

## STRATEGIES, CHALLENGES AND OPTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO CROSS BORDER CRIMES: AN ANALYSIS OF NIGERIAN-CAMEROUN BORDERS.

ISMAIL Bello<sup>1\*</sup>

RABI Bello Mohammed<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Political and Administrative Studies, Kampala International University, Uganda

<sup>2</sup> Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Baze University, Abuja. Nigeria

\*Corresponding Email: [ismailbello12@gmail.com](mailto:ismailbello12@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

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This paper examines strategies, challenges and option to tackling cross border crimes around the Nigerian-Cameroon Borders. The study basically adopts contents analysis for this research and adopted State Fragility theory pounded by Joel Migdal The state fragility theory is often used to explain how states' internal makeups hinder them from living out their full potentials. The findings of the research showed that border crimes such as narcotics/drug trafficking, internet crime (advance fee fraud/money laundering), human trafficking, fire arms trafficking, recruitment of child soldiers, mercenaries, smuggling of illegal goods, minerals and natural resources and cash crops among others are rampant across this borders. The paper submits that is need for strategies such as improved manpower, Sanitization and enlightenment of the border security, technological improvement, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for peace building, security, mobilization and management of resources, challenges in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, national control measures, legislative and regulatory action, adequate investigative and enforcement techniques, inter-agency collaboration to effectively respond to challenges of border security at the Nigerian-Cameroonian Borders.

**Keywords:** Cross-Border, Crimes, Weapons, Strategies, Nigeria, Cameroon.

### INTRODUCTION

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Nigeria has several setbacks from cross-border crimes. These crimes affect, the state security and economy. Nigeria's economy within the West African sub-region has

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suffered setbacks due to decades of neglect of informal economies at the borders that thrive on crime. Nigeria's borders with its many unmanned points are used to evade taxes, smuggling of prohibited items such as arms and ammunitions, rice, used cars, fake pharmaceuticals and other contrabands. The North-Eastern and South-Southern parts of the Nigerian border with Cameroun was assessed to have the highest concentration of border communities. These contiguous areas can be listed as the most backward due to their difficult terrain, lowest literacy rate, highest poverty index, and unemployment. The combination of these factors could explain why the region has the highest number of border-related crimes including the Boko Haram insurgency, armed militancy etc (Garuba, 2010).

In North-Eastern Nigeria, the movement of people and arms across borders has created severe security problems in recent years. Large bands of gunmen, remnants of rebel warlords from Libya, the Sudan, and Chad have slipped into Nigeria within the period of the past one decade where they have become masters of territories, putting up flags and declaring caliphates etc. such actions, contributed in turning major highways and many isolated towns and villages unsafe for habitation. (Onuoha, 2013). In recent times police reports indicate that some of these gunmen from neighboring countries have become involved as mercenaries in ethno-religious crises rocking central states of Plateau, Benue, Kogi and some north central states. A number of them have been captured fighting on the side of herdsmen against local farming communities in some districts around Plateau state. Nigeria's northern border areas are also frequently used by car thieves and the criminal rings that specialize in trafficking young women through North Africa to Europe, where they work as prostitutes (Onyekwelu 2012).

The implication is that Nigeria is not safe due to such cross-border population disorders and their attendant economic activities, cross-border crossing and immigration, ineffective border control and the porosity of Nigeria's borders which is a challenge to Nigeria's national security and boundary questions. In the north-east, the borders

Nigeria shares with Cameroun, Niger and Chad stretch over 1,690, 1,497 and 87 kilometers respectively. (Garuba, 2010). Cross Border Crimes and notorious activities carried out by individuals or groups across national and international borders, economic benefits, and also for socio-political cum-religious considerations. It is a set of criminal acts whose perpetrators and repercussions go beyond territorial borders. (Onyekwelu 2012).

In West Africa, reports indicate that there are Seven to Eight million SALW estimated to be in circulation in the sub-region. This is about the same number of people living in Benin Republic. It is estimated that one million out of this figure is currently in circulation in Nigeria. This is however, considered a conservative estimate as the onslaught by the Boko Haram terrorist gang particularly since 2009 may have substantially increased the number of illegal SALW flow in the country. (John et al 2013).

The exact origins and transit countries of illicit SALW and ammunition flows into Nigeria are not well documented. On a general note, countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Kosovo and Siberia are often mentioned in the flow of SALW into Nigeria. (Hazen and Horner 2012). Analysts also draw attention to smugglers operating from the Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Cameroon and within Nigeria itself as facilitating the flow of illicit SALW. Libya since the fall of Gadhafi in 2011, deserves special mention as source of illicit SALWs supply to Nigeria. (John et al 2013). On land, SALW weapons are reported to be smuggled in through Benin, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Significant numbers of these weapons also enter from neighboring West African states, which either are in or have recently come out from a state of war by dealers who collect these weapons and ship them to Nigeria for resale. The three most notorious entry ports of illicit SALW according to the International Alert Study are the South-West (Idi-Iroko and Seme borders). The port city of Warri in Delta State and the Northeast borders with Nigeria and Cameroon (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states). (Garuba, 2010).

## Methodology

This study adopted both qualitative method of data collection. This include and Journals, Books, e-books, reports, newspapers, e-journals, scholarly publications, information on the internet and information from government officials. The secondary source of data collection of this study was used because of distance and insecurity posed by armed bandits and the military counter-insurgency and reconnaissance activities in the Northeast. Consequently, the researcher was hindered from travelling to the flash points on a quest to source for primary data. The study basically adopts contents analysis for this research.

## **THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING.**

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### **State Fragility Theory.**

American international studies professor Joel Migdal looked into the relationship between state and society, where there is a disparity between the officially announced policies and the actual distribution of state resources. The list of countries included India, Mexico, Egypt and Sierra Leone etc. He traced this disparity to the lack of social control by the government - "the actual ability to make the operative rules of the game for people in the society". This not only includes existence of government agencies over the territory and extraction of resources but also the ability to appropriate resources and to regulate people's behavior. Migdal stated that the expansion of European economy and world trade in the 19th century led to drastic changes in people's strategies of survival in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. State policies enforced by Europeans, including land tenure laws, taxation and new modes of transportation, changed people's life situation and needs in these countries rapidly and deeply. Old rewards, sanctions and symbols became irrelevant under the new situation and previous social control and institutions were eroded.

However, unlike western Europe in the earlier centuries, these countries did not establish a new concentration of social control as the base of a strong and capable state. This is because although these countries had the necessary condition for creating a strong state

- old social control weakened by the world trade before World War I - they did not have the sufficient conditions: 1) world historical timing that encourages concentrated social control; 2) military threat either from outside or within the country; 3) the basis for an independent bureaucracy; 4) skillful top leadership that would take advantage of all the above conditions (Migdal & Schlichte, 2016).

The state fragility theory is often used to explain how states' internal makeups hinder them from living out their full potentials. The main thrust of this theory is that national environments which cannot project and fulfill critical government roles such as the provision of conducive and enduring economic environments, the establishment and development of credible formal organizations, prevention of violent conflicts, provision of basic needs and safeguarding of the citizens inalienable rights are weak and therefore susceptible to breakdowns (failure).

In their report, Rice and Patrick (2008) cited in the Pardee Papers of March (2010) conclude that state weakness is directly related to poverty, with the evidence that poor countries anywhere in the world display such symptoms that characterize them as weak states. According to them, Poverty fuels and sustains civil strife, which slowly but steadily diminishes states' strengths. (Rice and Patrick (2008), while taking note of this say that strength or weakness is directly a product of how much ability a state has to cater for essential public goods such as economic opportunities, protection from threats, accountability in governance.

However, while it is true that weak or failed states are everywhere in the world, the African continent is in particular noted for this, a situation that has caused many observers to believe that it is mainly an African issue, (Englebert and Tull 2008, 108). Unarguably, the entire continent is surrounded by weak nations but West Africa nations are more especially so which clearly reflects in their incapacity to project and actualize meaningful national development goals. The State Fragility theory is relevant to the research because it helps to explain how West African States' internal characteristics have stopped them from living up to the demands of such status especially in their failure to make and implement drastic policies to curb trans-border crime.

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### **Nexus between Cross-Border Crimes and Regional Security.**

However, the Nexus of Cross-Border Crimes on Regional Security can best be explained in the areas of; Economy, Corruption, Governance, Security and Injustice to mention but a few. This is as such criminal practices deny the public sector the legitimate income or revenue that could be acquired through legitimate business transactions and the payment of taxes.

Government and/or political officials who partner with such transnational syndicates undermine the very principles of good and economic governance as well as dent the image of public institutions required to fight against these cross-border crimes. Arrested criminals thus have no respect for security officials given the fact that they have the ability to circumvent the criminal justice system for various reasons. Some of these include the lack of appropriate harmonized sub-regional laws to deal with such cross-border criminal activities, the possibility of bribing corrupt political officials or legal personnel in the process, or of relying on key government officials to evade prosecution.

These developments erode the efficacy of state and public institutions to deal effectively with cross-border crimes as well as the threats and challenges to the state and its citizens in the sub-region. Identified cross-border problems have posed significant challenges, first to the security of individuals and that of ECOWAS member states, and generally to the freedom of movement of goods and persons in West Africa. In addition, sub-regional instability has undermined efforts to create a peaceful and stable integrated economic community conducive for investment, trade, growth and development.

Sustaining transparent, accountable democratic governance and the rule of law is equally a major part of the challenge and requires a collaborative effort to address the problem.

Cross-border crime represents a number of illegal and notorious activities carried out by individuals and groups across national and international borders, either for financial or economic benefits and also for socio-political cum religious considerations. It is a set of

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criminal acts whose perpetrators and repercussions go beyond territorial borders (Owolabi, 2009).

Records available to the Nigeria Immigration Service revealed that there are over 1,400 illegal routes into Nigeria – 1,316 more than the approved number of border control posts. The 84 approved border controls cover 4,047km, the total length of Nigeria's land border. Ogun and Adamawa states, for example, have 83 and 80 illegal posts respectively (Brown, 2013). The activities of smuggling and tax evasion in cross-border movements across Nigeria-Niger border provides the transitional features of border economic activities, interaction patterns in the border regions and flouting of international laws and convention on border crossing to the detriment of the national interest and invariably the national security in that era (Carr, 2011). It also indicated that porous features of the border region and the prevailing economic policies of the neighboring states are tantamount to influence illegal cross-border transactions in goods, currency and other threatening circumstance (Durkin, 2009).

Ering (2011) noted that the implication is that Nigeria is not safe due to cross border population and its attendant economic activities, cross-border crossing and immigration, ineffective border control and the porosity of Nigerian borders which is a challenge to Nigeria national security and boundary questions. In the north-east, the borders Nigeria shares with Cameroun, Niger and Chad stretch over 1,690, 1,497 and 87 kilometers respectively. The porosity of the Nigerian borders is the main factor encouraging the proliferation of illegal arms and insurgencies in the country.

According to Ezeanyika and Ubah (2012), reported that an arms trade expert, William Hartung argues that conflicts in Africa have attracted arms deal and the influx of arms to different parts of North, West and Central Africa that have proximity with Nigeria. Hence, in linking the flourishing arms market in Africa to the strengthening of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria as a challenge of the nation's territorial integrity and national security, admitted that the proliferation of arms has become a matter of concern owing to the facts that “It's one conflict after another...Because of the nature of the conflict, the

concentration of conflicts, the black market in Central Africa is more vibrant than other places” (Garuba, 2010).

Gros (2011) revealed that the situation of Nigeria's porous borders, which serve as conduits for illicit transnational traffic of small arms and light weapons and drugs, is further exacerbated by the limited presence of security and law enforcement officials. If they are present, they are poorly equipped, poorly paid, poorly trained and sometimes compromised or recruited to do the bid of the insurgents. It was also widely reported on accounts of current and former U.S. officials and arms experts that most of Boko Haram weapons were either stolen from Nigerian military stocks or purchased from the thriving Central African arms black market, owing to the insurgents' source of weaponry, its sophistication, and sheer number.

The news report further credited a statement to a former US Ambassador in Nigeria – John Campbell, admitting that: “There are hints that sympathizers in the Nigerian Army will deliberately leave doors of armouries unlocked for Boko Haram (Glickman, 2016) argued that the array of small and automatic weapons, grenades, mortars, mines and car bombs is all Boko Haram's soldiers need to carry out their brand of terrorism.

Border crimes have been one of the issues affecting the security of the country. The various crimes have posed a serious challenge to lives and properties. Findings reveal that lives are been lost on regular bases especially in communities surrounding the border area when there is any gunfight between the security agencies and the criminals. Numerous times, there have been community clashes leading to the death of security agents and also smugglers in this area. This often escalates into expanded conflict as findings show that, there has been the faceoff between security agents and the communities who always try to protect their people. The security agents need to conduct their work diligently but the communities always prove as a stumbling block and it's a danger to the security of lives and properties. Criminal activities tend to increase daily as a result of border crimes (Hatchard 2016).



Lahav (2013) stated that there have been cases of criminals from neighboring country terrorizing citizens in Nigeria and because of the porosity of the border area, it's easier for the criminals to escape. Research shows that members of the communities, especially in Seme, often lead those criminals along illegal routes that are unknown to the security agencies. Not all routes are being guarded thereby enabling the continuous flow of criminals. For instance, the recent ban on land importation on the vehicle has an adverse effect on those practicing the trade. They tend to have no form of income and would thereafter engage themselves in illegal activities like armed robbery. Robbery attacks have always been foiled by the Police Force in Seme on various occasions but most of them often move into Benin where they can easily mix without being detected.

### **Strategies to Improve Cross Border Security and Regional Stability.**

Border security is a factor of border management. International borders are a security issue for all governments. States are recognized under international law by their capability to maintain their boundaries, secure their territories, and protect their citizens. The ability to secure national borders is one of the criteria used to classify states as strong, weak and failed (Durkin, 2009).

A state has a primary responsibility of protecting its citizens from both internal and external threats to their livelihoods. It must be pointed out that the strategic location of a country determines opportunities for illegal activities that exist or can take place in its border areas. Some countries are more threatened by insecurities or mismanagement of other countries' borders than their own (Ering, 2011).

Border security means different things: border control, border management, border monitoring, border protection, etc. Usually, border security has been used to mean border control, which seeks to facilitate or limit the movements of people, animals, plants, and goods in and out of a country (Ezeanyika & Ubah, 2012).

Border management is defined as the government functions of immigration, customs, and excise, and police, with the aim of controlling and regulating the flow of people and goods

across a country's border/boundary in the national interest (particularly economic development, security, and peace) (Adebayo, 2005). Border management also includes maintenance of boundary beacons that mark the physical limits of the country's territory. Border management is a collaborative process between a country and its neighbors. It cannot be done unilaterally, and it is most effective and efficient when done regionally. Key stakeholders in border management in Nigeria include:

- i. Customs, immigration, police, armed forces,
- ii. Ministry of agriculture; exist for quarantine purposes,
- iii. Airline operatives
- iv. Shipping companies
- v. Border local authorities
- vi. International business companies and individuals; Individuals residents of the borders or travelers across boundaries e.g. traders, relatives, tourists or terrorists).

Despite these operatives, border management in Nigeria remains a concern. Nigeria border security issues are distinctive when compared to the other countries of the world. Because of this fact, these borders are not monitored, patrolled or controlled. Consequently, these borders have become transit points for smuggling and other illegal cross-border activities (Guy & Martin, 2011). The failure of the Nigerian government to manage its borders affects domestic and international economic activities. It is also a threat to national sovereignty and security of the nation. To this end, the study suggests the following measures in improving the border management strategies of the country.

**Increased manpower:** this is concerned with security operatives at the border areas.

Recent studies show that the number of security operatives required to manage the Nigerian border areas is inadequate. This calls for the recruitment and training of more security operatives to manage the Nigeria border. To check corruption, the welfare of border security operatives must be properly guaranteed (De Andres, 2008).

**Sanitization and enlightenment of the border security:** constant training and enlightenment must be conducted monthly by the various security agencies. These training and workshops should be held occasionally to enable the agencies to sharpen up their ideas. Majority of the officers are not well trained and often get into positions through illegal means and for them to be prepared to combat crime, training needs to be conducted. These will enhance the capacity of the agency to act effectively (De Andres, 2008).

**Technological improvement:** As crime increases with the advent of technology, it is necessary to develop improve skills to manage the emerging challenges. The Nigerian government must introduce modern technology in her efforts to combat crimes across the border area. The technologies are required in areas like cameras, robots, scanners among others. Sniffing dogs are trained specially by drug-related agencies to easily help detect illegal materials. A central database and watch house should be instituted whereby the cameras are being installed in hidden selected places. A new machine that can scan vehicles and humans should be introduced and it will make the job of the security agent easier and reduces crime (De Andres, 2008).

### **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration for Peace building.**

The composite term Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) has been in the post-conflict lexicon for many years; yet some confusion persists as to exactly what it entails. Most often, it has been used in reference to the process that follows a ceasefire agreement, involving a mechanism to remove weapons and to reduce the number of combatants by disarming and de-mobilizing them and placing them somewhere more productive, commonly described as reintegration. Such reintegration may be into any of the national security services or into normal civil life. The essential elements of a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme, therefore, are disarmament to reduce the availability of weapons; demobilization including post-conflict re-orientation of ex-combatants, discharge to an area of their choice in order to dismantle the combat structures, as well as the economic and social reintegration of ex-combatants

into the society, supported by cash or in-kind payments that are phased over a period of time to facilitate their rehabilitation (Ozerdem, 2013).

A Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme typically starts as part of a ceasefire or post-conflict peace building arrangement. The negotiations for a ceasefire or peace agreement provide the framework for such a Programme. However, while this model may be useful as a starting point for understanding the process, the fact must be constantly borne in mind that each Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme needs to be tailored to the prevailing circumstances of the specific post-conflict situation for which it is formulated. In other words, there are no hard and fast rules or frameworks for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, and programmes must be guided by the national or even regional realities (Theidon, 2007). The principles of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration are elaborated briefly as follows:

### **Security.**

A Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme has to be implemented in a secure environment if it is to stand any chance of success: if belligerents lack confidence in the process or are bent on disrupting it, combatants are unlikely to come forward voluntarily to disarm. Security has to be provided by a third party, possibly through a United Nations peacekeeping force, a sub-regional organization, a regional organization such as the African Union, ECOWAS, Multinational Joint Task Force, or by a 'coalition of the willing'. The prevailing security situation usually dictates the timing of the start of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme. Political Coordination and Control: At country level, political control implies effective government ownership through a National Committee reporting to the political

leadership. It also involves practical control through the identification and registration of former combatants or members of armed groups, knowledge of the numbers passing through the process, perhaps more importantly, both at national or regional levels, it

involves the effective coordination of implementing partners, and a clear communications policy that ensures that information reaches all stakeholders (Knight, 2008).

The degree to which political control and coordination are exercised, influences the response that can be elicited from international and donor communities; an effectively coordinated process builds donor confidence and reduces the opportunities for disruption by those parties to the conflict that may have been less willing to cooperate.

### **Mobilization and Management of Resources.**

The success of a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme depends also largely on the availability of human, financial and material resources. Resources need to be mobilized early in the Programme and sustained throughout its implementation so that the gap between the signing of a peace accord and the start of demobilization is kept to the minimum. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programmes have shown that nothing undermines a Programme more disastrously than assembling ex-combatants or members of armed groups and then not being able to provide food and accommodation for them. The timely mobilization and allocation of finance as well as having the capacity to make most use of the resources available are therefore issues that need to be taken into account when planning a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme. Furthermore, whatever resources that are mobilized must be managed in a transparent and accountable manner, guarding against the many opportunities for corruption (Williamson, 2006).

### **Challenges in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme.**

Nigeria is a host to a wide variety of armed groups, including Boko Haram, political gangs and, allegedly, foreign mercenaries. These armed groups are more numerous than was previously thought. A study that was coordinated by Small Arms Survey, (2013) found that there are at least 3-armed Boko Haram groups in Borno State. However, these groups are deadly and constitute threats to the security of the Borno State.

Demobilizing them, therefore, is a compelling imperative in the quest for Nigeria's peace building and security in Borno State and Nigeria and her neighbors at large. The demobilization of these groups, however, will be of no effect unless it is accompanied by disarming them and reducing significantly, the availability of small arms and light weapons in Borno State. It is estimated that there are more than 1 million small arms and light weapons in illegal circulation and use in the Borno State (Small Arms Survey, (2013).

The availability of these weapons was a major factor that facilitated rebel activities in the conflicts that have been witnessed in several areas in Borno State since the early 1990s. The ease with which these weapons are trafficked from countries at war to others that are relatively at peace, and the diverse uses to which they have been put both in conflicts and in criminal violence in the Nigeria, now call for a region-wide approach to the control of small arms and light weapons in Cameroon and Nigeria (Paes, ,2005; Davidheiser, & Nyiayaana, 2011; Onapajo & Ozden, 2020).

### **Options for Effective Responses to West Africa Cross Border Crimes.**

As indicated above, some efforts have been made to prevent, control and possibly eradicate cross-border criminal activities in West Africa but these efforts have not succeeded in reducing the ongoing cross-border crimes. The ongoing cases of small arms, drugs and human trafficking as well as electronic fraud, and reported cases of arrests call for more effective responses to the different categories of crime. To begin with, credible responses to West Africa cross-border crimes must be considered as an activity undertaken within a system (including all arms of government together with civil society actors) where the effectiveness of the entire system is dependent upon the performance of the various subsystems making up the whole. In this respect, efforts at the national level must complement sub-regional efforts with all arms of government and its security agencies working closely with civil society actors to combat the ongoing cross-border criminal activities in the sub region.

The various international, regional and sub-regional legislation on the different crime categories need to be revisited and measures put in place to disseminate them towards

their effective implementation. In addition, subsequent monitoring and evaluation programmes should be undertaken by both security agencies and relevant NGOs on the impact of the legislation within the various ECOWAS member states.

Further complementary measures or strategies however need to be taken by government officials and civil society to address the immediate threats and challenges posed by cross-border crimes at both national and sub-regional levels for credible results (Addo, 2006)

### **National Control Measures, Legislative and Regulatory Action.**

Legislation and regulatory bodies are crucial in guaranteeing an effective response to cross border criminal activities in West Africa. There are considerable variations in the nature and scope of various legislation, as well as commitments toward their implementation. Currently, very few West African countries have ratified or met sub-regional or regional legislative requirements for controlling organized cross-border crimes. For instance, efforts made to control human trafficking have not met the required minimum standards as released in the June 2004 Trafficking in Persons Report by the United States Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Of all the West African countries, Ghana was the only country considered to have complied with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The major components or factors making up the minimum standards are prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, and the prevention of trafficking in persons. Hence the major task required in this area is the need for the individual ECOWAS member states to review, ratify or strengthen existing legislation and legal, institutional and administrative procedures in tandem with sub-regional legal arrangements for fighting cross border crime. Such legislation should clearly criminalize cross-border criminal activities with strong deterrent and punitive measures. Specific crimes requiring urgent attention and control on the issue are small arms, human and drug trafficking, and the recruitment of child soldiers and mercenaries for fighting civil wars. This action should be followed by ensuring strict implementation of these laws to resolve the problem. Such a task can be assigned to a government monitoring/regulatory body like the National Commission on Small Arms and Light

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Weapons in the case of small arms, as recommended in the ECOWAS Moratorium (Addo, 2006).

### **Adequate Investigative and Enforcement Techniques.**

Effective responses to transnational organized crime like all other criminal activities hinge on the ability to trace, detect, analyze and freeze, confiscate or forfeit criminal proceeds or assets, as well as prosecute suspects or offenders engaged in these criminal activities. Part of the enforcement techniques also involves the rapid deployment of a specialized task force to arrest and prosecute offenders of the law, having detected ongoing cross-border criminal activities.

Article 20 of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime makes reference to adopting special investigative techniques to combat organized crime. Article 20(1) of its provisions recommends the use of other special investigative techniques, such as electronic or other forms of surveillance and undercover operations, by its competent authorities in its territory for combating organized crime. Each of the different security agencies cover specific aspects of cross-border organized crime, be it the illegal electronic transfers, movement of persons and goods, and the necessary actions needed to address these crimes. Responding to these activities would entail undertaking individual or collective specialized investigative and enforcement techniques which require expertise and the necessary tools to facilitate effective responses. Government ministries in charge of internal security must, therefore, arrange special training programmes especially for the police, customs and immigration officers to upgrade their skills for effective combating of crime. One good example of such initiatives is the training conducted by a team of security experts from the United States Customs and Border Protection Agency for the personnel of the Ghana Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) officials to strengthen security at the nation's ports and borders.

The aim of the training is to safeguard travelers and cargo against terrorist attack, and prevent the use of the borders and ports as channels for money laundering, drugs and arms trafficking (Arsovska, & Begum, 2014).



### **Inter-Agency Collaboration.**

Combating cross-border crime effectively at the national level also requires cooperation and pooling of resources together by all stakeholders, and especially the security or law enforcement agencies.

The various law enforcement agencies in the ECOWAS member states should not only collaborate and coordinate their activities to combat crime at the sub regional level but also within their respective countries. The main areas to focus on are exchanging information and intelligence through established electronic and organizational networks on suspects and contraband goods, as well as statistics reflecting the general scale and trend of ongoing cross-border crimes in the sub-region. These initiatives would equally enhance pooling resources together through joint planning and joint task force operations to combat the different categories of cross-border crime (Olisa, Chika, & Mary, 2022).

A classic example of such collaborative processes can be found in Australia where the law enforcement agencies undertake joint operations through the exchange of information on suspects and pooling of resources together to arrest and prosecute these suspects. Between 1999 and 2001 for instance, Customs and Federal Police have been involved in several major maritime operations that have resulted in the seizure of close to 800 kg of cocaine. In each case, the suspects, who were well organized, well financed and had prior experience and “success” in their mode of operation, relied on the state-of-the-art communications technology to affect the importation of the drugs.

The success of the anti-drugs operations was in part due to the cooperation between international and domestic law enforcement agencies and the use of specialist teams of police and customs officers provided by the government under the National Illicit Drug Strategy. Of course, the Customs and Federal Police also had access to state-of-the-art technology to track the vessel while off the Australian coast (Addo, 2006).

### **CONCLUSION**

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The reoccurring issues of border security in Nigeria and Cameroon have necessitated a research on its impact on national security. The challenges are far-reaching. The study has identified various forms of border security issues in Nigeria and Cameroon and their effects on national security and economic development. The concern has majored on the porous nature of the Nigerian - Cameroon borders. This has promoted the increasing number of illegal trades such as smuggling of contraband goods- adulterated drugs, prostitution, trafficking, and so on. The study identified that, although there is security trained by the Nigerian government to tackle these crimes at the border, the problem associated with poverty and corruption affects their lives. This, therefore, is the first place to begin in addressing the problem of border crimes in Nigeria and Cameroon.

### Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study recommended that:

- i. Nigeria and Cameroon governments should organize a joint border patrol to prevent cross-border trafficking of arms, human, drugs and illegal migration.
- ii. Border management laws by government functions of immigration, customs, and excise, and police, with the aim of controlling and regulating the flow of people and goods across border/boundary should be reviewed so as to allow over lapping patrol across the boundaries of Nigeria and Cameroon.
- iii. Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon should put in place an elaborate framework that shows genuine interest in tackling terrorism and insurgency within the region. The Infrastructure should incorporate early warning systems, monitoring and evaluation mechanism and mediation and preventive diplomacy. The Reports and recommendations of past disturbances should be exhumed from the graveyard of history, and implemented.
- iv. Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon should integrate to produce a comprehensive response mechanism to meet the complex challenges of weapons proliferation and illicit trafficking, yet existing responses remain fragmented and inadequately resourced.

- v. Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon should set up coordinated sub-regional programmes to tackle illicit arms trafficking. Programmes to develop effective controls on legal arms possession and transfers, among civilians and state security forces, remain inadequate.

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