



## The Border Game

Welcome to The Border Game universe! This game, as the name implies, deals with borders, specifically focusing on Africa's internal borders. The core premise of the game is a twofold question, how did Africa come to have the borders that it has, and how do they affect the movement of Africans on the continent? The result animates the borders that divide Africa, creating a thrilling world for players to explore and experience the different ways travel and movement is open, restricted, or limited for Africans on their own continent.

This is a communal game that brings children and adults together. It is similar to games which are famous in the streets of most African nations such as Nigeria's Suwe, Ghana's Tumatu, Zimbabwe's Pada, and other variations of hopscotch found across many parts of the world. However, this adaptation of the game is more closely related to the Southern and East African versions, known in South Africa as Tshere-tshere. Unlike other variations of hopscotch in which the player must primarily hop from one block to the next, Tshere-tshere mainly involves kicking a stone from block to block, and not hopping per se. Nevertheless, unlike all these variations of hopscotch, including Tshere-tshere, which have a pitch that is commonly drawn in a rectangular shape divided by lines, The Border Game is played directly on the African map as its pitch. The map can either be drawn or printed across a larger surface area.

The game can be played by two or more players. Each player draws an African country that they will play as, and their task is to navigate the border checks and controls to visit – i.e., kick a flat piece of stone from one country to another – to all the countries that that country can travel to visa free. Your goal as a participant is to be the first one to complete your travels to all the countries. But the journey won't be as easy as it sounds! Each country must overcome its own unique set of difficulties to reach this ultimate goal!

This is a coordination game that provides a fun, explorative platform to explore how Africans move through the continent. The players will examine and learn about Africa and its borders through play. Physically, the game involves throwing, hopping, balancing, and kicking. It requires good hand-eye and foot-eye coordination. Mentally, the game involves problem-solving, concentration, strategising, and critical thinking. It is an entertaining tool for families, friends, and schools that want to casually teach their children or learners about African borders.

### The game is divided into three parts

**Part 1** deals with some of the known historical evidence of African borders before colonialism and how they regulated movement, **part 2** deals with the current African borders after they were reshaped by colonialism, and **part 3** invites the players to reimagine what the future of African borders and movement should look like.

The middle part, which comprises of the main game, is intended for general use, whereas a combo of all three parts is intended for school use.

## The Africa that was

### **Part 1:** Pre-colonial map(s) of Africa.

The first segment of the game is intended to educate children and learners about the various maps that outline what the African borders, relations and movement of people looked like before Africa was colonised. In this segment, the pupils learn about the ancient and current nations, kingdoms and borders that Africa consisted of.



### Educational resource pack:

This segment of the game will be classroom based and accompanied by an educational resource pack which teachers can use to teach the learners about what African borders and nations used to look like. This will familiarise them with the history of how Africans used to move around the continent.

### Main task:

Drawing on material provided and further readings, the learners get the opportunity to research how Africans used to move around the continent. What were the rules that governed or controlled migration in pre-colonial Africa?

### The key learning outcomes:

The learners will be able to identify ancient and current African nations and kingdoms, their geographical locations, regional cooperation, and relations. This is intended to make them curious about African history, especially movement of Africans on the continent. This segment provides information that is pivotal to how they will engage with the rest of the play.

## The Africa that is

### **Part 2:** Post-colonial map(s) of Africa.

This second segment, which is also the main part of the game, is intended to introduce the players to how colonialism redefined African nations, kingdoms, and borders. The players meet the current borders of Africa, and how they have redefined African relations and movement throughout the continent. The game animates the difficulties of travelling within Africa, navigating the (post)colonial boundaries that still divide Africa.



### Educational resource pack:

The educational resource pack will provide teachers with learning materials they can use to teach learners to compare or contrast how colonialism has restructured and reshaped the African borders, nations and movement of Africans. It will familiarise them with the history of how African nations and borders have come to look like they do today.

### Main task:

Drawing on the differences between the two maps, the learners will reflect on the changes that colonialism has brought to the African continent. How has it changed the borders, nations, and movement of Africans on the continent?

### The key learning outcomes:

The learners will be able identify the changes in the African nations, identifying new and fallen kingdoms, their adjusted geographical locations, regional cooperation, and how Africans currently move around the continent. This is intended to make them curious about how the Africa they know today came to be.

## The Africa that will be

### **Part 3:** Post-post-colonial map(s) of Africa.

The third and last segment of the game is a speculative exercise. It invites the learners to re-imagine an Africa of the future that they would like to create. What will it look like? How will it redefine African nations and borders? And how those will affect movement of Africans on the continent?



#### Educational resource pack:

The educational resource pack will provide teachers with learning materials they can use to lead a discussion(s) with the learners about their experience of playing the game and how that has impacted their understanding of African borders and movements of Africans within the continent. The discussion will enable the learners to think and talk about the challenges and opportunities provided by these borders.

#### Main task:

After the discussion, the learners are invited to (re)imagine, 1) what a post-post-colonial Africa should look like, 2) and how Africans should be allowed to move in it. What did they discover about Africa through this game that they want to change? The learners will be given a blank map of Africa, and they must draw its borders anew. We will encourage the schools who play the game to ask their learners to email us their redrawn maps of Africa. We will build a large collection of young people's visions of what they would like their Africa to look like.

#### The key learning outcomes:

The learners will draw up an Africa they envision for the future.

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The concept of the game has been developed, and now I am working on the prototype that will be launched in the near future. If you'd like to follow the developments of the game or be notified when the prototype is launched, please get in touch or follow this link:

<https://eliotmoleba.com/games/the-border-game/>