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ABNE Network Offices (Nodes)

ABNE Main office is headquartered in Dakar, Senegal and has two nodes in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and in Kampala, Uganda. The Ouagadougou office was established in 2010 through a host country agreement signed between the NEPAD Agency and the Government of Burkina Faso in February 2010. The Kampala node was established in 2012 to provide ABNE services to the East and Southern African countries. The Dakar hub was opened in April 2016.



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African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE)

A science-based biosafety resource network for African regulators and policymakers



**A Programme of African Union's New Partnerships for Africa's Development Planning
and Coordinating Agency (AU/NEPAD Agency)**

Website: www.nepad-abne.net

What is ABNE?

The African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE) is a continent-wide biosafety service network. ABNE is an Africa-based, Africa-led initiative established by the NEPAD Agency. ABNE was conceptualized under the NEPAD Agency's Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA). ABNE service network has buy-in from the African governments and was officially approved in 2008 by the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST).

ABNE initiative fulfills the recommendations of the report by the high-level African panel on modern biotechnology - Freedom to Innovate, by Calestous Juma and Ismail Serageldin (2007)

(http://www.nepadst.org/doclibrary/pdfs/biotech_africa,2007.pdf).

ABNE's Goal – Building Functional Biosafety Systems in Africa



ABNE's overall goal is to support advancement of science and technology for agricultural development in Africa through the establishment of functional biosafety systems in African countries.

ABNE offers biosafety capacity building services aimed at empowering African regulators with science-based information. ABNE services are targeted towards members of National Biosafety Committees (NBCs), Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBCs), and Plant Quarantine Officers (PQs) and their support structures, as well as biosafety policy and decision makers so that they can make informed decisions on biotechnology products.

ABNE's Partnerships

The ABNE network has established a longstanding partnership with Michigan State University (MSU) in USA. This enables ABNE to harness the expertise and experiences of MSU and its global network for the benefit of Africa.

Moreover, ABNE collaborates with other service providers in Africa and globally to draw upon existing expertise, resources, and infrastructure.



ABNE services encompass the following programs and activities

A. Information resources – Web portal (www.nepad-abne.net), policy briefs, newsletters and other publications, Email listserv, CDs, DVDs, roster of experts

B. Training and education – Workshops, short courses, internships, and regulatory study tours

C. Technical support and consultations – One-on-one and group consultations and technical assistance

D. Networking – Participation in regional and international meetings and conferences

ABNE Services – Empowering African Biosafety Regulators

Based on the consultations held in more than 17 countries in different sub-regions of Africa and recognizing that countries are at various stages of biosafety and biotechnology capacity, ABNE is offering services that are tailored to countries' needs.



ABNE services include information, training, education, and technical assistance related to the development of biosafety guidelines, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and implementing regulations. The training and resources provided by ABNE are utilized for reviewing biosafety applications, monitoring, and compliance of laboratory and greenhouse trials, confined field trials, general releases, and imports and exports of biotechnology food and feed products. In addition, ABNE facilitates policy dialogue through networking activities that bring together African regulators, policymakers, scientists, and other relevant stakeholders at national, regional, and international levels.



ABNE – Key Achievements to date (2018)



- Trained 4401 African regulators from 20 countries
- Published 19 policy and research papers
- Conducted workshops, short courses, internships, study tours, and networking activities
- Provided technical assistance and guidance in response to requests from governments related to biosafety applications for four GM crops - rice, cowpea, sweet potato, cotton, sorghum and maize
- Assisted in the review of improved biosafety policies and regulations in a number of countries, through sharing of science-based information and best practices.
- Provided technical support to governments in number of African countries to develop manuals to facilitate biosafety communication and subsequent public participation in decision-making.