



From Barriers to Bridges

Support to the African Union Border Programme (AUBP)



german
cooperation

DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

The Integrative Potential of Borders: An African-Wide Vision

Border management plays a key role in peace, security and integration. Where borders are clearly defined, agreed upon and accepted, they enable peaceful and profitable relations with neighbours and socio-economic growth. Where they are disputed, they can give rise to conflict, ruining lives and devastating countries. Africa's Heads of State and Government have adopted a number of measures to ensure that borders enhance the well-being of border communities and promote regional integration.

1st meeting of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Cairo, 1964

The OAU recognises the colonially established borders (AHG/Res 16 (I)). Most of these borders have not been clearly defined or fully demarcated.

Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa, 2002

Transitioning from the OAU to the African Union (AU), African states sign a Memorandum of Understanding that all African borders shall be delimited and demarcated by 2012.

8th AU Summit of Heads of State and Government, 2007

It is agreed upon that the AU Commission (AUC) shall focus on structural prevention of conflicts, and the AU Border Programme (AUBP) is created. In addition to delimitation and demarcation, the AUBP is envisioned as a tool for increased regional integration, cross-border cooperation and the development of institutional capacities.

Acknowledgement of the importance of border management for peace, stability and economic integration;
Reaffirmation of African States' commitment to implement the AUBP

Extension of original deadline for delimitation to 2017

Adoption of the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention), providing the first continental legal framework for cross-border cooperation, encouraging peaceful resolution of border disputes and accelerated integration.

3rd Conference of African Ministers in charge of Border Issues, May 2012

17th AU General Assembly, June 2012

23rd Assembly of Heads of State and Government, June 2014



German Support to the African Union Border Programme

The German Federal Government has a long history of cooperation in Africa and with the AU. Aiming at crisis prevention and capacity building, the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt; AA) supports the AU's efforts in border management. Since 2008, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH renders implementation assistance to the AUC on behalf of the AA. Reflecting the AUBP's core components, the GIZ support encompasses delimitation and demarcation, cross-border cooperation and capacity development on the continental, regional, national and local level. GIZ support to the AUBP is coordinated from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, home of the AU headquarters. However, with a decentralised project structure and its offices throughout Africa, GIZ supports the implementation of different AUBP projects with regional, national and local state and non-state actors in the respective countries, building on synergies and strengthening relationships. Cooperation with a multitude of partners on all levels has put borders into the spotlight, demonstrating the strength of German-African cooperation. The current project phase (2016-2018) is budgeted with € 10.4 million, resulting in a total budget of € 37.2 million from the AA since 2008. This third phase emphasises enhanced border management and aims to improve the collaboration among all stakeholders of the AUBP, focusing more strongly on the regional economic communities (RECs) and Member States level.





Delimitation and Demarcation

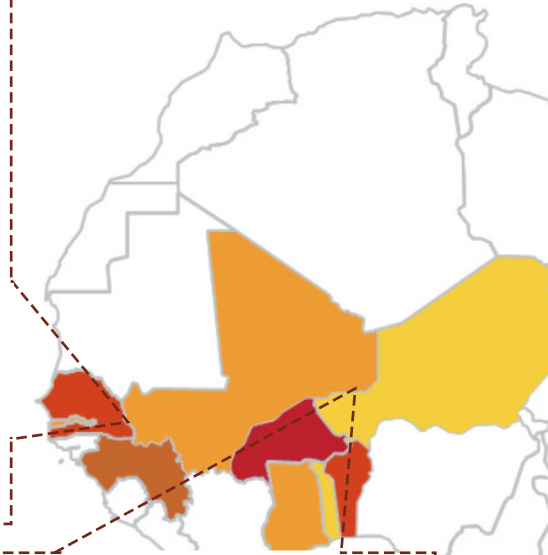
Border delimitation and demarcation are necessary preconditions for successful cross-border cooperation and integration, rather than a way of separating countries. Non-defined borders are a potential source of dispute between immediate neighbours and those further afield, especially when natural resources are involved.

Since sovereign nation states are the main players when agreeing on and fixing borders, GIZ support in this area is directed at the bilateral level. Initially, cooperation focused on land boundary delimitation and demarcation and has since been expanded to river, lake and maritime delimitation all over the continent. As a result, more than 2,500 km have been demarcated from 2008 to 2015 at borders between twelve countries. Support of maritime delimitation exercises resulted in the official signing of border agreements between the Seychelles, the Comoros, Tanzania and Mozambique.

Results in the Area of Delimitation and Demarcation

Mali and Senegal

In August 2010, GIZ and the AUBP conducted a successful technical appraisal mission of the Mali-Senegal border. In May 2014, the two countries signed an agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of their joint border; a local plan for cross-border development is currently being developed. The Project provides financial and technical support to the ongoing delimitation and demarcation process for the 362 km long border.



Mali and Burkina Faso

The delimitation process between these two countries was agreed upon following an armed conflict in the 1980s. However, by 2008 only 890 km of the 1,303 km border had been demarcated. Within the framework of the AUBP, the GIZ assisted in demarcating the remaining 413 km in the border regions. In January 2010, demarcation was finalised with the setting of the very last boundary beacon during an official celebration attended by ministers and officials from both countries as well as representatives from the respective border communities.

Rwanda and Uganda

The Project supports the ongoing delimitation and demarcation at the Rwanda-Uganda border. This includes financial and technical support, for example GPS trainings, sensitization activities, the provision of vehicles and the development of local agreements. The support also triggered activities by the two countries on local cooperation agreements with other neighbours.

 Financial and/or technical support by GIZ

A map of the African continent is shown, with several countries highlighted in different colors: Sudan and South Sudan in dark red, Mozambique, Tanzania, Malawi, and Zambia in orange, and Mozambique, Tanzania, and the Comoros in brown. Three callout boxes with dashed borders point to these regions, containing text about GIZ's support for boundary delimitation and maritime activities.

Sudan and South Sudan

In cooperation with the British Foreign Office, GIZ has supported the AUBP unit's work with the South-Sudan/Sudan Joint Boundary Commission concerning their preparations of delimitation, demarcation and conflict resolution.

Mozambique, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia

A total of 1959 km have been demarcated at borders between the four countries. GIZ assisted the process technically and financially. In the case of the Malawi-Mozambique border an extensive aerial survey was carried out in order to delimit the boundary. GIZ also supports the countries in the delimitation of their river boundaries and in tracking pertinent documents in colonial archives.

Maritime delimitation

Mozambique, Tanzania and the Comoros were the first countries to embark on maritime delimitation activities with the support of GIZ following an appraisal mission in July 2010. The maritime delimitation between Mozambique, Tanzania and the Comoros was completed with an official signing ceremony of the maritime agreements on 5 December 2011. This was followed by agreements on maritime boundaries between Tanzania, the Comoros and the Seychelles which were officially signed on 17 February 2012.

Cross-Border Cooperation

Cross-border cooperation extends beyond individual countries affecting entire regions. It is crucial for long-term peace and stability in the border area. Joint projects help strengthening the relationships between the population at the border and the two cooperating countries at large. The cooperation moreover creates and reinforces social and economic ties. In building trust and positive relationships, cross-border projects contribute significantly to conflict prevention. Germany is committed to supporting cross-border cooperation at the local, regional and continental level.

In the framework of the Project, this resulted in the development and adoption of the Niamey Convention on the continental level; in several cross-border projects between Malian and Burkinabe as well as Malian and Senegalese communities on the local level. The projects range from shared cereal storage facilities to the first cross-border health centre in Africa and the indication of routes for cattle crossing. Local conventions on the management of cross-border resources, stipulating cross-border programmes for local development and projects run jointly by communities on both sides of the borders, contribute to peace and integration.





Enhanced Border Management

Health emergencies such as the Ebola virus epidemic, migration patterns and threats from organised crime, human trafficking and terrorism highlight permeable borders and the need for enhanced border management. Progress has been made in several regions with respect to cross-border trade, free movement of people and goods, including the commencement of negotiations on the African Continental Free Trade Area in 2016. These developments underscore the relevance of border management that strikes a balance between control and free movement and strengthens the role of borders as a factor for integration and peace.

Reflecting upon these challenges and the experiences from the two previous project phases, the third German support phase for the AUBP places its focus on enhanced border management to increase the collaboration between stakeholders in cross-border cooperation, mobility and questions of security, particularly at the RECs and Member States level.

A continental strategy for enhanced border management is currently in the final stages of its development and covers issues such as migration, one-stop border posts, health and gender issues. After the adoption of this strategy at AU level, a development of similar strategies on the level of the RECs is envisioned. Further project activities in this area include the setup and reform of national bodies and institutions for border issues as well as the development of implementation roadmaps and awareness raising.

Institutional Development

Institutional capacity development is a key element of the GIZ's Support to the AUBP. The first two project phases aimed at enabling the AUC – and within it, the AUBP unit – to function as a coordinating platform and primary actor for fostering an open discussion on border issues free of taboos. The GIZ supported the development of the AUBP's strategic operation plans and provided support to several ministerial conferences. In successfully sensitising the AU Member States on border issues, the AUBP unit paved the way for future cooperation. Further, the Project aims at improving the integration capacities of the RECs, focusing – but not limiting – its collaboration in the third phase on the East African Community and the Economic Community of West African States. Activities include policy development, the development and implementation of regional border management strategies and the promotion of regional border consultative committees. Also, the Project aims at strengthening the role of RECs in resolving border disputes. Overall, the clear definition of responsibilities and roles between the AUC, RECs and Member States in border management will support the AUBP in reaching its objective.

To ensure the effective implementation of the programme in new partner countries and to ensure the wide, sustainable availability of knowledge gained throughout the Project, several guidebooks have been developed. The Project





also connected research institutions with border commissions in order to enhance their capacities and develop studies and training modules. For example, in order to support conflict-sensitivity in boundary-related activities, the GIZ developed together with an expert group a “toolkit on sensitisation” which will be widely shared to inspire dialogue around demarcation and border management. The dissemination of good practices will strengthen the AUBP unit’s role in successfully providing support to Member States.

Besides, the Project organised needs-based trainings for partner institutions, such as seminars on river boundary delimitation that allowed the border commissions to advance in their joint delimitation projects. On the local level, the Project conducted trainings on health issues and the prevention of epidemics in the context of border management, amongst others.

Outlook

After the two phases have successfully contributed to eliminating the taboos associated with border issues, the prime concern now is to meet the technical and financial support needs by government authorities, RECs, and the AUC. Priorities include capacity development on all levels, the development of border-related policies and the collaboration and coordination between the different actors. Germany via the GIZ continues to support the AUBP: in collaboration with the coordination unit within the AUC and the RECs and through its direct support to Member States, in order to foster a continental approach to border issues. This support promotes a comprehensive understanding of the connection between AUBP components and its ultimate goal of conflict prevention and regional integration.



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