

Border Governance and National Security in Nigeria: Challenges, Institutional Gaps, and Strategic Options

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between border governance and national security in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the institutional and operational challenges affecting effective border management. Despite Nigeria's strategic geopolitical position in West Africa and its extensive 4,477-kilometre land borders, the country's porous frontiers continue to facilitate transnational crimes including terrorism, arms trafficking, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and irregular migration. The study employs qualitative analysis, drawing on institutional assessments, performance metrics, and comparative case studies, particularly Morocco's border security framework and the United States-Mexico border management system. Using analytical models including the iceberg model and fishbone analysis, the research identifies critical challenges: weak institutional frameworks, absence of armed mobile border guards, inadequate operational equipment and infrastructure, insufficient manpower, and lack of physical barriers along vulnerable border sections. The findings reveal that Nigeria's border management agencies operate below acceptable international standards, with over 90 percent of borders inadequately protected and more than 1,400 irregular routes facilitating illicit activities. The study proposes strategic interventions including the establishment of a National Border Guard Service, enhanced inter-agency coordination, investment in smart border technologies, construction of strategic physical barriers, and strengthened regional cooperation. The research concludes that effective border governance requires a holistic approach combining institutional reforms, technological modernization, adequate human resources, and community engagement to address both visible and underlying factors undermining Nigeria's national security.

Keywords: Border Governance, National Security, Nigeria, Transnational Crime, Border Management, Institutional Framework, Armed Mobile Border Guards, Irregular Migration.

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INTRODUCTION

The control and management of national borders constitute one of the fundamental responsibilities of the modern state. Effective border governance is indispensable for safeguarding territorial integrity, preserving state sovereignty, facilitating legitimate trade and migration, and protecting citizens from transnational security threats. Consequently, governments across the world devote considerable financial, technological, and institutional resources to strengthening border management systems in order to regulate the movement of people, goods, and services while preventing illicit

cross-border activities. In an era characterized by increasing globalization, transnational crime, irregular migration, terrorism, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the strategic importance of border governance has become more pronounced than ever [1].

The contemporary border challenges confronting many African states are deeply rooted in the continent's colonial experience. The partition of Africa following the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 produced territorial boundaries that largely disregarded pre-existing political entities, ethnic identities, cultural

¹ Barkindo, B.M., "Introduction: Trans-border crimes and Nigeria: An Overview", in Barkindo, B.M. and Lipede, A. (eds.), *Human Trafficking and Economic*

Crimes Across Nigeria's International Borders, Spectrum, Ibadan, 2007

affiliations, linguistic communities, and historical patterns of interaction. Colonial boundaries divided closely related communities while simultaneously incorporating diverse groups into newly created political entities with limited regard for indigenous systems of governance [2]. These artificial borders, inherited at independence, have remained a significant source of political, socio-economic, and security challenges across the continent. The colonial boundary system continues to shape contemporary governance challenges, particularly by creating extensive and often poorly monitored frontier regions that facilitate transnational criminal activities and undermine national security [3].

National security extends beyond the traditional military conception of defending territorial sovereignty. It encompasses the protection of a state's territorial integrity, political stability, economic prosperity, critical infrastructure, institutions, and the safety and well-being of its citizens. Contemporary approaches to national security recognize that threats originating beyond national borders—including terrorism, arms trafficking, human trafficking, drug smuggling, cybercrime, irregular migration, and organized criminal networks, can have profound implications for internal stability and national development [4]. Effective border governance has therefore become a critical pillar of national security strategy, requiring integrated institutional frameworks, coordinated law enforcement mechanisms, modern surveillance technologies, and effective cross-border cooperation.

Border control, as an essential component of border governance, involves the regulation and monitoring of cross-border movements through legal, administrative, technological, and operational mechanisms. Its primary objectives are to facilitate legitimate trade and human mobility while preventing illegal migration, trafficking, smuggling, terrorism, and other forms of transnational organized crime. Contemporary border management increasingly combines physical infrastructure with advanced technologies such as biometric identification systems, electronic surveillance, unmanned aerial vehicles

(drones), integrated information systems, and intelligence-led policing. These innovations enable states to balance security imperatives with the efficient movement of people and commerce [5].

Several countries have adopted comprehensive border management strategies that combine physical barriers, technological innovation, and institutional coordination to address evolving security threats. Along the United States–Mexico border, extensive physical barriers are complemented by sophisticated surveillance technologies, biometric screening systems, integrated intelligence platforms, and coordinated operations among multiple security agencies to combat irregular migration, drug trafficking, and organized crime [6]. Likewise, Morocco has invested heavily in securing its eastern frontier through the construction of defensive barriers, surveillance infrastructure, and specialized border security forces to prevent terrorist infiltration and irregular migration. While these models reflect different geopolitical realities, they demonstrate the growing recognition that effective border governance requires a combination of institutional capacity, technological innovation, and strategic planning rather than reliance on physical barriers alone.

Nigeria occupies a strategic geopolitical position in West Africa, sharing approximately 4,477 kilometres of land borders with the Republic of Benin, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, in addition to an extensive maritime coastline [7]. The country's borders are traversed by numerous official crossing points as well as an estimated 1,400 irregular routes, many of which remain inadequately monitored. The porous nature of these borders has facilitated a wide range of transnational crimes, including human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms smuggling [8], illicit trade, illegal exploitation of natural resources, vehicle theft, and the infiltration of foreign armed groups. These activities have significantly contributed to the persistence of terrorism, armed banditry, kidnapping, and other forms of violent insecurity, particularly across Nigeria's North-East and North-West regions [9]. The cross-border movement of armed actors, weapons, and illicit financial networks has

² Asiwaju, A.I., *Artificial Boundaries*, Inaugural Lecture Series, (Lagos: University of Lagos Press, 1984)

³ Asiwaju, A.I., 'Border Security and Trans-border Crimes: the Nigerian Experience: Comparative Historical Perspective' in Alemika, E.O.E. et al (eds). *Crime and Policing in Nigeria: Challenges and Options*. Network of Police Reforms in Nigeria: (CLEEN Foundation2006).

⁴ Bassey C., and O. Osita, *Government and Border Security in Africa*, (Lagos: Malt house, 2009)

⁵ Bonchuuk, M.O., "Cross-Border Crimes, Human Trafficking and the Challenge of Community Policing: A Concept in Search of Policy" (*Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 14, Uyo, January, 2010)

⁶ Akinyemi, O (2013). "Globalization and Nigeria Border Security: Issues and Challenges" in *International Affairs and Global Strategy*, Vol. II Retrieved from www.iiste.org

⁷ in Barkindo, B.M. and Lipede, A. (eds.), *Human Trafficking and Economic Crimes Across Nigeria's International Borders*, Spectrum, Ibadan, 2007.

⁸ Sarkin Gulbi, A., Ahmad, U., Karofi, U.A., Rambo, R.A. & Sani, A-U. (2024). *Banditry and pragmatic solutions to its menace in Northwestern Nigeria*. *Tasambo Journal of Language, Literature, and Culture*, 3(2), 1-10. [www.doi.org/10.36349/tjllc.2024.v03i02.001](https://doi.org/10.36349/tjllc.2024.v03i02.001)

⁹ Florquin, N, and Berman., E. G. (2005). *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in*

further complicated efforts to combat insurgency and organized crime, with profound consequences for national security, economic development [10], and humanitarian conditions.

Despite notable efforts by the Federal Government of Nigeria to strengthen border management—including the establishment of specialized border patrol units, the deployment of biometric immigration systems, enhanced customs administration, and increased collaboration among the Nigerian Immigration Service, Nigerian Customs Service, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Department of State Services, and other security institutions, significant institutional and operational challenges remain. These include inadequate manpower, limited technological capability, weak inter-agency coordination, insufficient infrastructure, corruption, inadequate funding, and the persistence of numerous unregulated border crossings [11]. Consequently, Nigeria's borders continue to provide opportunities for criminal networks and violent extremist groups to exploit existing governance deficiencies.

Against this background, this study examines the relationship between border governance and national security in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the institutional and operational challenges affecting effective border management. The study critically evaluates existing border governance mechanisms, identifies the major constraints limiting their effectiveness, and proposes strategic policy options for strengthening Nigeria's border security architecture. While the analysis focuses primarily on the Nigeria–Niger border because of its strategic importance as Nigeria's longest international land boundary and its vulnerability to transnational security threats, the findings and recommendations have broader relevance for improving border governance across Nigeria's international frontiers.

Overview of National Security and Border Control in Nigeria

The overview of Border Control (BC) and National Security (NS) in Nigeria will dwell on precolonial and colonial eras. In a similar vein, BC in the post-independence and military era will be looked at before the post-military era. Prior to the colonial era in 1860, Nigeria was a collection of different kingdoms and

tribal states with their own BC mechanisms. A map displaying major border demarcations according to kingdoms and tribal states in pre-colonial Nigeria is at Annex A. The map shows how effectively borders were controlled by native authorities. These measures were primarily focused on protecting the territories and controlling trade. Borders were often marked by natural landmarks such as rivers, mountains, and forests, and were guarded by local authorities who controlled the movement of people and goods across the borders [12]. Trade routes were established and regulated, and traders were required to pay tolls or taxes to cross into different territories. Although these native BC measures looked rudimentary, they were effective enough to keep unwanted persons from entering their territories to cause mayhem. For this reason, the security of kingdoms, chiefdoms, and territories was enhanced through effective BC. Unfortunately, this trend changed during the colonial era.

In 1914, the British colonial government amalgamated all the territories into a single country Nigeria, and new BC measures were introduced. The British government established formal border posts and introduced a system of customs duties and tariffs to regulate trade. A map showing Northern and Southern Nigeria before 1914 is at Annex B. The annex depicts a clear demarcation between the North and South. They also implemented immigration controls to manage the movement of people across borders, particularly to restrict the entry of unauthorized migrants. These measures were undertaken by the colonial authority to help maintain labour supply for colonial economic activities such as mining and agriculture. However, they evolved into the current framework for BC which agencies such as the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), NCS, and NIS for effective BC.

After gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria continued to maintain BC measures inherited from the colonial era. During this period, BC was placed under the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs [13]. The Nigerian government established the NIS in 1963 as the primary agency responsible for enforcing customs and immigration laws at the borders. The NIS implemented immigration controls, including the issuance of passports and visas, to manage the movement of people across borders. Border Management Strategy (BMS) shows a performance metric assessment for BC agencies. The

the ECOWAS Regions. Geneva: Small Arms Survey Publication.

¹⁰ Sani, A-U. & Bakura, A.R. "Idleness, illiteracy, and banditry: Unemployment as a catalyst for crime in Northwestern Nigeria." *Global Journal of Research in Humanities & Cultural Studies*, 5(1), 67–74 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14908648>

¹¹Gbenyenye, E.M, (2018). "Africa Colonial Boundaries and Nation Building." Nigeria. In Ashafa, A.M, Usman, M.T and Samaila, A. *Readings in Post-colonial Borders*

and Economy in West Africa. Kaduna, Nigeria, EPylamak Services Ltd.

¹² Oral Interview with Hussaini Jibrin, Senior Lecturer, History Department, Media Chat on "The border control during the colonial era in Nigeria", at Army War College Abuja, Nigeria, 15th Apr. 2023.

¹³. O Akinyemi, *Globalization and Nigeria Border Security: Issues and Challenges* Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 2006, p.7

assessment showed that the NIS, NCS, DSS, NDLEA, and NPF performed poorly in BC. This was because of inadequacies of manpower, equipment, and modern technology equipment among others. During this period, BC measures were often characterized by corruption and inefficiencies, leading to widespread smuggling and irregular immigration [14].

Nigeria experienced a series of military coups and was under military rule for much of the period from 1983 to 1999. During this time, BC measures were tightened as the military government sought to assert control over the country's borders and combat smuggling, illegal immigration, and other security threats. The government increased the presence of security forces, including the military and paramilitary agencies at border posts and implemented stricter regulations on the movement of people and goods across borders. It is therefore necessary to continue to impose strict measures for BC in order to enhance NS.

Since the return to civilian rule in 1999, Nigeria has continued to implement various BC measures to address emerging security challenges and promote economic development to enhance NS. The FGN has introduced several initiatives aimed at modernizing BC, including the deployment of technology such as biometric systems for passport and visa issuance, and the establishment of joint border patrols with neighboring countries to enhance BC. Nigeria has also been part of regional and international efforts to enhance cross-border cooperation, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocol on the free movement of persons and goods within the sub-region. While also taking measures to address issues of irregular migration, human trafficking as well as small light arms weapon among others.

The FGN has increased efforts to strengthen BC through legislation, policies, and strategies relevant to border management such as the Nigeria NS Strategy in 2014. Other efforts include the deployment of advanced technology, such as biometric systems, drones, and surveillance equipment, to enhance detection and deterrence capabilities. Additionally, In Aug 2014, NIS commenced the establishment of the Border Patrol Corps (BPC). Due to the inadequacy of this BPC, NIS got additional approval for the creation of 30 additional BPCs and 27 Border Patrol Bases (BPBs) in 2015 to boost BC. With this development, the country now has 114 BPCs and 72 BPBs [15]. In addition, the BPC was trained and equipped to patrol Nigeria's land borders with its neighbours. Furthermore, there have also been

efforts that include the NIS strategic roadmap for 2016-2019. Despite these measures, the borders were still porous allowing insurgents and bandits to operate across the border with little or no hindrance, thus undermining the NS.

The implementation of the NIS Strategy roadmap revealed that there are some strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that the border agencies are being confronted with. The Performance Metric Assessment (PMA) of the major BC agencies in Nigeria from 2016 to 2022 showed that BC by the NIS, NCS, DSS, NDLEA, and NPF slightly improved, but overall, the performance of the agencies was still below average, which does not meet acceptable international standards. This was because the operational equipment that was provided by the FGN for BC is inadequate [16]. Despite the increase in manpower, the strength has grossly remained inadequate. Consequently, more than 90 percent of Nigeria's border particularly with Niger, Chad, and Cameroon are unprotected [17]. In addition, the illegal border routes were also 300 percent more than the legal routes. The illegal routes facilitate most of the banditry, insurgency/terrorism, illegal trafficking, and small arms and light weapons smuggling into Nigeria [18]. The trend of border crimes between 2000 and 2022 is at Annex D. These crimes are due to numerous BC challenges. This necessitated some efforts by the FGN to resolve the challenges of BC. The FGN's efforts at optimizing border agencies yielded a little positive outcome. One such effort by the FGN was the development of a 5-year NIS Border Management Strategy (BMS). John C Maxwell alludes. "Everything rise and fall on leadership." [19]. The BMS document was aimed at tackling the challenges of BC at land, sea, and air borders in Nigeria. It is therefore essential for the FGN to fully implement the BMS.

Analysis of Border Control and National Security in Nigeria

In carrying out the analysis of Nigeria's borders, there are several factors, passive and active affecting BC that would be considered. The passive includes the weak institutional framework, diplomacy, and inter-agency coordination. While the active factors are operational equipment, technology, infrastructure, and manpower. Others are AMBG, mounted NIS on horses, walls, and ditches among others. The factors against effective BC in Nigeria are analyzed using the iceberg model as shown in Annex E. Visible factors include lack of enforcement of laws, insufficient manpower, lack of AMBG, limited interagency collaboration, and outdated equipment. Underlying

¹⁴ Nigerian Border Management Strategy, 2019, p. 50.

¹⁵ Idris O, Ag Deputy Controller General Border Management, interview on "The Challenges of the porous border for Nigerian National Security", at Headquarters Nigerian Immigration Service Abuja, on 8 Jun 23.

¹⁶ Nigerian Border Strategy, Op.cit.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ TY Burtai, Operational Command and Leadership my perspective, a Lecture delivered at Army War College, to participant of AWCN Course 7/2023 May 23.

factors include corruption, training, lack of patriotism, inadequate training and coordination, others are conflicting priorities, discipline personnel, weak infrastructure, inadequate funding and capacity assessment among others. By tackling these visible and underlying factors, Nigeria can strengthen its BC thereby enhancing NS.

Capacity assessment is one of the instruments of border control. Capacity refers to the ability of individuals or organizations in performing optimally in assigned tasks. The NIS has the primary responsibility for managing immigration and enforcing immigration laws in Nigeria while the NCS is responsible for regulating and controlling the movement of goods across the borders. However, with the emergence of insurgency in the Northeast and the armed banditry in the Northwest, the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) have been involved in fighting the terrorist to protect the nation's territorial integrity. In fighting these terrorists, other security agencies were involved for the same objective, patrolling, monitoring, and protecting Nigeria's land borders for detecting and preventing security threats though this is not their primary duty. A Map of Nigeria showing the deployment of the BC agencies is at Annex F. Due to the porous nature of the Nigerian land border coupled with the dearth of men and equipment, this deployment shows the agencies can do little or nothing to deal with any threat emanating from the illegal routes. A visit to Morocco for a Geo-Strategic Study Tour (GSST) in June 2023 following an interview with Moroccan Ministry of Interior officials, revealed that a strong institutional framework that guides all security agencies in supporting the lead agency in the discharge of its primary responsibility in BC which enhanced NS, especially between Morocco and Algeria. The laid down framework has brought out the whole-of-society approach in dealing with issues that have to do with BC for enhanced NS. In line with Sun Tzu's view which states that "Security against defeat implies defensive tactics; ability to defeat the enemy means taking the offensive." [20]. A whole-of-society approach is necessary for effective BC considering that threats at the border require physical as well as those trained to protect and prevent any threats against NS.

While it is crucial to have effective defensive measures to protect the border, there is also a need to proactively address potential threats through offensive strategies such as intelligence gathering, preemptive actions, and interdiction efforts which is exactly what is most important in the AMBG in tackling BC. They are

well-armed and mobile equipped with the necessary vehicles and equipment to respond immediately to any threat. Unfortunately, there is no dedicated AMBG in Nigeria and this has significant consequences for Nigeria's NS [21]. The institutional structure of AMBG is at Annex G. The Annex has brought out the structure from the commanding officer down to the supporting units and their roles in carrying out their duties. With thousands of illegal routes, Nigeria has only 72 functional Border Patrol Bases (BPB) with little or no adequate equipment to effectively control the vast expanse of land borders which is estimated at 4,047 km and 853 km of coastline [22]. Establishing AMBG will breach the gap create by adequate manpower. AMBG will patrol the border on vehicles, motorcycles, dogs and horses thereby preventing irregular migrants from entering the country through illegal routes. This task needs agency coordination as was seen among the Moroccan security agencies for effective BC.

Inter-agency coordination among agencies in BC requires clear goals, information sharing, collaboration, defined roles and responsibilities, integrated technology systems, a legal framework, capacity building, and regular evaluation. The above-mentioned issues were clearly seen among the Kingdom of Moroccan security agencies. By adhering to these principles, agencies in Nigeria can work together effectively to safeguard national borders. As Stanley McChrystal puts it "Teamwork is not a preference, it is a necessity." and "Efficiency comes from working together across boundaries, not from optimizing within them." [23]. In addition, interagency coordination should be promoted at both operational and tactical levels. This includes regular meetings, joint training exercises, and joint task forces to foster teamwork, build trust, and facilitate effective decision-making. Additionally, interagency are catalyst for the design and the implementation of strategies and policies with a good chance of being timely, effective, relative and sustainable [24]. There is a need for training to build the personnel capacity in handling their primary responsibility as well as effective interagency coordination among the border management agencies. This will contribute immensely to achieving the set goals which are effective BC for enhanced NS.

Operational equipment is another instrument for the border control consider by this paper. They are required for effective BC for enhanced NS. The ideal level of BC equipment can vary depending on several factors. These include the geographical location, size,

²⁰. Sun Tzu "On The Art Of War", Leicester: Allandale Online Publishing, 2000, Pp 12-15.

²¹. Idris O. Op.cit.

²². Ibid.

²³. B Gordon, Key takeaways from Team of Teams by General Stanley McChrystal, <https://beaugordon.medium.com/key-takeaways-from->

team-of-teams-by-general-stanley-mcchrystal-eac0b37520b9 Accessed on 5 Apr 23.

²⁴ Inter agency cooperation and coordination for efficient service delivery in multi dementional and joint environment, a Lecture delivered at Army War College, to participant of AWCN Course 7/2023 20 Mar 23.

and type of border (land, maritime, or air), the specific threats and challenges faced, and the available resources and budget. As Sun Tzu puts it, the line between disorder and order lies in logistics [25]. While this quote primarily emphasizes the significance of logistics in maintaining order and effectiveness in warfare, it indirectly implies the importance of operational equipment. Adequate logistical support includes ensuring the availability and functionality of equipment plays a crucial role.

The NIS has 114 BPCs and 72 BPB with less than 100 functional vehicles as against the required capacity of 300 vehicles and 1000 motorcycles [26]. The table of equipment of NIS State Commands as shown in BMS shows the acute shortage of patrol vehicles, modern communication equipment and security gadgets such as sensors and alarm systems, and surveillance cameras to cover the flank virtually in all state commands along land borders. State commands like Borno have only 7 Four Wheel Drive vehicles, 19 All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) Type A, 17 ATV Type B, and 23 Communication gadgets to police its land borders with Niger, Chad, and Cameroun. Apparently, the equipment holding is not adequate for effective BC. This situation is the same with other border agencies in Nigeria as revealed by the assessment of BC equipment in Nigeria [27]. The assessment of BC equipment in Nigeria is at Annex H. The annex shows that several government equipment procurement programs meant to augment the equipment holding of border management agencies for effective BC were not sustainable. Border security lacks the relevant equipment to monitor and manned the borders as it ought to and government response to this challenge over the years is not encouraging²⁵. Consequently, only about 10 percent of the border space could be covered. This has enabled the free movement of persons and goods across the border illegally. Therefore, inadequate operational equipment is a major problem affecting BC for enhanced NS in Nigeria. If adequate equipment is provided by the FGN, the agencies would effectively carry out their responsibility thereby enhancing NS.

Challenges Militating Against Effective Border Control for Enhanced National Security in Nigeria

To discover the root cause of the challenge militating against the effective BC for enhanced NS in Nigeria, the fishbone model was used to analyze Nigeria's BC measures and activities. The outcome of the analysis is in Annex I, which was identified and categorized into different branches. This visual

representation helps to provide a comprehensive view of the factors influencing the problem. The root causes of the problem mitigating effective BC in Nigeria, as identified through the Fishbone model, include the dearth of manpower, inadequate funding, dearth of operational equipment, lack of ditches and walls, inadequate policies and regulations, poor organizational structure and coordination, insufficient training and education for personnel, outdated technology and infrastructure, and inadequate resource allocation. Others are weak institutional framework and absence of AMBG. Important ones will be discussed.

i. Weak Institutional Framework

The policies that establish ministries, department, and agencies in Nigeria has to some extent spelled out guidelines on how each operates in carrying out its assigned roles. In achieving BC in Nigeria, agencies responsible for BC are performing below expectations in dealing with security threats due to a weak framework on all the supporting agencies to the lead agency in carrying out its assigned roles. For instance, Customs is more concerned about the movement of goods, services and revenue generation for FGN than security or safe BC. In this regard, the content of whatever goods move across the border is of little concern so long as customs duties are paid. As a result, the customs generate revenue for FGN but at the same time endanger the NS [29]. This attitude to Nigerian customs is entirely different from that of the Kingdom of Morocco. Securities at the Tangier Seaport carry out their duties with the NS as their priority as was clearly seen during a visit to the port. The country enjoys peace because of its strong institutional framework.

The framework and government policy that empowers the customs as a border agency was also responsible for undermining its capability of providing effective BC and security. This is apparently in the deployment of the NCS under the Ministry of Finance rather than that of the Interior as in other climes. This clearly indicates that the efforts of the NCS were tailored toward revenue than security. Besides this, they also lacked the requisite capacities and capabilities to man the vast unguarded expanse of the national border other than the few border control posts. This obviously becomes the missing link in the national security architecture for effective BC. It is therefore imperative that the FGN establishes an institution that can be saddled with the primary responsibility of ensuring effective BC while

²⁵. Robert H, "The Fine Line between Order and Chaos is Logistics, Leadership", 16 May 2019, https://www.army.mil/article/221944/the_fine_line_between_order_and_chaos_is_logistics_leadership. Accessed 17 Apr 23.

²⁶. K Abba, "Cross-Border Management and National Security in Nigeria: An Appraisal of Nigerian Immigration Service" (Unpublished).

²⁷. AB Dambazau, Former COAS and Minister of Interior, Interview on "The challenges and way forward of Border Control in Nigeria", at Abuja on 10 May 23.

²⁸. Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

NCS continues in its current role. This would address the missing link and enhance effective BC for NS.

ii. Absence of Armed Mobile Border Guards

AMBG are specialized personnel trained and equipped for BC. The primary function of an AMBG is to prevent unauthorized entry into a country and combat illegal activities such as smuggling, human trafficking, and drug trafficking, and prevent the movement of foreign fighters that may use illegal routes. AMBG personnel are typically trained in BC techniques, surveillance, and intelligence gathering. They work closely with other law enforcement agencies to detect and prevent criminal activity along the border. AMBG forces operate on land and use a range of tools and technologies to monitor and secure the border, including drones, surveillance cameras, and border fences. Although the NIS has trained and deployed 2500 special border corps across various formations and procured 60 border patrol vehicles and other equipment across the board nationwide [30]. This is not an AMBG and lacks the capacity to function as one, particularly in tackling sophisticated transnational organized criminal groups like foreign fighters, terrorists, insurgents, and armed traffickers amongst others. A Chinese philosopher, Confucius state that "A man who does not plan find troubles at his door step" [31], this statement assert the need for taking adequate action to protect the nations border.

The absence of AMBG poses a significant challenge to BC in Nigeria. The country has long been plagued by a range of illegal activities, including smuggling, human trafficking, and drug trafficking. In the absence of effective border security forces such as the AMBG, these activities would continue to thrive, leading to significant economic losses, public health risks, and endangering NS. According to Global Terrorism Index (GTI) report, in 2022, Nigeria lost about \$9.8 billion to smuggling and insurgency-related crimes, while the country has been identified as a transit point for drug traffickers moving cocaine from South America to Europe and a safe haven for foreign terrorists.³² Therefore, FG needs to consider establishing AMBG that can respond in the shortest possible time to any border threats. This will fill in the missing gap in the security architecture of BC to enhance NS.

iii. Inadequate operational equipment and Infrastructure

The inadequate operational equipment is a significant challenge to BC in Nigeria. The country's border security agencies are often ill-equipped and lack the necessary tools and resources to carry out effective

BC. This lack of operational equipment has allowed transnational criminal gangs to operate with relative ease across the country's porous borders. This contributes to the growth of illegal activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, and the smuggling of goods. According to the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (GIATOC), Nigeria is a major hub for transnational criminal activities in West Africa, with organized crime groups exploiting the country's porous borders to move illicit goods and people [33].

The lack of operational equipment is also a contributing factor to the high crime rate in Nigeria's border areas. Criminal activities such as banditry, kidnapping, and armed robbery are prevalent in these regions. The lack of adequate equipment and resources for border security personnel has made it difficult to address these security challenges. According to a report by the Nigeria Security Tracker 2022, there were 1,214 incidents of violence across Nigeria's borders between January 2019 and June 2022, resulting in 2,769 fatalities [34]. These statistics underscore the urgent need for Nigeria to invest in the necessary operational equipment and resources to enhance its BC. Therefore, Nigeria could prioritize the provision of additional operational equipment and resources to its border security agencies. This will strengthen Nigeria's BC capabilities and effectively address security challenges. The additional equipment could include SBMS like that of the USA at its border with Mexico as well as specific area vehicles and technology. Others include ground sensors, drones, and radars at legal border entries to screen those coming into Nigeria so that they can be able to check and identify possible weapons and drugs coming into the country. It is therefore necessary for the FGN to acquire modern equipment for the BC agencies for effective BC thereby enhancing NS. The equipment will enhance their capacity and enable them to patrol along the possible crossing areas and to also respond to any threats.

iv. Inadequate Manpower

Manpower refers to the human resources needed for effective BC for enhanced NS. Longer borders typically require more manpower to effectively cover and control. A short border between 2 countries may require a smaller number of personnel compared to a long border that spans hundreds or thousands of kilometers. In addition, the security threat level at the border plays a significant role in determining the required manpower. The volume of cross-border traffic, including legitimate trade and travel, also affects the manpower needs for BC. The availability and effectiveness of technology and infrastructure, such as surveillance systems, sensors, and border fencing, can

³⁰. A Eselebor, The Challenges of Border Management and Collective Security in Nigeria, Ibadan: University of Ibadan, 2015,, p.4.

³¹ a Lecture delivered at Army War College, to participant of AWCN Course 7/2023 7 May 23.

³². Global Terrorism Index Report 2020.

³³ Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crimes report, 2022, pp-9-10

³⁴. Nigerian Security Tracker report, 2023, pp.10-12

also impact the required manpower. Furthermore, the availability of resources, including budget, training, and logistical support, also influences the ideal manpower for BC. Based on these considerations, NIS BMS recommends that border management personnel could be deployed at a density of at least one officer per kilometer of a land border or one officer per 3 kilometers of coastline. An interview with a senior immigration officer reveals that the number of personnel deployed to manage these borders is greatly inadequate. Each border post has a manpower shortage in Nigeria. For instance, the manpower summary of 11 NIS mega BC posts selected from each of the geopolitical zones suggests that 278 personnel are currently deployed in these border locations while requires manpower strength is put at 765 personnel. This amounts to 487 shortfalls in personnel estimated at 64 per cent [35]. Therefore, the FGN needs to recruit additional personnel for effective BC. The additional personnel would fill in the gap at the legal entry which would improve efficiency in carrying out the personnel duties.

Available statistic indicates that border security agencies require over 125,000 additional personnel for effective policing of all the nation's borders" [36]. From the above, it is implied that the current manpower strength of 19,100 personnel of border security agencies is grossly inadequate. The consequences of this are that the expanse of the land border of 4,047km and 8935km coastline would be porous [37]. This border porosity provides ease of movement for the influx of irregular migrants and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Thus, inadequate manpower is a problem for effective BC for enhancing Nigeria's NS. Therefore, addressing the challenge of inadequate manpower is crucial to enhance Nigeria's BC.

v. Lack of ditches and Walls

The lack of ditches and walls in Nigeria poses a significant challenge to effective BC, thereby compromising NS. Without these physical barriers, Nigeria's borders remain highly vulnerable to unauthorized crossings, smuggling, and other transnational crimes. The Kingdom of Morocco provides a compelling example of how the implementation of ditch enhanced BC. Recognizing the need for stronger measures to prevent Almurabitun terrorists from entering

the country from Algeria, the Moroccan government took a giant stride and constructed a 2,700-kilometer-long sand wall, known as the "Berm," along its borders with Algeria.³⁸ Furthermore, Morocco has employed advanced surveillance technologies, such as radar, cameras, and drones, to monitor its border regions, enabling real-time response by Auxiliary forces in charge of their BC. The Berm is 3 meters high and 3 meters depth. Between every 5 km, there is an observation post with about 30-40 reaction force. It also has a series of overlapping fixed and mobile radars which covers the range of 60 to 80 KM. The first phase of the Berm was constructed by the Kingdom of Moroccan Armed Forces between 1980 to 1982 [39]. In line with the teachings of Sun Tzu, "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting." Morocco's approach aligns with this philosophy, demonstrating that the provision of ditches serves as a proactive and preventive measure for enhanced NS. The establishment of this Berm has prevented the Algerian Terrorist from entering Morocco thereby enhancing their NS. Interestingly, the Berm was constructed by Moroccan Armed Forces.

Similarly, the USA under President Trump constructed a wall along its border with Mexico. The wall was intended to prevent irregular migrants from Mexico. In addition, the wall also prevents the influx of illegal drug trafficking and other criminal gang entering the US from Mexico. To reinforce the wall, 23,000 border guards were deployed to patrol the wall. This effort was supported by SBMS, Close Circuit Television (CCTV) and communication facilities for effective control thereby enhancing the USA's [40]. In Nigeria, the excavation of ditches and walls along the longest land border requires a huge amount of funds. However, Nigeria has suffered serious economic setbacks because of insurgency and banditry. About 35,000 people were killed and properties worth billions of US Dollars were also lost with millions of people displaced from their homes. Additionally, food insecurity and high level of illiteracy have increased. Annex J contains a summary of losses by Nigeria due to banditry to the insurgency. More worrisome, is the influx of foreign fighters into Nigeria from crisis-ridden countries across the porous borders [41]. These porous borders neighboring Niger, extended into Chad, Sudan to Central African Republic, and Libya

³⁵ Usman B. Deputy Controller General of Immigration Human Resource Management, interview on "Manpower for effective BC in Nigeria", at Headquarters Nigerian Immigration Service Abuja, on 7 Jul 23.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ M Hakeem, Op. Cit.

³⁹ S Saddiki, "The Wall of Western Sahara World of Walls, The Structure, Roles, and Effectiveness of Separation Barriers", Open Book Publishers, pp. 97-120.

⁴⁰ GW Bush, "The White House of the United States of America, Securing America's Borders Fact Sheet", Border Security", <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/homeland/01.html> accessed 12 April 2023

⁴¹ Sarkin Gulbi, A., Ahmed, U., Rambo, A.R., Mukoshy, J.I. & Sani, A-U. (2024). Addressing banditry in Nigeria's North West: Excerpts from the actors. EAS Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies, 6(1), 13-19. www.doi.org/10.36349/easjhcs.2024.v06i01.002.

which facilitated the ease of foreign fighters into the country to join BH and bandits. In view of this, whatever resource it requires to dig the ditches and walls is nothing compared to the huge losses caused by the insurgency and banditry. It is imperative to construct ditches and walls between Nigeria and Niger's porous borders. This could effectively deter unauthorized crossings, disrupt criminal networks, and safeguard the country's territorial integrity thereby enhancing NS.

Way forward in Addressing Challenges of Ensuring Effective Border Country for Enhanced NS in Nigeria

Way forward in addressing challenges of ensuring effective BC for enhanced NS in Nigeria include the establishment of AMBG, provision of adequate equipment and infrastructure, and provision of adequate manpower as well as the establishment of ditches and walls amongst others. Thus, a holistic approach can be taken to strengthen BC in Nigeria. These are discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

i. Establishment of Armed Mobile Border Guards

The establishment of AMBG would address the challenge of BC in Nigeria. The objective of the force would be to secure Nigeria's borders and prevent illegal activities, including smuggling, human trafficking, and terrorism. This would improve the effectiveness of BC for enhanced NS. The force would be well-equipped and trained to carry out surveillance and monitoring of the borders, engage in interdiction and enforcement operations to disrupt illegal activities and collaborate with neighboring countries and international partners to share information, resources, and best practices in border security.

To establish the AMBG, there would be a need for political will and commitment from the government to prioritize border security. Political will is essential for the sustainability and effectiveness of the AMBG. Clausewitz stated that "Everything in strategy is very simple, but that does not mean everything is very easy."⁴² Interview with General AB Dambazau former COAS and Minister of Interior supported the establishment of AMBG equipped with the required equipment. To establish AMBG it does not require fresh recruitment. Personnel could be drawn from all the border security agencies including the AFN. From the start, each agency could contribute 200 personnel to form a battalion strength unit as a pilot unit. The Ministries of Interior and of Defence could draw up a plan to train and equip them and to be administered by DHQ. The AMBG equipment would include desert vehicles, horses, motorcycles, dogs, drones, and cameras deployed in open areas. It is therefore suggested that the FGN could establish AMGB by the First Quarter of 2024 due to the urgent need to curtail illegal influx. This period would allow the funding to be considered in the year 2024 budget. AMBG

will prevent threats from possible foreign fighters from the crisis-ridden countries thereby enhancing NS.

ii. Provision of adequate equipment and Infrastructure

Provision of adequate equipment would address the challenge of inadequate operational equipment in the BC in Nigeria. The objective of this effort would be to equip border security personnel with modern and effective tools to enable them to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently. This would lead to enhanced BC, thereby reducing transnational crime, illegal immigration, and terrorist activities. To achieve this objective, the Nigerian government would need to prioritize the acquisition of modern equipment, including patrol vehicles, communication devices, drones, scanners, and other necessary tools. The government would also need to ensure that the equipment is properly maintained and regularly updated to meet emerging security challenges at the border.

To establish this equipment provision program, significant resources would be required, including funding, personnel, and infrastructure. A portion of the revenue generated by NIS could be used to fund the acquisition and maintenance of this equipment. The equipment provision program would be administered by a team of experts in border security and logistics, who would work closely with relevant stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the program. The FGN could authorize NIS to use 30 per cent of its revenue generated from visa and residence permits to acquire modern operational equipment with effect from the First Quarter of year 2024. Ultimately, the provision of adequate equipment to the border security force would go a long way in enhancing NS. The authorized 30% could take effect from the First Quarter of 2024 to allow the process to be followed for final approval. FGN needs to provide adequate operational equipment to the BC agencies. The additional equipment if provided would enhance personnel in carrying out their duties, thereby enhancing NS.

iii. Provision of Adequate Manpower

The provision of adequate manpower would effectively address the challenge of inadequate personnel in the border security agencies in Nigeria. The primary objective of increasing manpower would be to enhance BC measures and improve NS by adequately patrolling and monitoring the country's borders. To achieve this objective, recruitment drives would be conducted to attract qualified individuals into the NIS, NCS, NPF, NDLEA, AFN, DSS, and others. This would involve rigorous screening, selection, and training processes to ensure that personnel are well-prepared and equipped with the necessary skills to carry out their duties effectively. Retention strategies such as improved remuneration, incentives, and career development

⁴². C. Clausewitz, Michael Howard, 1989, "On War", Princeton University Press, p.178.

opportunities would also be implemented to retain experienced personnel and promote career growth within the agencies.

Adequate resources would be required to get the needed manpower, including funding for recruitment, training, equipment and infrastructure. Sufficient budgetary allocations and utilization of revenue generated by border security agencies would be necessary to meet these requirements. The recruitment process would also involve engaging with communities residing near the borders to identify and recruit personnel who are familiar with the local terrain and culture, which would enhance the effectiveness of BC operations. The newly recruited personnel could include specialist in Information and Technology, officer cadre and junior cadre to fill available gaps created by those who retired, dismissed, and voluntarily retired. Therefore, FGN could recruit adequate manpower to address the challenge of inadequate manpower by the Fourth Quarter of 2023.

Iv. Establishment of ditches and Walls

Establishment of ditches and walls would mitigate the challenge of irregular migrants into Nigeria through illegal routes. The objective is to enhance BC and NS in Nigeria. To achieve this, a comprehensive strategy needs to be implemented. Firstly, the construction of ditches would be prioritized, focusing on areas that are highly porous and prone to unauthorized crossings. It could also be phased like that of the Kingdom of Morocco. To achieve these objectives, adequate resources need to be allocated by the FGN. From what NA has been doing in areas of operations in Northeastern, Nigerian Army Engineers should be task to dig ditches and walls along Nigeria and the Republic of Niger borders. From Bagudu in Kebbi State to Jibya in Katsina State could be handled by 8 Division Engineers, while from Jibya to Babban Mutum a border town between Katsina and Jigawa could be handled by 2 Division Engineers. 1 Division Engineers could handle from Dutse town of Jigawa State up to Yobe State while 7 Division Engr could be tasked to handle from Maiduguri up to Banki. Each Division would handle its own area of responsibility.

The FGN could allocate sufficient financial resources from the national budget to fund the construction of ditches and walls. Additionally, seeking partnerships with international organizations and neighboring countries could be beneficial in securing additional funding. Therefore, by taking immediate action, Nigeria can strengthen its BC measures and enhance NS, while safeguarding its citizens and territorial integrity. This process could start in phases, as short medium, and long-term periods. The short-term phase could commence in the First Quarter of 2024 to allow the project to be included in the 2024 budget. A special intervention fund could be provided by the Presidency to kickstart the project before the budget. The timeline for this important project is at enclosure.

CONCLUSION

Effective BC is a critical aspect of ensuring NS in Nigeria. The country has a long history of BC efforts, starting with the establishment of the NIS in 1963. Over the years, various institutional frameworks have been put in place to enhance BC, including the creation of the NIS, NCS, NPF, DSS, NDLEA, NSCDC. These agencies are responsible for various aspects of BC, such as immigration, customs, and other security agencies that have worked together to ensure effective BC. The paper analyzed the NS through effective BC in Nigeria. These covered institutional framework, inter-agency coordination, operational equipment, infrastructure, and manpower and capacity.

The challenges facing BC in Nigeria are multifaceted and require multiple approaches to be adequately addressed. The absence of AMBG, lack of ditch and walls, inadequate operational equipment, and infrastructure, as well as inadequate manpower, are some of the critical challenges affecting BC in the country. These challenges have exposed the nation's porous border to free movement by foreign fighters from countries that are faced with insecurity especially the ongoing crisis in Sudan that forced an influx of irregular migrants and refugee crisis flowing into the Republic of Chad and Niger.

To address these challenges, the establishment of AMBG to protect, prevent and respond to any threat, the provision of adequate equipment and infrastructure, and the provision of adequate manpower as well as the construction of walls and ditches supported with SBMS, radars, drones are necessary steps to take. Countries like USA and the Kingdom of Morocco has strived hard in establishing wall and ditches respectively supported by technology and physical deployment of a force dedicated to the protection of the wall and ditches against any breach by Mexican drug cartels into USA and Almurabitun into the Kingdom of Morocco. The importance of manpower in BC was brought out, as well as operational equipment for effective BC. These measures would enhance the effectiveness of BC and enhance NS.

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