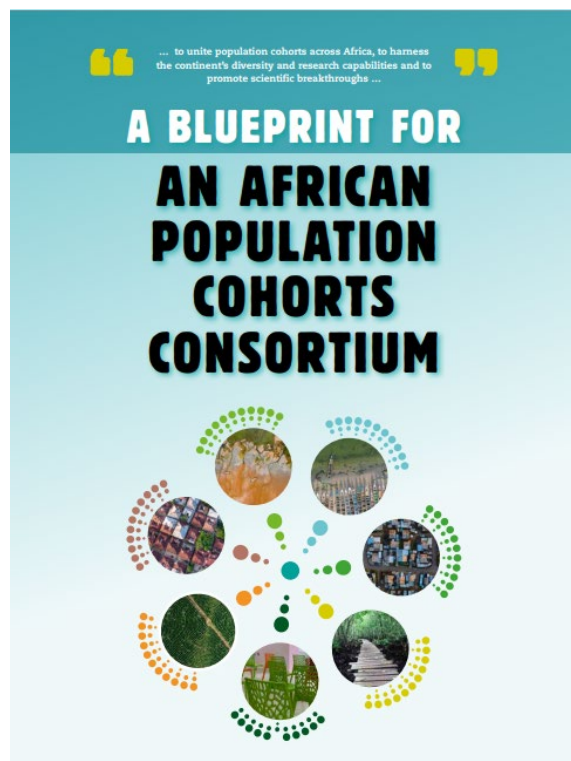




## APCC Blueprint endorsed at conference

November 2024



The [African Population Cohorts Consortium](#) (APCC) Blueprint Conference took place in Cape Town on 27 and 28 May 2024.

The conference was opened by Dr Kobus Herbst, a co-lead of the formative phase of the APCC and Professor Michéle Ramsay, one of the co-applicants of this phase. Former South African Statistician – General Dr Pali Lehohla reflected on the Science and Policy Interface, Experiences and Relevance for the APCC. An International Perspective on the Value of Population Cohorts was presented by Professor Geoffrey Ginsburg who is the Chief Scientific Officer, All of Us, NIH and co-chair of IHCC.

Dr Kobus Herbst presented the [APCC Blueprint](#). A total of 106 delegates attended the conference from 21 countries. 45 population cohorts accepted the blueprint. The APCC is now in its start-up phase.

The vision of the APCC is the sustainable development of African populations towards good health and wellbeing. The African Population Cohorts Consortium (APCC) is an exciting initiative that brings African scientists and researchers together to

strengthen and promote cohort-based research on the continent. Dr Kobus Herbst said, “Our vision is to harness the huge opportunity of population cohorts and diversity in Africa to champion new and innovative multidisciplinary engagement and research for positive impact on the health and well-being of communities in Africa.”

The journey to establish the APCC started with a meeting in Uganda in March 2020 when the scientists and funders present agreed to establish a research population data platform to address the continent’s most pressing health and socioeconomic needs. In October 2022 the Collaboration for the Establishment of the African Population Cohorts Consortium (CE-APCC) commenced work, funded by the Wellcome Trust, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and UKRI Medical Research Council.

The three stages preceding the production of a blueprint consisted of a systematic review of existing population cohorts across Africa, a series of virtual thematic consultative workshops with different stakeholders including



population cohort leads and regional institutions, and seven workstreams were convened to detail the optimal components of an APCC. The three strategic programme initiatives of the APCC are Health and Wellbeing Across the Lifespan, Climate and Health, and Leveraging Population Cohorts to Enhance Progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

The primary functions of the APCC are firstly to promote population cohort-based research among cohort scientists and the broader scientific community to answer relevant context-specific and policy related research questions at scale, bolstered by strategic research programmes. It is to develop and implement common methodologies, guidelines, and data models that will enhance individual cohort outcomes and the effectiveness of multicohort research. This step change in research and analysis will contribute well curated, population-based data and metadata to the African and global scientific community in support of creative policy development, implementation, and evaluation. Furthermore, it is also to strengthen the capacity of the population cohorts in Africa to contribute groundbreaking and high impact science within the continent. This also involves preserving vital cohort resources and expanding the reach of population cohorts to regions or population groups currently underrepresented in the APCC.

The strategic objectives guide the APCC’s efforts in harnessing the unique strengths of African populations and research capabilities towards achieving its vision of fostering sustainable development and promoting good health and wellbeing for all. The five strategic objectives are to facilitate scientific breakthroughs, strengthen research infrastructure, support Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), cultivate collaborative networks and champion inclusive participation.

One of the key objectives of the APCC is to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among researchers, institutions, and policymakers across Africa and beyond. The consortium will promote interdisciplinary research, capacity building, and evidence-based decision-making to improve population health outcomes by sharing population health data, expertise, and resources.

The APCC realises that a key activity to achieving collaboration, ownership and co-creation is engaging relevant stakeholders, thus the importance of this programme. APCC stakeholders are identified as population cohorts, academia and research institutions, funders, regional organisations, private sector, policymakers and cohort participants.

An interim steering committee of the APCC was elected at the Blueprint conference and Dr Kobus Herbst was elected Chairperson. The committee is currently sourcing funding to implement the APCC. The members are in the table below.

Name	Affiliation	Country
Kobus Herbst (Chair)	South Africa Population Research Infrastructure Network (SAPRIN)	South Africa
Dorcas Kamuya (Co-chair)	KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme	Kenya
Agnes Kiragga	Africa Population Health Research Centre	Kenya

Name	Affiliation	Country
Mia Crampin	Malawi Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit (MEIRU)	Malawi
Collins Iwuji	Africa Health Research Institute	South Africa
Dan Kajungu	Makerere University Centre for Health and Population Research	Uganda
Ivalda Macicame	National Health Institute (INS)	Mozambique
Moffat Nyirenda	MRC/UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit	Uganda
Owen Nkoka	Malawi Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit (MEIRU)	Malawi
Umberto D'Alessandro	MRC Unit The Gambia	The Gambia
Jude Igumbor	Witwatersrand University	South Africa
Emelyn Shroff	Public Health Authority, Ministry of Health	Seychelles
Mohamed Salama	American University in Cairo	Egypt
Tesfahun Melese Yilma	University of Gondar	Ethiopia
Karim Derra	Health Sciences Research Institute (IRSS)	Burkina Faso

