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An Appraisal Of The African Union's Border Management Programme (Aubp) – Challenges And Opportunities

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Abstract

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the African Union's Border Management Programme, revealing the continental body's challenges and opportunities encountered in the process. The paper underscores the complexity of border management in Africa as a multifaceted issue that extends beyond securing borders to facilitating trade, promoting regional integration,

and preventing conflicts. Premised on a reflective approach and the deployment of qualitative research techniques, the paper analyses how AUBP has positively contributed to effective border management and governance whilst fostering enhanced border governance in Africa. The article further utilises securitisation theory and governance theory as analytical lenses in making sense of African UNION'S border Management Programme. The article postulates that in spite of AUPB's efforts, limited inter-state cooperation is prevalent, including ineffective border policies as the major hindrances of the African Union Border Management Programme. Furthermore, these challenges present opportunities for enhancing border management which the article concludes that it is a leverage which the African Union should harness.

KeyWords: *African Union, Border Management, Inter-State Cooperation, Policy Implementation*

Introduction

The African Union Border Programme (AUBP) was conceived in June 2007 through the Declaration on the African Union Border Programme by the 1st Conference of African Ministers in charge of border issues and the adoption of the Declaration by the 11th Ordinary Session of the African Union Executive Council. The AUBP was mandated to support the finalisation of the delimitation and demarcation of AU Member States' borders; encourage and facilitate cross-border cooperation initiatives; and build the border management capacity of Member States and other relevant stakeholders.

The African Union Strategy for a Better Integrated Border Governance includes an institutional framework composed of the State, RECs, the AU and the international community. The primacy of the state to effect good governance of borders is maintained and complimented by complementary role that the international communities, the AU and the RECs (AUPB, 2020). The strategy is based on five pillars that anchors the vision and the mission for the AU Border Governance Strategy, namely Development of Capabilities for Border Governance; Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Border Security & Transnational Threats; Mobility, Migration & Trade Facilitation ; Cooperative Border Management Borderland Development and Community Engagement.

The AU's border management programme is guided by various policy frameworks and instruments, including the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) and the African Union Border Governance Strategy

- AUBGS. These initiatives aim to enhance cooperation among African countries in managing their borders effectively and efficiently. The AUBP focuses on promoting good governance, security, and development along Africa's borders, while the AUBGS seeks to strengthen border governance through capacity-building, information-sharing, and coordination among member states (Polner, 2011).

One of the key objectives of the AU's border management programme is to promote peaceful coexistence among African countries by preventing conflicts that may arise from border disputes or cross-border criminal activities. By enhancing cooperation and coordination among member states, the AU aims to create a conducive environment for economic development and regional integration (Goué & Kana, 2023). Effective border management is crucial for promoting regional integration and security in Africa. Borders serve as gateways for trade, investment, and people movement, making them essential for economic development and social cohesion. However, poorly managed borders can also be sources of conflict, instability, and insecurity. Strengthening border governance mechanisms and enhancing cooperation among member states, can help prevent conflicts arising from territorial disputes or cross-border criminal activities (Njenge, et al., 2021) and therefore contributing to promote peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected regions and stability. Effective border management helps to combat transnational threats such as terrorism, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and arms proliferation.

Although the African Union has made significant strides in developing a comprehensive border management programme, teething challenges and opportunities needs to be addressed (Goué & Kana, 2023). The African Union's (AU) border management framework is confronted with a plethora of challenges militating against the smooth implementation notably inadequate infrastructure, porosity of borders and limited cooperation among member states. These challenges have contributed to increased cross-border crimes, terrorism, and irregular migration, threatening regional stability and security. This paper aims to appraise the AU's border management framework, identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and proposing recommendations for improvement. This study can also strengthen the existing migration and refugee policies in the African continent through providence of practical insights that the can be factored to further solidify what is already available. More importantly, discourse of

migration in general and AU Border management in particular are inexhaustive.

This article is a modest attempt in taking stock of the continental initiatives in border management, identify key challenges facing its implementation, and explore potential opportunities for improvement. The objectives of the article are to evaluate the current state of border management in Africa, focusing on the effectiveness of existing policies and practice; identify and analyse the key challenges hindering effective border management in African countries; explore potential opportunities for enhancing border management, with a focus on policy improvements, regional cooperation, and capacity building.

To achieve these objectives , the following questions are posed - what are the AUBP success stories demonstrating continental efforts in effective border management? In what ways has border management enhanced inter-state cooperation in African states? And What opportunities exist for enhancing border management in Africa, and What steps can be taken to capitalize on these opportunities?

Materials and Method

This article is largely reflective in its approach, with reference to various reports of surveys conducted throughout Africa. More importantly, the article reviewed the following documents: Border Governance in Africa: an African Union Strategy (2020); African Union Strategy for a Better Integrated Border Governance (2020); From barriers to Bridges – Promoting Stabilisation and Peace at Borders in Africa document jointly compiled by GZI and African Union (2024) and African Union Report on the AUBP/RECs Coordination provided rich and current insights and information pertaining the African Union Border Management programme. As such, the methodology that formed the basis of this article was largely qualitative. This study utilised the qualitative research design or approach. Qualitative approach as defined by Creswell (2009: 4) is “a means of exploring and understanding the meanings individuals and groups ascribe to a social or human problem.” The research paradigm stresses largely on an interpretative approach. A qualitative approach was chosen largely because of its reliance on human interpretation and evaluation which cannot be dispassionately measured in a standard way thus necessitating the consultation of a variety of sources of data relating to the research topic (Williman, 2011). In addition qualitative methods were deemed appropriate in this paper because of their

prioritisation on depth and nuance, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the complex experiences and needs with regards to African Union border management framework in terms of the experienced challenges and opportunities.

African Union Border Management

Border control refers to mechanisms put in place by states in an effort to monitor and regulate the mobility of human beings, animals and goods across land, air and maritime borders (Polner, 2011). States exercise full sovereignty and territorial integrity dictates in sync with international law exerting maximum control of their points of entry and exit. Border controls in the 21st century are tightly intertwined with intricate systems of travel documents, visas, and increasingly complex policies that vary between countries. The African Union Border Management document (AUBM) stresses the organic link between peace and security on one hand, and on the other, good governance of borders and the attainment of sustainable development of borderlands (AUBM, 2020). It further acknowledges how “Borderlands have been a haven for criminal groups that carry out activities threatening regional and national security,” (AUBM, 2020: iv). The document also asserts that the opening of borders allows for robust trade, and the free movement of people that can contribute to integration, prosperity and peace. It therefore follows that a comprehensive border management system is a mitigatory poverty alleviating mechanism and conflict through eliminating trade and mobility barriers..

The African Union Border Programme (AUBP) was launched in 2017 by the AU as a direct response to these risks and as an expression of the strategic importance of continuous and sustainable measures at the borders (AUBP, 2020). Since 2008, the project has supported the continental, regional, national and local implementation of the AU Border Programme (AUBP, 2020). The support focuses on four areas of action, better delimitation and demarcation of borders which focuses on selected AU member states’, better defining of their borders through joint border definition; Improved border governance, policies and strengthened institutions which is anchored on AU Border Governance Strategy (AUBGS) adopted in 2021 with the set frameworks for harmonising and improving border governance on the continent.

The third component is conflict prevention through dialogue and cooperation at conflictive borders – a project working with border

communities, civil society, local and state actors aimed at building trust between border communities through cross-border dialogue and cooperation projects, and reducing conflicts or tensions (Nick, 2023). The fourth and last component is strengthening synergies and knowledge transfer project which promotes cooperation with and between national, regional and international border actors and the further development of expertise through regional trainings and exchange formats to ensure synergies and a coherent border governance approach in Africa (Nick, 2023). Dividends have indeed been witnessed ever since the AUBP was launched, notably the definition of 8,000+ km of borders; support of four Regional Economic Communities and 35 plus countries with regards to their border governance. In addition, nine Cross-Border Agreements have been signed whilst 35+ joint cross-border activities by neighbouring countries have been implemented (Nick, 2023).

The African Union (AU) has long recognized the importance of effective border management in promoting peace, security, and development on the continent (Hlovor, 2020). One of the AU's earliest initiatives in this area was the adoption of the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) in 2007 (Norman & Micinski, 2023). The AUBP aims to promote peaceful coexistence among African states by addressing border-related issues such as boundary disputes, cross-border crime, and irregular migration. The programme also seeks to enhance cooperation among AU member states in managing their borders effectively by establishing several regional mechanisms to support border management efforts (Mason, et al., 2020), and commitment to promoting peace and security on the continent through effective governance and cooperation among member states (Norman & Micinski, 2023).

African States' Border Management Complexities

Clearly defined, internationally recognised and locally accepted state borders are an important basis for conflict prevention (AUPB, 2020:1). African states grapple with inherited ill defined borders from colonial times which still exist today which are considered potetila sources of conflict (AUPB, 2020: 6). AU efforts to improve border management, continue to face a number of challenges (Mason, et al., 2020), including the presence of porous borders that are difficult to monitor and control. These allows illicit activities including smuggling, human trafficking, and terrorism to thrive across borders. Additionally, the lack of resources and

capacity among many African countries to effectively manage their borders. This includes inadequate infrastructure at border posts and checkpoints and limited training for border officials in fields of customs procedures and immigration law enforcement (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023).

Political instability and conflict in some regions of Africa presents difficult for countries to secure their borders effectively (Goué & Kana, 2023). These cross-border movements of armed groups and refugees can further exacerbate security concerns for neighboring countries. Thus, there is greater need for coordination and cooperation among African countries border management. In addition, many countries lack mechanisms for sharing information and intelligence on cross-border threats, which hinders efforts to address common challenges collectively. These challenges will require sustained commitment from both individual African countries and continental organizations such as the AU to strengthen border management capacities and promote greater cooperation among member states (Goué & Kana, 2023).

Border management in Africa is a complex and multifaceted issue (Aucoin, 2022), there is need for a holistic and integrated approach that takes into account the diverse range of actors, interests, and dynamics at play along the continent's borders (Yendaw, 2022), including government agencies responsible for border control and security, and non-state actors like communities, civil society organizations, and transnational criminal networks. Some studies have focused on border management in Africa is the role of regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in shaping border management policies and practices (Toroitich, et al., 2021). Other areas include the importance of strengthening regional mechanisms to enhance coordination and information sharing among member states (Toroitich, et al., 2021), capacity building in training programs for border officials, improving infrastructure at border crossings, and deploying technology such as biometric systems and drones to enhance surveillance capabilities (Philip & Uwa, 2022). By strengthening their capacity to manage their borders effectively, African countries can effectively address security threats and facilitate legitimate cross-border trade and movement.

There has been significant interests in the impact of external factors such as international donors and development agencies on shaping border policies and practices and concerns on how external funding can lead to a focus on securitization at the expense of human rights or

economic development objectives (Donko, et al., 2022), hence the call for greater transparency and accountability on the deployment of external assistance to support border management efforts in Africa.

Border Security and Terrorism Threats

Border security is a critical component of national security, and serves as the first line of defense against potential threats from outside the country (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023). In recent years, border security has become more pressing due to the rise of terrorism threats worldwide. Terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda have demonstrated their ability to carry out attacks on a global scale, making it imperative for countries to strengthen their border security measures to counter terrorists movements (Donko, et al., 2022).

One of the main challenges in securing borders against terrorism threats is the sheer size and complexity of modern borders (Goué & Kana, 2023). Advances in technology and transportation, borders have deepened the porosity and undetected crosses (Goué & Kana, 2023), presenting a significant challenges for border security agencies who must constantly adapt and improve their strategies to counter the evolving threats.

Evasion of borders by sophisticated tactics by terrorist organizations is a new challenge. Terrorists may use false identities, forged documents, or hidden compartments in vehicles to smuggle weapons or explosives across borders. This requires border security agencies to employ advanced screening techniques and intelligence gathering methods to identify and intercept potential threats (Hlovor, 2020).

In addition to physical border security measures, countries also rely on international cooperation and information sharing to combat terrorism threats. Terrorist organizations operate across borders and often receive support from foreign entities, making it essential for countries to work together in sharing intelligence and coordinating efforts to disrupt terrorist networks (Goué & Kana, 2023).

Furthermore, border security agencies must also be vigilant in monitoring emerging threats and adapting their strategies accordingly (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023). As terrorist tactics evolve, so too must border security measures in order to effectively counter these threats requiring constant investemnts and training.

Securing borders against terrorism threats is a complex and multifaceted challenge that requires a comprehensive approach involving

physical barriers, advanced screening techniques, international cooperation, intelligence sharing, and ongoing adaptation to emerging threats (Hlovor, 2020). This requires the prioritizing of border security and investing in resources and training for border security agencies to prevent terrorists from entering their territory and protect their citizens from harm.

Cross-border Trade and Economic Development

Cross-border trade has long been recognized as a key driver of economic development, allowing countries to access new markets, increase their competitiveness, and foster innovation. The importance of cross-border trade has only grown, with globalization and advances in technology making it easier than ever for businesses to engage in international commerce (Hlovor, 2020). One of the main ways in which cross-border trade contributes to economic development is by increasing a country's GDP. This can lead to job creation, increased consumer spending, and overall economic growth (Hlovor, 2020).

Cross-border trade also plays a crucial role in promoting innovation and technological advancement. When businesses are exposed to new markets and competition, they are incentivized to develop new products and services that are more efficient and cost-effective. This benefits the businesses and spurs overall economic development through productivity and innovation (Hlovor, 2020). Cross-border trade allow countries diversify their economies and reduce reliance on monopolies. Through expansion into new markets, countries can mitigate the risks associated with economic downturns or fluctuations in demand for certain goods or services. This diversification helps make economies more resilient and better equipped to withstand external shocks (Goué & Kana, 2023).

Added to these economic benefits, cross-border trade has positive social impacts such as the exchange of goods and services between countries, reducing poverty levels through job creation and increased access to affordable goods (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023). It also promotes cultural exchange and understanding between and among nations, fostering greater cooperation and collaboration on global issues. While cross-border trade has potential to drive economic development, some challenges must be addressed to unlock the benefits. These include barriers such as tariffs, non-tariff barriers, regulatory differences, and logistical constraints that hinders free flow of goods across borders (Mason, et al., 2020). By addressing the challenges associated with

international commerce and promoting policies that facilitate trade between nations, countries can harness the full potential of cross-border trade for sustainable economic growth.

Migration and Refugee Flows

Migration and refugee flows have been a significant and complex issue throughout history with millions of people around the world being forced to leave their homes due to conflict, persecution, economic hardship, or environmental factors (Hlovor, 2020). Cross border movements has profound social, economic, and political implications for both sending and receiving countries. One of the key drivers of migration and refugee flows is conflict. Wars and civil unrest force millions of people to flee their homes in search of safety and security. The Syrian civil war, for example, has resulted in one of the the largest refugee crises in recent history, with millions seeking refugehood worldwide. Conflicts in Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Myanmar have also resulted in large numbers of refugees (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023).

Persecution is another major driver of migration and refugee flows. Minority groups, political dissidents, and individuals facing religious or ethnic persecution end up leaving their countries in search of safety. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar is a striking example, with hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence and persecution in Rakhine State. Other factors that results in mass movents include poverty, lack of economic opportunities, and inequality push many people to leave their countries in search of better prospects elsewhere. Economic migrants face challenges such as exploitation, discrimination, and precarious living conditions as foreign workers.

Environmental factors such as natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation also drive migration. Rising sea levels, droughts, floods, and other environmental disasters are forcing many people to leave their homes in search of safer places to live with the impact of climate change expected increase in the coming years (Hlovor, 2020). Cross border migration has profound social implications for both sending and receiving countries. Migrants often face discrimination, xenophobia, and marginalization in host countries and struggle to access basic services such as healthcare, education, housing, and employment. Integration policies vary widely across countries but are crucial for

ensuring that migrants can fully participate in society (Goué & Kana, 2023).

Economically, migration can have both positive and negative impacts on sending and receiving countries as migrants often contribute to the economies of host countries through labor force participation, entrepreneurship, innovation, and cultural diversity (Hlovor, 2020). Migrants may also face exploitation or competition for jobs with local workers while politically migration can be contentious by fueling debates about national identity, sovereignty, security concerns, and border control policies. Populist politicians sometimes exploit anti-immigrant sentiments for political gain, resulting in restrictive and harmful immigration policies (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023).

Theoretical Framework - Securitization Theory

Securitization theory is a broader analytical lenses that examines how issues become security concerns. Proposed by Bary Buzan and Ole Waever, or the Copenhagen School (Sethi, 2015) argue that security is ultimately an outcome of a special social process “speech act” rather than an objective condition (Williams, 2003: 512-513). The theory avers that threats to security exist independent of someone representing it as such (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998: 24-26). The Copenhagen School insists there are choices involved in deciding which issues are to be characterised as security threats (Sethi, 2015: 1). Furthermore, the school of thought argues that security is subject to both social and political construction, stressing how security issues are defined, constructed, and articulated by various actors. Language, discourse and politics key tenets in espousing of what security entails. Additional emphasis is on the broadening of security beyond military security to encompass non-traditional security as well as regional dynamics in shaping security.

In terms of border management, securitization theory can be used to analyse how borders are framed as security threats and how such framing influences policy decisions and practices. In terms of research securitization theory can provide a useful lens for the examination of the African Union's approach to border management. The AU has identified border management as a key priority due to security challenges like transnational crime, terrorism, and irregular migration. The securitization theory is useful in the exploration of the framing of these issues as security threats to African Union and its member states.

Securitization theory can be useful in examining how security concerns have influenced the development of border management policies and practices within the African Union (Donko, et al., 2022) and potential implications of framing borders as security threats such as human rights violations, increased tensions between neighboring countries, or hindering regional integration efforts (Goué & Kana, 2023).

Governance Theory

Another theory that can provide a valuable theoretical framework in this study is Governance Theory. The theory focuses on the processes and structures through which authority is exercised and decisions are made in society including the importance of collaboration, participation, accountability, transparency, and effectiveness in governance systems (Goué & Kana, 2023).

This theory is critical in analysing how decisions are made regarding border policies, regulations, and practices by AU (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023). by shedding light on the roles and responsibilities of different actors involved in border management, including governments, international organizations, civil society groups, and local communities. The governance theory is also critical in the exploration of how well the AU's border management programme aligns with principles of good governance. This will help to assess whether decision-making processes are inclusive and participatory, whether there is transparency in border management practices, and accountability mechanisms are in place to ensure that decisions are implemented effectively.

Furthermore, governance theory can help researchers identify challenges and opportunities for improving border management within the AU, (Goué & Kana, 2023), (Houehounha & Moukala, 2023).

Discussion of Findings

i. AUBP success stories

In 2011, AUBP facilitated the maritime delimitation agreements between the Union of Comoros, the Republic of Mozambique, and the United Republic of Tanzania (AUPB, 2020) resulting in peaceful coexistence in interstate border governance amongst the three nations. As for Republic of Burkina Faso and the Republic of Mali, AUBP ensured the installation of a cross border health center shared between the villages of

Onarokov (Burkina Faso) and Wanian (Mali) in 2012 (AUPB, 2020). This development was preceded by the successful demarcation of the common boundary between the two states. By 2015, AUPB accompanied the Republic of Botswana and the Republic of Namibia in the delimitation of their common boundary, culminating in the signing of a boundary treaty in 2018 (AUPB, 2020). From 2016 to 2017, AUPB supported the Republic of Malawi and the Republic of Mozambique in the delimitation of Lake Malawi/Lake Nyasa.

ii. Enhanced Border Governance in Africa

According to AUPB, borders are an instrument to promote peace, security and stability, as zones of facilitation of regional integration and sustainable development (AUPB, 2020). AUPB has facilitated cross-border trade, including informal cross-border trade (AUPB, 2020), as a focal point for integration, prosperity and trade and cross-border relations and exchange (AUPB, 2020). The enhanced border governance in Africa is projected to carry a crucial role in the prevention and elimination of cross-border security threats such as terrorism, violent extremism; crimes such as transportation of illegal goods across.

iii. Limited Inter-State Cooperation

Although AUPB has provided the platform for cooperation amongst states in border management and control. This study established that there still remains some degree of limited cooperation between neighboring states in managing shared borders evidenced by the lack of joint border patrols and information sharing on cross-border crime. Enhancing inter-state cooperation can significantly improve border management by enabling countries to jointly address shared challenges. The African Union could play a crucial role in facilitating such cooperation. There is limited cooperation between neighboring states in managing their shared borders due to the lack of joint border patrols and information sharing on cross-border crime. Limited inter-state cooperation can also lead to gaps in border security, allowing for illicit activities such as smuggling and illegal immigration. This hinders the African Union's goal of promoting regional integration. This finding is consistent with existing literature that emphasizes the need for greater inter-state cooperation in border management albeit with more research still needed.

Ineffective Border Policies

The study found that many African countries have border policies that are not effectively implemented. This is due to lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate training of border officials. Ineffective border policies undermine efforts to secure borders and promote regional integration. Moreover, there is a need for the African Union to support member states in strengthening their border policy implementation.

Many African countries have border policies that are not effectively implemented due to lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate training of border officials. Ineffective border policies undermine efforts to secure borders and promote regional integration and contribute cross-border crime and irregular migration although there is still need for more research on strategies for improving policy implementation in this context.

Opportunities for Enhancing Border Management

Based on the findings of this study, the main opportunities for enhancing border management within the African Union are as follows;

Investing in Border Infrastructure

This could significantly enhance border security and control, reducing issues such as smuggling, illegal immigration, and cross-border crime including facilitation of trade and people movement, promoting economic development and regional integration.

Enhancing Inter-State Cooperation

There is a significant opportunity to enhance border management through improved inter-state cooperation through implementing joint border patrols, sharing information on cross-border crime, and harmonizing border control procedures. Enhanced inter-state cooperation could lead to more effective border security and control, helping to address shared challenges such as cross-border crime and

irregular migration. It could also promote regional integration, a key goal of the African Union.

i. Strengthening Border Policies

The study identified an opportunity to enhance border management through strengthening border policies. This could involve providing more resources for policy implementation, combating corruption, and improving the training of border officials. Strengthening border policies could enhance border security and control, reducing issues such as cross-border crime and irregular migration. It could also contribute to the African Union's goal of promoting regional integration.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of border management within the African Union. They highlight the critical role of infrastructure, inter-state cooperation, and effective border policies in managing borders effectively. For instance, the study found that countries with modern border surveillance technology and well-maintained border posts were better able to control cross-border crime and facilitate legal trade and migration. In the broader context of border management research, these findings underscore the complexity of border management in Africa. They reveal that border management is not just about securing borders, but also about facilitating trade, promoting regional integration, and preventing conflicts. This aligns with the growing recognition in the research field that border management is a multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive and integrated approach. For example, the study found that countries with effective border management systems were not only able to secure their borders but also promote cross-border trade and cooperation, contributing to regional integration and economic development.

The findings also highlight the importance of context-specific strategies in border management. They show that while some challenges and opportunities are common across different countries, others are unique to specific contexts. This underscores the need for tailored strategies that take into account the specific circumstances of each country. For instance, the study found that landlocked countries faced unique challenges in border management, such as dependence on neighbouring countries for access to ports, which required specific strategies to address.

In terms of contribution to the existing body of knowledge, this study adds to the limited research on border management within the African Union. It provides empirical evidence on the challenges and opportunities of border management in Africa, filling a significant gap in the literature. The findings also offer practical insights for policymakers and practitioners working in the field of border management in Africa. For example, the study's findings on the role of inter-state cooperation in effective border management could inform policy decisions and strategies at the African Union level.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the ongoing debate on the role of regional organizations in border management. It highlights the critical role of the African Union in facilitating inter-state cooperation, promoting good governance, and supporting member states in strengthening their border management capacities. For instance, the study found that the African Union's initiatives, such as the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), played a crucial role in promoting cooperation and capacity building among member states.

In essence this study not only enhances our understanding of border management within the African Union but also provides a foundation for future research in this area. It opens up new avenues for exploring how border management can contribute to peace, security, and development in Africa. For example, future research could explore the impact of effective border management on conflict prevention and resolution in border regions, or the role of border management in facilitating intra-African trade and economic integration.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following policy recommendations are proposed to enhance border management within the African Union:

- i. **Invest in Border Infrastructure:** Policymakers should prioritize investment in border infrastructure. This includes upgrading border posts, implementing modern technology for border surveillance, and improving road networks connecting border areas. Such investments could be funded through national budgets, regional funds, or international aid. Policymakers should also consider public-private partnerships as a potential funding mechanism.

- ii. **Promote Inter-State Cooperation:** The African Union should take the lead in promoting inter-state cooperation in border management. This could involve developing regional agreements or protocols that encourage joint border patrols, information sharing on cross-border crime, and harmonization of border control procedures. The African Union could also facilitate regular meetings or forums for member states to share best practices and coordinate their efforts.
- iii. **Strengthen Border Policies:** Policymakers should focus on strengthening border policies and their implementation. This could involve providing more resources for policy implementation, combating corruption, and improving the training of border officials. Policymakers should also consider developing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of border policies.
- iv. **Support Capacity Building:** The African Union should support capacity building in border management among its member states. This could involve providing technical assistance, training programs, and resources for border officials. The African Union could also partner with international organizations or institutions that have expertise in border management to provide such support.
- v. **Engage Local Communities:** Policymakers should engage local communities in border management. Local communities can provide valuable insights and support in managing borders, especially in remote or hard-to-reach areas. Policymakers could consider mechanisms for involving local communities in border patrols, reporting of cross-border crime, or conflict resolution.
- vi. **Promote Research and Innovation:** Policymakers should promote research and innovation in border management. This could involve funding research projects, promoting the use of innovative technologies in border management, or establishing partnerships with academic or research institutions.

Conclusion

This study has provided a comprehensive examination of the African Union's border management programme, highlighting both the significant strides made and the challenges that persist. The research has

underscored the complexity of border management in Africa, revealing it as a multifaceted issue that extends beyond securing borders to facilitating trade, promoting regional integration, and preventing conflicts. The findings of this study have identified key challenges in border management, including inadequate border infrastructure, limited inter-state cooperation, and ineffective border policies. However, these challenges also present opportunities for enhancing border management. By investing in border infrastructure, promoting inter-state cooperation, and strengthening border policies, there is significant potential to improve border management within the African Union. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on border management in Africa and offers practical insights for policymakers and practitioners. It also opens up new avenues for future research, exploring how effective border management can contribute to peace, security, and development in Africa. In essence, while challenges in border management persist, the African Union's ongoing efforts, coupled with the opportunities identified in this study, provide a promising path towards effective border management. As Africa continues to strive for regional integration and security, effective border management will undoubtedly play a crucial role in shaping the continent's future.

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