



Regional Conference

5 February 2020, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

The Art of Neighborhoods: Border Dynamics, Natural Resources and Mobility in Central Asia



The Mountain Societies Research Institute (MSRI) of the Graduate School of Development at the University of Central Asia (UCA) calls for participation in the regional conference “The Art of Neighborhoods: Border Dynamics, Natural Resources, and Mobility in Central Asia” as part of the project “Improving Stability and Better Natural Resource Management in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan” supported by UK Aid. The conference will be held on February 5, 2020, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Research on the formation of national borders in the countries of Central Asia is mainly focused on security research issues. Important aspects affected by borders such as natural resource management, mobility, and new forms of cooperation remain on the periphery of this research. During the past four years, the Mountain Societies Research Institute has conducted comprehensive research in the Ferghana Valley, an area of high concentration of borders and of vital interests to several countries in the region. The developed research framework has been used to analyze the national discourses, socio-economic and political realities and to deflect the predominant focus from a security perspective to a wider,

more inclusive development perspective. Various aspects with this research framework have been considered, the relevance of which are caused by the most acute socio-economic and political issues of the region. The results have formed the basis for the review “Cross-border dynamics and natural resources in the Ferghana Valley” which will be presented at the conference. Contributions from regional experts will reflect and contextualize the findings also from national and regional perspectives. Participants will be welcome to challenge dominant orthodoxies and rethink the approaches to study the manifestation of borders as well as their impacts in Central Asia, and expand the understanding of cross-border issues beyond the scope of the security discourse.

The conference is designed to provide a platform for broad expert discussions focusing on the issues addressed in thematic panels:

- Natural resource management in the context of neighborhood practices transformation.
- Mobility, communications, and economic dynamics of border areas.