



Mise en oeuvre par



Central Africa: Support to the ECCAS Border Programme

Fostering sustainable border governance to prevent conflicts between African states and promote regional integration.

The Challenge

Porous or insufficiently delimited and demarcated borders between African states are often the starting point for violent conflicts, hampering regional integration, economic growth, development and sustainable peace. This is equally true for the Central African region, where most borders are not yet clearly defined, demarcated and governed. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) has addressed this potential for conflict by launching the ECCAS Border Programme in 2009. The programme is conceptually based on the "African Union Border Programme (AUBP)" and aims at promoting peace and security in the Central African subregion through structural conflict prevention at borders.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed additional security risks in border regions: often insufficient health care, combined with an increased risk of disease propagation due to the high number of transit carriers, puts border populations at particular risk. In addition, the closure of borders for individuals has led to negative economic consequences which increase the potential security risks from a lack of trust in state institutions or from social tensions. Since mid-2020, this security aspect of public health at borders is also taken into account by the project.



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| Project Title | Support to the ECCAS Border Programme (APF-CEEAC) |
| Commissioned by: | European Union (EU), German Federal Foreign Office |
| Lead executing agency | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH |
| Project region | Member States of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) |
| Lead institution | ECCAS Commission, Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security |
| Duration | 01/2020 – 12/2022 |
| Budget | € 13.25 million |

Our Approach

The project is embedded in the ECCAS Peace and Security Strategy, which puts emphasis on borders in its 'Peace and Security Roadmap' and is an integral part of the European Union's Support programme to the institutional reform and capacity building for ECCAS (PARCIC).

In addition, ECCAS Member States have declared cross-border cooperation and border clarification their clear priorities in the ECCAS Strategy 2021-2025. Cross-border cooperation in the context of disease



Photo on the left: Border crossing between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, 2018 © GIZ

Photo on the right: Border commission in Niger, 2017 © GIZ



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Photo on the left: Health worker at the border between Cameroon and Central African Republic, Garoua-Boulai, Cameroon, 2020 © GIZ

Photo on the right: Traditional authorities at a border post between Cameroon and Chad, 2020 © GIZ

control also features as pillar 4 of the ECCAS strategy against COVID-19.

The support of the EU and Germany aims at a multi-level approach, on the following areas of action

1. Delimitation and demarcation

The project supports the Member States in the bilateral verification, delimitation, demarcation and governance of their borders. In strict compliance with the "do no harm" principle, human rights standards, gender and civil society participation principles are applied in this process.

2. Cross-border cooperation

Furthermore, the project supports partner countries in the elaboration and implementation of cross-border cooperation and regional development agreements, in close cooperation with local institutions and civil society. In addition, the project promotes joint border governance by various actors, including border police, customs, local elected officials, women's and youth associations.

3. Capacity building

The sustainable success of the project is ensured through integrated implementation and capacity building at the local, regional and institutional (ECCAS) level.

The security aspect of public health at borders is addressed through sensitization and conflict prevention measures, as well as through the promotion of regional cooperation in the field of public health and prevention of disease outbreaks.

Impact and Outlook

Through its continental border program, the African Union has already taken numerous steps towards a sustainable peace architecture on the African continent. Knowledge management has been ensured through the publication of manuals on conflict management in border areas, on border demarcation and the establishment of border commissions. In 2020, the AUBP published the Continental Border Governance Strategy, which is considered a reference document.

The results already achieved in the implementation of the regional ECCAS Border Program can be summarised as follows:

- After years of inactivity, the national inter-ministerial border commission in Chad has been reactivated thanks to the project's support.
- Bilateral border negotiations between Cameroon-Chad and Cameroon-Gabon have been re-launched and joint missions were organised to the border areas in question.
- The roadmap for the elaboration of a regional border governance strategy for the ECCAS zone was adopted by the member states' border focal points.
- In the DRC and Rwanda, approximately 350,000 persons were sensitised about COVID-19 with a telephone quiz. In Cameroon, awareness campaigns in the border zones sensitised an additional 500 key persons.

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