly meetings, a mailing list and a WhatsApp group. External communication has been carried out predominately on [the LinkedIn](#), where the CoRE AI's page had 1,025 followers on Dec 31, 2025. Cluster activities are also shared on www.africaeuropecoreai.org where we this year added a social network to expand cluster research to other faculty members at our various universities.

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 of AI will play an essential role in achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals (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 utilizing AI methods and research in AI and Data Science still needs to be improved in Africa. The goal of the CoRE AI 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.



Core-AA panel at Africa Days at Uppsala University. Photo: Helin Bäckman Kartal.

In 2025, the focus for the cluster was expansion. New universities joined: University of Luxembourg and University of Groningen, Netherlands. The cluster also enlisted the first civil society organisation-member, *Because She Can*, through creating opportunities for women students to creating a future where women lead, create, and thrive in technology led by Otema Yirenkyi and Kweyakie Bleboo. The University of Ljubliana, Slovenia, appointed a new point person, Miha Maskon, making the engagement stronger. The cluster engaged in new ways with the surrounding ecosystem:

- Nov., a study Visit with AI company Twelve Football
- Oct., the Fifth Biennial International Conference. Research, Innovation and Artificial Intelligence for Africa's Transformation. ARUA conference
- Sept., Science Summit in New York
- June, Africa Days at Uppsala University
- April, Nordic Forum in Rwanda
- April, Africa AI colloquium
- March, Soccermatics Training Workshop in Addis Ababa



In Kigali. Photo: Kajsa Hallberg Adu.

In 2025, a focus has been mobility and scale up. In Sept.-Oct., 9 PhD students from African universities visited UU and worked on the onboarding course Kujenga alongside projects with supervisors from Uppsala University. The mobility pilot has now run twice in Uppsala. Next year, it will be replicated at two other European universities.



Visiting PhD-students. Photo: Kajsa Hallberg Adu.

CoRE Food Environment for the Promotion of Health (CoRE FE4H)

The CoRE FE4H is led by Associate Prof. Meena Daivadanam, UU, and Associate Prof. Jane Battersby from the University of Cape Town and supported by the Forum's Research Coordinator Jecinta Okumu. CoRE FE4H continues to engage young scholars and strengthen a connected network of researchers working on food environments and health equity. Activities in 2025 have focused on student engagement, teaching collaborations, high-level discussions on equity, and capacity-building initiatives. Key activities in 2025 include:

- Internship Programme: Uppsala University hosted an intern Josipa Juricevic from Croatia (Aug.-Nov. 2025) through Erasmus mobility funds. She contributed to cluster communications and developed the CoRE figure featured on the cluster's website: About us – The Guild-ARUA Cluster of Research Excellence FE4H.
- Teaching Collaboration: Through UU's Global Health Master's Program, Mark Spires (University of Greenwich) contributed to teaching activities in 2025.
- Webinar on Equity in Partnerships on 6 Feb.: The FE4H CoRE organised a high-status webinar which brought together the Guild and ARUA leadership and stakeholders to discuss equity in partnerships. Some 40 participants attended and was moderated by Meena Daivadanam and Dr. Mark Spires. Panellists included the Vice-Chancellor of UU, Secretaries-General of ARUA, the Guild, CARTA, and Professor Rhoda Wanyenze and Professor Jose Frantz, University of Western Cape.
- MSCA Doctoral Network Application: The CoRE FE4H submitted the proposal in Nov, seeking funding to recruit 11 PhD candidates within the cluster.
- Funding received in 2025: Change Maker Project – with the PI at Karolinska Institutet (Professor Helle Molsted Alvessons). Associate Prof. Jane Battersby and Dr. Amos Laar project called The African Regional Collaborative for Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH-ARC), was supported by the Gates Foundation and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

CoRE Migration and Health (CoRE M&H)

In 2025, the Cluster of Research Excellence in Migration & Health (CoRE M&H) made significant progress in strengthening research capacity, expanding institutional partnerships, and supporting early-career scholars across Africa and Europe. Through targeted training programs, research exchanges, and strategic recruitment, the cluster advanced its mission to build a robust, interdisciplinary network dedicated to addressing migration and health challenges along the AU-EU corridor.

- 7-8 April, The African Centre for the Study and Research on Migration (ACSRM), the IDRC Research Chair on Forced Displacement in Anglophone West Africa at the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS), University of Ghana and the CoRE M&H held a joint workshop in Accra aimed at strengthening the capacity of PhD students and early-career researchers. This workshop brought together 20 emerging scholars in Africa to deepen their understanding of forced displacement, climate-induced migration and the migration

and health nexus, while enhancing their skills in drafting academic and policy-oriented publications.

- 10-11 June, the CoRE M&H through ACSM held a symposium in South Africa. Twenty PhD students participated in an intensive two-day symposium hosted by the African Centre for Migration Studies (ACSM) at Wits University. CoRE M&H members delivered lectures and facilitated thematic sessions.
- 2-5 July, ACSM organized Winter School on Migration & Health. The program provided methodological training, theoretical grounding, and peer-learning opportunities. Session recordings were made available to the broader CoRE M&H network.
- Aug.-Oct., Research Mobility and Exchange through Student Exchanges: Through UU coordination and Erasmus program, three interns from UU's Global Health master program completed placements at Wits University.
- In March-April, a visiting PhD Student from Ghana (Gifty Sarkodie Amponsah) spent 1.5 months at UU as part of the student exchange program. These exchanges enhanced cross-regional learning and supported the development of future research leaders.
- In Oct., two postdocs. (Dr. Neusa Torres and Dr. Fehmida Quddus) joined ACSM-Wits University on one-year renewable contracts. Their appointments strengthen CoRE M&H's research capacity and contribute to ongoing collaborative projects.
- Strategic Partnerships and Outputs: Core M&H expanded its network with the addition of: Radboud University (RUNOMI), Ghent University and African Centre for the Study and Research on Migration (ACSMR). The partnerships broaden the cluster's interdisciplinary reach and enhance opportunities for joint research and training.
- CoRE M&H released a Concept Note outlining its strategic academic, collaborative, and research objectives. This document serves as a guiding framework for future activities and partnership development.
- 30 Sept.-2 Oct., CoRE M&H representatives participated in the Guild-ARUA Conference in Stellenbosch, South Africa, contributing to high-level discussions on African research collaboration and capacity strengthening.

CoRE-Mathematics (CoRE-Math)

CoRE-Math was designated as an African Research Universities Alliance–The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities Cluster of Research Excellence in September 2024. The cluster was launched at the first ARUA–The Guild conference in Stellenbosch and consolidated through the first in-person CoRE-Math meeting in Uppsala in October. Institutional co-funding from Uppsala University was secured in December 2024.

2025 was a year of cluster-building and consolidation. Progress was made in expanding membership, establishing early research and education programmes, advancing external funding efforts, and developing the institutional and communication structures needed for longer-term growth. Building on the foundational developments of late 2024, CoRE-Math moved in 2025 from formal establishment to an operational collaborative platform.

- Cluster development. The cluster expanded through the admission of the University of Vienna and University of KwaZulu-Natal, while Stellenbosch University applied for membership. As part of its admission, UKZN committed to fund four postdoctoral fellowships annually, each for up to six months.
- Funding and resource mobilisation. Progress included the initiation of Erasmus+ Global Mobility exchanges, the submission of a proposal to the Simons Foundation, and the submission of an application to the International Centre for Mathematical Sciences for Mathematics-in-Industry study groups, later funded. Work also laid the basis for a strategic funding framework and the Erasmus+ CBHE concept.
- Research. The first call for UU CoRE-Math Fellowships was announced in May. The first cohort of eight fellows comprised four PhD students, two postdoctoral researchers, and two senior researchers.
- Education. The first school organised under the CoRE-Math label, on Harmonic Analysis, was held in Kigali in July, building on the long-standing EAUMP school tradition.
- Infrastructure and communication. The CoRE-Math website was launched in January, providing a shared communication platform.

Research Training Collaboration with Mozambique

Since 2017, the Forum for Africa Studies is involved in three research partnerships with Mozambique. The Forum coordinates one program in partnership with Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) and the Dept. of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology at Uppsala University. The four PhD students in Cultural Anthropology (Paulo Mahumane, Book Sambo, Jossias Humbane, and Márcia Manhique) made progress in 2025; Paulo Mahumane and Jossias Humbane successfully defended their respective PhD theses.

- Strengthening Municipal Democracy and Local Development. In Sept. 2025, Paulo Mahumane successfully defended his PhD thesis in Cultural Anthropology at Uppsala University, entitled [The Curse of Coal Mining: Residents' Resistance to Industrial Coal Mining in Moatize District, Mozambique](#). PhD Student Book Sambo had his final seminar in Dec. 2025; defense is planned for late 2026.



Prof. Bjørn Enge Bertelsen from Bergen University, and PhD Student Paulo Mahumane. Photo: Sten Hagberg

- Population Dynamics and Socioeconomic Wellbeing. In June, PhD student Márcia Manhique had her final seminar, and thesis defense is scheduled for the Fall of 2026. In Nov., PhD Student in Global Health Gilda Gondola Sitefane successfully defended her thesis [Access to Comprehensive Abortion Care in Mozambique: A study among young people in the context of legal reform](#)
- Biocultural Heritage in Mozambique. In May, PhD student Jossias Humbane had his final seminar, and in Dec. he successfully defended his PhD thesis in Cultural Anthropology at Uppsala University, entitled [“Magude isn't like it used to be”: Intersections of social and climate change in Mozambique](#).

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 2025, the LACET hosted [six virtual seminars with early career students from Burkina Faso and Mali](#), and one [Webinar \(book launch\)](#). The LACET is also key to the establishment of the Sahel/PAX Collaborative Research Group.

Participation in networks

The Forum participates in a wide range of research networks. In addition to those detailed above, we are particularly focusing on the SANORD, the AEGIS, and, most recently, the ENLIGHT.

Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD)

Since 2013, the Forum for Africa Studies is actively involved in SANORD, with UU’s organization of the 2016 SANORD Conference where the Forum took the lead as a high point. In 2025, the Forum took over the University’s coordination of the SANORD. In August, Kajsa Hallberg Adu and Sten Hagberg participated in the SANORD Conference at the University of Aarhus, Denmark.

AEGIS

Since 31 May 2023, the Forum is a full member of AEGIS, originally an acronym for Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies. The 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. It hosts the biannual European Conference in African Studies (ECAS).

In June, the AEGIS Collaborative Research Group *Le monde du Sahel/Promoting Academic Collaborations and Spaces (Sahel/PAX)*, initiated by Sten Hagberg, Muriel Côte, and Éric Hahonou, was approved by the General Assembly. In October, an International Workshop organized at Roskilde University focused on *Alternative epistemologies – Insights from the Sahel*. Three round-table sessions structured the conversations: 1: Present and future challenges of research in the Sahel (Baba Coulibaly, Eric Hahonou, Muriel Côte, and Mahamadou Kante); Session 2: Decolonizing research methodologies – A Practice Approach (Sten Hagberg, Baba Coulibaly, and Mahamadou Kante); and 3. Academic liberties and research ethics (Bintou Koné, Tongnoma Zongo, Muriel Côte (online), Sten Hagberg, and Éric Hahonou).

A dozen of UU researchers participated in the [European Conference on African Studies in Prague, 25-28 June 2025](#) on “African, Afropean, Afropolitan.” The Forum sponsored a panel organized by Sten Hagberg (Uppsala University) and Rosa De Jorio (University of North Florida), entitled “Tracing Afropolitanism in West Africa: Historical and Anthropological approaches to current debates.” with papers by Yaouaga Félix Koné (Institut des Sciences Humaines), Joseph Hellweg (Flora State University), Harriet Boateng Aduako (University of Utrecht), as well as the papers by Hagberg and De Jorio. Other UU researchers who attended the ECAS2025 included Adelaida Caballero, Ashleigh Harris, Emy Lindberg, Nadia Lovell, Jennifer Lorin, and Carl Rommel, as well as the Forum affiliated early career scholar Bintou Koné (Bayreuth University, and Institut des Sciences Humaines, Bamako).



Three participants of the panel: Harriet Boateng Aduako, Yaouaga Félix Koné, and Sten Hagberg, June 2025, Prague, Czech Republic. Photo: Rosa De Jorio.

ENLIGHT

In April, Sten Hagberg presented a paper at the Interdisciplinary Policy-Oriented Research on Africa Conference at the University of Bordeaux. During this meeting, representatives of ENLIGHT universities such as Uppsala Bern, Groningen, Galway, Ghent, and Bordeaux organized a formal meeting to set up the ENLIGHT Expert Network on Collaboration with Africa (EEN@Africa). In July, the network was officially validated during ENLIGHT Board Meeting.

ASAA

In September, Kajsa Hallberg Adu attended the African Studies Association in Africa (ASAA) Conference on African Responses to Global Vulnerabilities: Building Hope for the Future, Praia, Cabo Verde. Kajsa Hallberg Adu co-organized a panel with Titilope Ajayi, entitled: “The PhD Expansion Project in Africa: Challenges, Opportunities, Futures and Transformations”. The forum is considering becoming a member of the ASAA.



Panel participants in Praia, Cabo Verde. Photo: Kajsa Hallberg Adu.

Reports from other strong Africa research environments at UU

This new section of the Annual Report includes main Africa activities, and environments being carried out at Uppsala University. While in this, we limit our report to two – the International Science Programme, and the Department of Women’s and Children’s Health – we plan to include other strong research environments, such as the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, and the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, in next year’s report.

International Science Programme

The [International Science Programme \(ISP\)](#), based at Uppsala University, is a long-standing international programme that supports the strengthening of research environments and postgraduate education in chemistry, mathematics, and physics, working globally with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa. Supported principally by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, ISP currently works with partner institutions in 27 African countries, with major activities centred in Burkina Faso, Mali, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Established in 1961 at the Department of Physics at Uppsala University, ISP has contributed to building research capacity for more than six decades through long-term institutional partnerships, support for postgraduate training, scientific exchange, research collaboration, and, where relevant, the provision of equipment, materials, literature, and computational resources.

A distinctive feature of the ISP model is its long-term, partnership-based approach, centred on support to nationally anchored research groups and doctoral training environments, combined with international scientific collaboration, mobility, and network-building. Rather than short-term project funding, the model emphasises sustained institutional relationships, local ownership, and the gradual strengthening of scientific capacity.

While anchored at Uppsala University, ISP operates through broad collaboration with researchers and departments at Swedish, Nordic, and other European universities, and functions as an international platform for scientific cooperation and institution-building. Since the 1990s, ISP has coordinated Sida's bilateral research cooperation programmes on the Swedish side in a changing set of countries. The current cooperation involves universities in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Tanzania, together with Swedish universities. These programmes support cooperation in research, postgraduate training, and dissemination, thereby contributing to institutional capacity development at partner universities.

The Department of Women's and Children's Health

The [Department of Women's and Children's Health](#), in the disciplinary domain of Medicine and Pharmacy, is engaged in a number of interdisciplinary research projects in, with, and about Africa. The **Global Health and Migration Unit**, which includes the International Child Health and Nutrition research group currently collaborates with universities, NGOs and research and education networks in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa. The unit hosts the **WHO Collaborating Centre on Migration and Health Data and Evidence** which supports WHO in relation to refugee and migrant health with a global focus, including Africa, in addition to two of the four The Guild-ARUA Clusters of Research Excellence co-led by Uppsala University. The research group **International Maternal and Reproductive Health and Migration** (Obstetrics and Gynaecology Unit) collaborates with ministries, hospitals and universities in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Kenya, the DRC, and Mozambique. The **Centre for Health and Sustainability** collaborates with partners in Uganda, Ethiopia and other countries on One Health, climate and disease outbreaks among others. In addition, there are other research activities at the department the includes collaborations in Africa, such as in the field of global mental health in the **CIRCLE** research group. Research at the department in the research groups described here, often concerns measuring, understanding or addressing inequities in health, and the role of social determinants, and socioeconomic and cultural aspects on health and health care access and utilisation for maternal and child health conditions, nutrition, mental health and non-communicable diseases.

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 UU. 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 2025, one issue was published: #10 [Comment briser le plafond de verre ? : Une recherche engagée sur la participation politique des femmes maliennes](#) (Hagberg et al. 2025).



[Uppsala Papers in Africa Studies 10](#)

Courses in African Studies

In the Spring 2025, Forum's Sten Hagberg led the course African Studies (30hp). Other Forum members involved in teaching were Jennifer Lorin, and Jecinta Okumu. [A list of courses focusing on Africa](#) is available at Forum's web site.

Research Funding Applications

During the year, the research coordinators within their respective research clusters have been part of several large scale EU funding applications to Erasmus+, Horizon and MSCA programs. Further, coordinators collaborated in a personal capacity in two grant applications, one internal within Uppsala university to its Democracy and Higher Education opportunity and one to

Vetenskapsrådet national research council (VR). This is in an effort to leverage the research skills within the forum and build sustainable careers. Unfortunately efforts did not yield results this year.

Collaborations with students and ASAU

Our collaboration with the African Student Association in Uppsala (ASAU) is a way for the Forum to reach relevant stakeholders and to support the student community. On 7 March, the Forum hosted a joint “fika” with ASAU to explore collaborations. We are currently doing an annual event in collaboration with them in March, advising on issues around annual meeting and marketing as well as giving ASAU a platform at some of our events. Student organizations are heavily dependent on individual engagement and turnaround of especially Master’s students is fast, leading to that the association “starts over” every two years. Our annual events and support create institutional memory that can be built upon, and the association does well in spreading information about our events.

Concluding remarks

Since the launching in March 2012, the Forum has organized or co-organized 380 events, in the form of seminars, lectures, round-tables, workshops, and conferences in Uppsala and with partners in Africa and beyond. In 2025, workshops and panels were organized in Cabo Verde, Denmark, and Germany. The Africa Days at Uppsala University were organized for the first time, but will be a yearly event. The Uppsala School for Africa Studies started in September 2025 with 31 early career scholars enrolled. In October, the two-week Fieldwork Seminar in Decolonizing Research Methodologies was a strong moment of African engagements in Uppsala, and on the island of Gotland.

Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Public Events 2025

- 31 January. Nadia Lovell, UU, and George M. Bob-Milliar, Nordic Africa Institute, on Space and Power in West Africa.
- 21 February. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Ida-Maria Sintorn and Carolina Wählby, UU, Sweden; Salman Toor, UU, on Opportunities for Improved Health and Food Security with AI in Africa.
- 14 March. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Joseph Augustine, UU; Patrick Ayeni, SLU; Mary Theodorah Ajal, SLU; Otema Yirenkyi: *Collaboration between Forum for Africa Studies and African Students Association Uppsala (ASAU): Ongoing Master's Research*.
- 20 March. Public lecture with Dr. Delphine Manetta, IFRA-Nigeria; and LaSIC, Félix Houphouët-Boigny University, Côte d'Ivoire: *Elections in Africa: Lessons learned from Burkina Faso*.
- 26 March. Delphine Manetta, IFRA-Nigeria. Research Seminar in Cultural Anthropology: *From Burkina Faso to Nigeria: How local elections led me to question the relationship between masculinities, mobilities and space*.
- 11 April. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Gifty Sarkodie Amponsah, PhD Candidate, University of Ghana, and Jane Battersby, Associate Prof., University of Cape Town, South Africa, on Access and Equity: *Gender, WASH, and Urban Infrastructure as Catalysts for Health and Food Choices*.
- 16 May. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Eric Mutabazi, Université Catholique de l'Ouest, France, on *Teaching Rwandan History between 1971 and 1994*.
- 9-10 June. Africa Days at Uppsala University on the theme *Strengthening Research Collaborations with Africa in Challenging Times*. The program included a diverse mix of themes and participants. Sessions concerned early career scholars, a keynote by George Bob-Milliar on Democracy and Academic Spaces, research presentations (Anthropology, AI, Global health) from the three disciplinary domains at Uppsala University, as well as the Swedish premiere of the awarded film *Katanga – the dance of the scorpions* by the Burkinabe filmmaker Dani Kouyaté.
- 16 June. Lunch Seminar on the book [Résistance, alternance, souveraineté : Une recherche engagée sur la crise et la transition au Mali](#) (Hagberg et al. 2025), with Sten Hagberg, Yaouaga Félix Koné, and Bintou Koné.
- 23 June. Public talk and conversation at Bayreuth University with Yaouaga Félix Koné, Institut des Sciences Humaines and Sten Hagberg, UU: *Une anthropologie des transformations sociales et politiques au Mali : ethnographie, encadrement et engagement*.
- 25-28 June. European Conference on African Studies (ECAS), Prague, Czech Republic, on *African, Afropean, Afropolitan*. The Forum sponsored a panel organized by Sten Hagberg (UU) and Rosa De Jorio (University of North Florida), entitled "Tracing Afropolitanism in West Africa: Historical and Anthropological approaches to current debates" with papers by Yaouaga Félix Koné (Institut des Sciences Humaines), Joseph Hellweg (Florida State University), Harriet Boateng Aduako (University of Utrecht), as well as the papers by Hagberg and De Jorio. Other UU researchers included Adelaida Caballero, Ashleigh Harris, Emy Lindberg, Nadia Lovell, Jennifer Lorin, and Carl Rommel, as well as the Forum

- affiliated Malian research Bintou Koné (Bayreuth University, and Institut des Sciences Humaines).
- 29 August. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Beth Maina Ahlberg, International Health-Skaraborg Institute for Research and Development; Dept. of Sociology UU: *Community engagement for eradicating Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Examples from Kenya, Somaliland and Sweden*.
- 19 September. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Gloria Ajami Makokha, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the English Dept., UU, under the African Literary Metadata (ALMEDA) project, on *Digitizing majina: providing visibility to the khanga's oral literary messages*.
- 8 October. International Workshop at Roskilde University on *Alternative epistemologies – Insights from the Sahel*, co-hosted by the research programme STRESS (Strengthening Resilience of Sahelian Societies), funded by Danida Fellowship Center (2024-2029) and hosted by Roskilde University (RUC), and the Decolonizing Research Methodologies-project, funded by the Swedish Research Council, and led by Uppsala University. Three round-table sessions: Present and future challenges of research in the Sahel (Baba Coulibaly, Eric Hahonou, Muriel Côte, Mahamadou Kante); Decolonizing research methodologies – A Practice Approach (Sten Hagberg, Baba Coulibaly, Mahamadou Kante); and Academic liberties and research ethics (Bintou Koné, Tongnoma Zongo, Muriel Côte (online), Sten Hagberg, Éric Hahonou).
- 18 September. PhD Defense in Cultural Anthropology. Paulo Mahumane, [The Curse of Coal Mining: Residents' Resistance to Industrial Coal Mining in Moatize District, Mozambique](#)
- 24-27 Sep. Conference: 6th Biennial conference African Studies Association in Africa (ASAA) "African Responses to Global Vulnerabilities: Building Hope for the Future", Praia, Cabo Verde. The Forum sponsored a panel co-organized by Kajsa Hallberg Adu and Titilope Ajayi: "The PhD Expansion Project in Africa: Challenges, Opportunities, Futures and Transformations".
- 13 October. A One-Day Public Seminar of the 2025 Field Seminar with African & Swedish Universities: *Decolonizing Research Methodologies – A Practice Approach*. Speakers: Sten Hagberg – "Concepts, collaborations, and careers: The decoloniality of engaged research and joint learning"; Baba Coulibaly – "Vers une décolonisation des instituts de recherche africains issus de la colonisation?: Interrogations et perspectives à partir du cas de l'Institut des Sciences Humaines, Bamako, Mali"; Emil Sandström – "Decolonizing qualitative research methodologies in academia: Creating spaces for transformative learning"; Paula Uimonen – "Beyond belief: Spiritual conviviality, epistemic decolonization, and fieldwork relations"; Thomas Ndaluka – "From religious to fundamental identity: Decolonizing the understanding of religious coexistence in Tanzania"; Patrice Toé – "Le retour de l'anthropologie à domicile ou le détour du regard d'un anthropologue africain à Gotland (Suède)"; and Oulia Makkonen – "Language and the limits of decolonization".
- 17 October. Book launch with Sten Hagberg, Yaouaga Félix Koné, Bintou Koné on Women in Politics: How to break the glass ceiling in Mali? Book: Sten Hagberg et al. 2025. [Comment briser le plafond de verre ? : Une recherche engagée sur la participation politique des femmes maliennes](#).

- 23 October. Open Seminar with Visiting African Researchers on *Rural Resilience and Resistance: Exploring Decolonial Perspectives on Gotland*, Campus Gotland, Uppsala University
- 7 November. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Jecinta Okumu, UU, *Negotiating Health: Youth agency or lack thereof in ARV adherence in Kenya*; and Mahamadou Kante, Centre for Health and Sustainability, UU, *Validation of an SMS and voice call intervention to improve antenatal care attendance in Mali*.
- 17 November. Film screening *When Women Speak about women activists in Ghana* with Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, University of Ghana, and the 2025 Claude Ake Chair, and Beatrice Brew, former Rotary Peace Fellow in Peace and Conflict Studies, UU.
- 19 November. PhD Defense in Global Health: Gilda Gondola Sitefane, [Access to Comprehensive Abortion Care in Mozambique: A study among young people in the context of legal reform](#)
- 5 December. Friday Seminars in Africa Studies with Prof. Kristine Höglund, Dept. of Peace and Conflict Research, UU; Dr. Emma Elfversson and Dr. Camille Pellerin, Dept. of Government, UU, on *Conflict over space in rapidly growing cities: Forced evictions and housing insecurity in Africa*.
- 16 December. PhD Defense in Cultural Anthropology: Jossias Humbane, ["Magude isn't like it used to be": Intersections of social and climate change in Mozambique](#)

Appendix 3: List of Meeting/Conference/Mobility by the Forum's secretariate in 2025

Travels abroad sponsored or co-sponsored by the Forum, and/or the CoREs, UU

10-15 March. Meeting: Stellenbosch International Network (SIAN), South Africa (Hallberg Adu)

1-4 April. Conference: Nordic Forum in Rwanda (Hallberg Adu)

1-4 April. Conference: Interdisciplinary Policy-Oriented Research on Africa Conference at the University of Bordeaux (Hagberg)

25-28 June. European Conference on African Studies (ECAS), Prague, Czech Republic, *African, Afropean, Afropolitan*. The Forum co-sponsored the panel: "Tracing Afropolitanism in West Africa: Historical and Anthropological approaches to current debates" (Hagberg)

24-27 Sep. 6th Biennial conference African Studies Association in Africa (ASAA) "African Responses to Global Vulnerabilities: Building Hope for the Future", Praia, Cabo Verde. The Forum co-sponsored a panel: "The PhD Expansion Project in Africa: Challenges, Opportunities, Futures and Transformations". (Hallberg Adu)

29-31 Oct. Conference African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), Makerere University, Uganda (Hallberg Adu)

3-5 Nov Visit to University of Nairobi, Kenya (Hallberg Adu)

6-7 Nov. Workshop, Sciences-Po, Paris. Les marges de l'État: Recompositions sociales, politiques et économiques au Sahel (Hagberg)

8-15 Nov. Teaching Mobility to Institut des Sciences Humaines de Tunis, Université de Tunis EL Manar (Hagberg)

Appendix 4: Main Visits at the Forum for Africa Studies

A major activity is to connect Uppsala University with African universities, and institutes, and obviously scholars of international renown. In 2025, we had several visits from African universities, organizations and also travelled to Africa to participate in different research events.

19-27 March: Dr. Delpine Manetta, IFRA, Nigeria

7-11 April: Delegation from the Université Jean Lorougnon Guédé, Daloa, Côte d'Ivoire: Prof. Viviane Adohi-Krou, President of the University, Head of the Delegation; Prof. Issiaka Koné, Vice-President in charge of External Relations; Prof. Sidiky Bakayoko, Deputy Secretary General; and Prof. Karidia Traoré-Ouattara, Director of the Institut Universitaire d'Ingénierie du Paysage et du Bois.

9-13 June, Visit in collaboration with Core AI from NGOs in the education space: Titilope Ajayo from Doing A PhD in Africa and Otema Yirenkyi and Kewyatie Bleboo from Because She Can

15 June-5 July, Professor Yaouaga Félix Koné, Institut des Sciences Humaines, Mali

25 Aug: Visit in collaboration with Core AI The Guild's Secretary General Professor Jan Palmowski

Appendix 5: The Board and the Management/Coordination 2024

The Board

Professor Kajsa Ahlstrand (Humanities and Social Sciences), Chairperson
Associate Professor Anders Themnér (Jan-March)/Professor Kristine Höglund (Humanities and Social Sciences, April-Dec)
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)
King Bwila (Student Representative)
Professor Sten Hagberg (Director)

Management/Coordination

Director, Professor Sten Hagberg
Research Coordinator, Dr. Kajsa Hallberg Adu
Research Coordinator, Dr. Nadia Lovell (Jan-March)
Research Coordinator, Dr. Jecinta Okumu
Financial Officer, Ms. Aksana Mushkavets
Postdoctoral Researcher, Dr. Jennifer Lorin, Coordinator Fieldwork Seminar (August-Oct)

Appendix 6: Ongoing Externally funded projects hosted by the Forum for Africa Studies

Four research training programs with Mozambique, totaling 8 MSEK (2017-25). Coordinator: Sten Hagberg. NB The total amount of the four program is 40 MSEK.

Decolonizing Research Methodologies-project is funded by Swedish Research Council (VR) to support the creation, organization, and the implementation of an interdisciplinary research school with Burkinabe, Malian, Swedish, and Tanzanian universities, and research institutes (2022-25). 6 MSEK.

Four 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.

Appendix 7: Research activities and applications

February. Internal UU grant application: Democracy and Higher Education, Kajsa Hallberg Adu and Jecinta Okumu "Youth in Africa Political Participation Paradox (YAPPP)".

February. Grant application: Erasmus+ Capacity Building and Higher Education with Core AI.

May. Grant application: VR Projektbidrag för forskning om demokrati och samhällelig motståndskraft, "Gen-Z AHEAD: Access to Higher Education and Democratic Attitudes in Kenya and Ghana". Kajsa Hallberg Adu and Jecinta Okumu.

October. Grant application: Horizon CL4 "Context" with CoRE AI.

November. Grant application MSCA Doctoral Network Application with CoRE FE4H.

Do you want to know more?

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Forum för Afrikastudier vid Uppsala universitet
Dept. of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology
Box 631
SE-751 26 Uppsala
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Visiting Address:

Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology
Thunbergsvägen 3H

Web: [Forum for Africa Studies – Uppsala University](#)

Facebook: [Uppsala Forum for Africa Studies](#)

