



# Perspective on International Support for West Africa Border Security



**By:**

**Kemi Nanna Nandap, fsm, pcc  
Deputy Comptroller General {Migration}**



## Introduction and Background

- The West Africa, Sub-Region consists of 16 Independent Countries and has an extensive joint land border stretching about 32000Km. The region is bounded in the North by Sahara Desert and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean.
- This massive sub-region is faced with myraids of border security challenges including Trafficking in persons, Smuggling of Migrants , Trafficking in Arms, among many others.
- Tackling these Border security Challenges require enhanced cooperation and unified border patrol policies.
- International Collaboration and support for and with the region will strenghten the capacity of individual states within the region to improve border security and counter cross-border crimes.





# Current State and Key Challenges of West African Borders



- Land Borders between Countries in the region are often extensive and cover difficult geographical terrain and vast uninhabited areas. The Nigeria - Niger Border over 1400km
- Limited infrastructure especially along the land border crossings; these equipment ranges from surveillance and communication equipment, stable power source, shelter for border officials
- Contiguous nature of the border communities and multiplicity of languages among various communities and border Officials across countries.
- Lack of a unified regional approach/policy on border security.
- Differences in Border Management legislations across National Boundaries
- Frequent political instability within the region.



# Common Cross-Border Threats Along West African Borders



- Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants are the most Common Cross Border Crimes
- There are also incidences of Arms and Drug Trafficking
- Cattle Rustling is an emerging cross border crime which is mostly localized between countries within the region.



# The Roles of International Partners in West African Border Security



The Nigeria Immigration Service as the Lead Border Management Agency in Nigeria has benefitted from a number of Intervention programmes by International partners in the following areas:

- *Capacity Building and Training of Immigration Officers {Local and International Trainings, study visits, training policy development etc.}*
- *Deployment of modern Border Management Information System and Border Management tools { MIDAS installation at 35 PoEs, Document Examination equipment, e-border monitoring solutions}*
- *Research and policy support {development of standard operating procedures , observatory, etc}*
- *Partnership in operational and infrastructural support for border officials*
- *Facilitating International cooperation and partnership { facilitating MoUs on Migration data sharing between Countries}*



## NIS Approach to Border Security

NIS approach to border security is encapsulated in the National Border Management Strategy(NBMS) 2019.

*The strategy emphasized an Integrated approach to Border Management, echoing the role of technology, inter-agency cooperation and community involvement in border Security.*

➤ Our border Control Framework based on NBMS 2019:

*Control Before Entry (Visa System)*

*Control on Entry (Land, Airport, Seaport...Introduction of MIDAS as BMIS)*

*Control After Entry (E-Registration of Migrants, Residence Permits)*

➤ The implementation strategy for the above stated framework includes:

*Deployment of Technology through the Border Management Information System {MIDAS at 35 Points of Entries}*

*Deployment of a Border surveillance and Patrolling System under an enhanced Command and Control Structure {27 FoBs}*

*Enhanced Inter-Agency Cooperation through joint border patrol and border drill operations*

*Electronic Border Monitoring System (E-border & Command & Control)*

*Secondary Inspection Units at Airports (to be expanded to land and blue border)*





## Recommendations on Priority Areas of Cooperation for International Partners

- Capacity Building for Officers especially in areas like cross border crime detection & investigation, document fraud detection, migrants protection and support, joint training for LEAs within the region.
- Support in the expansion of the Border Management Information System network and Secondary inspection Units
- Partnership in the implementation of API/PNR in line with United Nations Security Council resolution 2396 (2017)
- Cooperation in bridging the operational and infrastructural equipment deficit in the border areas {Body Cameras, Scanners, hand-held document examination equipment and mobile BMIS}
- Enhancing cross border cooperation especially between countries with shared borders.
- Cooperation in the development of a unified regional border security policy.





## Conclusion and Call for Action

- Considering the size and complexities of West African Borders, technology driven interventions remain the utmost priority of West African Border Officials.
- There is the need for a unified regional approach to border security in West Africa. {Single Regional Policy on Border Security}
- There is increasing need for international support to achieve a more secure border in the sub-region. {capacity building and technical support}
- It is pertinent to note that border security any where in the word should be the priority of all Countries. *{Border Security is the most basic and necessary responsibility of all sovereign nations}*







Thank you.

