AIPGG Journal of Humanities and Peace Studies Vol. 6. NO 1. 2025
ISSN: 2756-5831 (ONLINE)

Ungoverned Spaces and Cross-border Security Management: Focus on Nigeria-Niger Border Relations

Sunday Akin Dare
Department of International Studies
Baze University, Abuja

Abstract

This paper assessed the impact of ungoverned spaces on cross-border security management between Nigeria and the Niger Republic. There has been a raging debate on the causes and enablers of insecurity along the border belt regions in the southern Libya corridor. Most scholars in this debate have dwelton governments' reactions, especially in the use of force, while few have highlighted the importance of proactiveness. Studies have found ungoverned spaces as fertile ground for criminal networks to operate. More so, the vast land spaces along the borderline that are mostly lacking in governance have come under severe scrutiny. The paper explores the relationship between ungoverned border communities and cross-border security challenges. It also examines the efforts of Nigeria and Niger through the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation (NNJCC) in demarginalizing residents in their border communities. The study was anchored on the theories of ungoverned spaces and securitization, while a combination of quantitative and qualitative research designs was used to gather and analyse data. The study found that there is a strong relationship between ungoverned spaces and security challenges along the communities in Nigeria-Niger borderlines, and that there is currently no bilateral agreement to address the issues of ungoverned spaces in these border communities. Hence, the study recommended, among other things, that the governments of Nigeria and the Niger Republic should set aside their political differences and enter into an agreement that will condition both countries to make sizeable investments in border communities.

Keywords: *Ungoverned Spaces, Banditry, Border Communities, Borderlines, Enabler, Securitization*

Introduction

Globally, many countries have a long history of poor management of border communities. This has exacerbated security risks posing enormous danger to national and international peace. The escalating rise in the criminal activities of violent non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, human, drug, and arms/weapons smugglers, etc., can be tied to the vulnerability of these communities.[1] Border communities within the context of the Sahel and Lake

[1] UNDP 'Border Management and Border Communities in the Sahel'. *UNDP Border Management*

ISSN: 2756-5831 (ONLINE)

Chad basin region countries are mostly perceived as areas or spaces of limited state presence, hence presenting easily accessible entry points through which external security challenges are facilitated by non-state actors. The vast stretch of this region, especially its bush parts, forest areas, and large border expanse, highlights the peculiar risk facing the nation, including vulnerability to external threats.

Nigeria, mostly bordered by the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin countries such as Chad, Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, has, over the years, witnessed daring cross-border management challenges perpetrated by violent non-state actors such as criminal cattle herders, armed bandits, religious extremists, and terrorists. These attacks frequently emanated from border areas or spaces without formal state authority and presence, hence lacking in government reach, enforcement capabilities, and control.[2] The lack of state authority and control in these spaces poses a significant security risk. Drug and human trafficking, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, money laundering, illegal cross-border migration, and smuggling of illicit-contraband goods are criminal activities that also fester as a direct result.[3]

Accordingly, the gap in border community development, control, and regulation is symbolised by increasing incidents of banditry, kidnapping, militancy, and communal conflicts, the effects of which are now experienced far beyond the borders within urban and rural communities.[4] Terrorism, today, has been adjudged the most fundamental cause of insecurity in Nigeria, as well as in Chad, Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, and this is so because the ungoverned spaces which demarcate these countries as borders and border communities exhibit vulnerability, hence exploited by trans-border criminals and terrorists.[5] This paper situates border communities as risk-prone ungoverned spaces through which armed and criminal non-state actors infiltrate and attempt to compromise the country's national security. Securing these border communities is an imperative if national security is to be effectively enforced in the face of the nation's growing security challenges. Averting or mitigating these challenges falls under the purview of the security regime existing between neighbouring nations. In the case of Nigeria and Niger, the 1,608-kilometer-long borderline has been, over the years, proven difficult to manage, thereby yielding a series of wanton attacks on civilians across both divides. If the historical complexities in the security and management of border communities have

---

and Communities Assessment Project on Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali and Niger, 2016.

[2]IOM Border Security: Communities' Integration and Perception. Diffa and Zinder Regions. Geneva: International Organisation for Migration, 2017.

[3] Mitchell, K . ''Ungoverned Space: Global Security and the Geopolitics of Broken Windows''. *Political Geography*, 2010, 29 (2). 289 – 297

[4] Taylor, A.J. 'Thoughts on the Nature and Consequences of Ungoverned Spaces'. The SAIS Review of International Affairs. Vol. 36 (1), 2016.

[5] Bernard, S.H, &Daful, M.G (2021). Assessment of the Impact of Ungoverned Spaces on Insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria. *Ghana Journal of Geography*. Vol 13(2) 31-65

ISSN: 2756-5831 (ONLINE)

resulted in national security challenges, then the recent diplomatic row between Nigeria and Niger since July 2023 has even exacerbated them. Therefore, the border communities remain largely ungoverned, and insecurity continues unabated.What have both nations done in this regard?

Beyond the regimes of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU), the Nigeria Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation (NNJCC) was created in 1973 to, among other things, provide institutional anchorage and political support for regional initiatives between the two countries. According to Okechukwu,the workings of the NNJCC go beyond the framework of simple economic relations; its integrity remains concrete in the promotion of joint development of the two countries by implementing local projects, designing financing strategies, and accompanying political decisions in order to facilitate their implementation.[6] The NNJCC's achievements are closely linked to its mission of developing bilateral and cross-border trade in the following vital sectors: transport, telecommunications network, trade, environment, management and promotion of livestock breeding, joint rural programmes, energy, industry, health, management of aquatic resources, combating cultural enemies, security, and border management, among others.[7] It is against this background that the paper interrogates the place of NNJCC in the face of rising attacks on border communities, especially those that are largely starved of governance.

Conceptual Clarifications

Ungoverned Spaces

The concept of ungoverned spaces is defined as spaces that are ineffectively governed by the state. Taylor sees ungoverned spaces as the inability of the state to exert its power as the authoritative allocator of value, possessor of the monopoly of legitimate coercion, and the provider of the collective good.[8] Ungoverned spaces are seen as political, social, and economic territories functioning within the state where the legitimate authorities are unwilling or incapable of exerting"effective sovereignty". The political economy of ungoverned spaces maintains that integrating such spaces is of little value and may be too expensive or difficult to govern. For instance, it has not been easy for the government of Nigeria to govern its forests. Though the forests have long existed, in recent times, some of them have been invaded and controlled by terrorist groups.

[6]Okechukwu, M. U. Illegal mining and rural banditry in north west Nigeria: Responses, success and challenges. Enhancing Africa's Response to Transnational Organized Crime, 2018, 19, 1-11.

[7]Okechukwu, M. U. Illegal mining and rural banditry in north west Nigeria, 34.

[8] Taylor, A. J. "Thoughts on the nature and consequences of ungoverned spaces". *The SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 36(1), 2016, 5-15.

Some have argued that, contrary to the widely accepted generalisation on the absence of governance in these areas, political orders in these areas have not disappeared; rather, it is exerted by non-state actors like warlords, religious or traditional leaders, rebel organisations, and community leaders. Ungoverned spaces, therefore, exist in areas where the legitimate government has willingly or unwillingly surrendered its organisations and community leaders.[9]

The rainforests in the Niger-Delta host illegal oil bunkers, pipeline vandals, thieves, and other insurgent groups involved in the struggle for control of oil resources. Forests in the Western and Eastern parts of the country have been havens to armed robbers, kidnappers, ritualists, smugglers, and robbers. In the North, the Sambisa Forest in the Northeast has been the house of the Boko Haram extremist group for more than a decade. The Gundami forest in Zamfara, Kagoro-Nindam forest in Kaduna, and Kuyanbana forest, where Niger, Kaduna, and Kebbi states, among others, can be accessed, have accommodated the cattle rustlers, kidnappers, cattle rustlers, and armed bandits[10]. The non-state actors, like bandits and Boko Haram extremists, among others, make use of these spaces as havens. They mobilise forces from these spaces and launch out to the governed spaces to claim more spaces.

Banditry and Ungoverned Spaces in Nigeria

Banditry, generally, is a loosely defined concept. Banditry in Nigeria involves armed violence aimed at human life and property by criminal actors (Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014). Bandits in Nigeria engage in criminality such as looting of villages, kidnapping for ransom, extortion of local communities, armed robbery, rustling, and related armed violence. Banditry activities have been prevalent in the northwest zone of the country, but have grown extensively in Zamfara state in the last decade.[11] Extant literature has documented the different perspectives on the reasons for the rise of criminality and banditry in Nigeria. The first school of thought argues that politicians armed and sponsored youths in the 2011 election and failed to recover the arms given to them in the preselection period. The politicians abandoned the thugs in the post-election era, who then went into cattle stealing, robbery, drug abuse, and later transformed into armed gangs terrorising villages.[12] The position is strengthened by the position of Rafai that the first set of motorbikes used for attacks for banditry activities mist especially

[9]Lake, D. A.. "Hobbesian hierarchy: the political economy of political organization." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 2009 263-283.
[10]Olaniyan, A., &Yahaya, A.. Cows, bandits, and violent conflicts: Understanding cattle rustling in Northern Nigeria. *Africa Spectrum*, 51(3), 2016, 93-105.
[11]Gadzama, I. U., Saddiq, N. M., Oduehie, T. C., &Dariya, C. J. Appraisal of rural banditry in" Kamuku" forest in BirninGwari local government area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology*, 18(1), 2018, 42-49.
[12]Gadzama, I. U., Saddiq, N. M., Oduehie, T. C., &Dariya, C. J. "Appraisal of rural banditry in" Kamuku forest in BirninGwari local government area of Kaduna State, Nigeria." *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology*, 18(1), 2018, 42-49.

in Zamfara state, are donated by politicians in the build-up to the 2011 elections.[13]

Another school of thought argues that banditry springs up as a response to injustice against the agro-pastoral communities. In line with this position is the narrative that bandits started from the mercenary fighters who fought and defended the herders in their confrontation with the farmers. Rufai argues that at the formative stage, the goal of the group was to ensure the oneness of the herders in their quest for social justice.[14] This perspective holds that the mercenary fighters later turned to criminals who started with cattle rustling and later turned to kidnappers.

These narratives are important to the understanding of the development of banditry. However, they may not be right because arguments exist in the literature that the colonial government in the pre-independent era also responded to the menace of rural banditry by deploying policemen to the strategic locations across Sokoto province to curb the act and other cross-border crimes in the province.[15] Whatever the sources of banditry are. They have become a major security concern in Nigeria, with the northwest geopolitical zone as the epicentre.

Thousands have died in the northwest zone as a result of banditry. In recent years, the situation has degenerated with gangs kidnapping for ransom, laying ambush for travellers, and looting of villages. Villagers across the states in the zone claim they pay tax to the bandits to avoid violence occurrence (Ladan and Matawalli, 2021). The report of a committee set up by the Zamfara state Government to investigate the activities of the bandits claimed that between 2011 and 2019 report that about 6,319 people died: 4000 were kidnapped; N2, 805,049,748 ransom was paid; 6,483 widows and 25,000 orphans were left behind by the victims in the period. The report also shows that more than 21,000 cows, 141,000 sheep, and about 20,000 donkeys and camels were rustled. More than 3587 houses and 1400 motorcycles, and vehicles were burnt.[16]
Virtually all the states in the northwest are affected by banditry. In Sokoto state, the security situation has been alarming, especially in the 8 local governments-

[13]Rufai, M. A. "I am a bandit": A decade of research in Zamfara State bandit's den. 15th university lecture series delivered in UsmanuDanfodiyo University Sokoto, 13-15.
[14]Rufai, M. A. "I am a bandit", 12.
[15]Garba, D. Armed banditry in North West borderlands and the need for deeper Nigeria-Niger Republic bilateral security relations. *Journal of Conflict Resolution and Social Issues*, 2(1),
2021, 35-49
[16]Adegboruwa, E. (2021). Democracy in Peril. Retrieved on 2/8/2022 from https://guardian.ng/opinion/democracy-in-peril/Ailemen (2018). Armed forces extend operation
SharanDaji to Niger Republic. Retrieved on 2/11/2021 from https://businessday.ng/uncategorized/article/army-extend-operation-sharan-daji-niger-republic/

Sabon Birni, Gada, Isa, Wuni, Goronyo, Illela, Rabah, and Gwabawa, as a result of banditry. In Kaduna state, bandits have been terrorising BirninGwari, Chikun, Kajuru, and Igabi local governments. Bandit kingpins are holding sway in Katsina local government- Jibia, Safana, Batsari, Danmusa, Kankara, Dutsin Ma-Faskari, Kurfi, Dandume, and Sabuwa. In Kebbi state, Fakai, Sakaba, and Danko-Wasagu local government areas have been affected. In all these areas affected, each bandit's leaders maintain a territory and carry out their operation in many situations unchallenged. Villagers pay them to have access to their farms, graze their animals, and take their farm produce to local markets.[17]

The bandits' leaders in the states have carved out areas of operation for themselves. They ransack villages, block highways, massacre civilians, and challenge the security apparatus of the state. The available data in the literature suggests that they are known by the citizens, security agencies, and state government, as some of them have participated in negotiations with the authorities. As it has been noted, ungoverned spaces are areas that lie beyond the coverage of the government and pose a threat to stability and security. Ungoverned spaces are often seen as fertile grounds where terrorist groups thrive and incubate. Evidence of such is manifested in the several bandit hideouts in Kwiambana, Ajjah, Birnin Kogo, Rugu, Shiroro, Borgu forests that span across Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, Niger states, and some parts of the Niger Republic, among others, that serve as hideouts for the bandits. This argument is corroborated by the view of Olaniyan and Yahaya that most of the forest reserves are out of the reach of the security forces. The forest reserves offer a criminal hideout from the security forces.

In addition, Clunan and Harold give an inclusive argument on ungoverned spaces;they argue that the concept transcends the presence of the government in an area. It involves the presence of the informal economies, criminals, and dominance of traditional nomadic tribes, the presence of the primordial tribal hierarchies, customs, and religious institutions. In this view, governance revolves outside the established authority of the state. For instance, the constitution of the state placed the natural resources in the hands of the government; there are indications that the informal gold economy in the state gives rise to insecurity in the region. While some argue that the bandits are working with the artisanal miners who exchange the illegal gold for weapons at the borders, others argue that the wave of banditry in the region is said to be an effect of the dominance of warlords struggling for a piece of the pie.[18] The report of a committee set up by the Governor of Zamfara state indicted five emirs and 33 heads of districts in the state. Also, Muslim clerics like Sheik Gumi have been supporting and negotiating

[17]Mohammed, I. A., Liman, A., &Babangida, M. Investigation: The 39 LGAs controlled by bandit
kingpins in 6 states. Retrieved 2/8/2024 from
https://21stcenturychronicle.com/investigation-the-39-lgas-control-by-bandit-kingpins-in-6-states/
[18]Okoli, A. C., &Abubakar, M. 'Crimelordism': Understanding a New Phenomenon in Armed Banditry in Nigeria. Journal of Asian and African Studies, 56(7), 2021, 1724-1737.

with the bandits who have committed many atrocities. These revelations, coupled with the findings of Rofai (2021), show the existence of state and non-state actors operating in the same territory.

Methodology

This paper was approached from a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. It adopted both the attributes of survey and descriptive research design. To achieve the first objective, the researcher uses data from the database of the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED). ACLED is a project that collects information on the dates, actors, locations, fatalities, and types of all reported violence and protests around the world. Specifically, the researcher collected data on violence against civilians between 2020 and 2024 in 20 border communities, which have a large expanse of ungoverned land spaces, 10 in Nigeria and 10 in Niger. These were purposively selected from the Dosso, Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder, and Diffa regions of Niger and the Nigerian States of Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, and Jigawa. Communities were selected from each region and state, respectively. The number of attacks on civilians between 2020 and 2024 was tested using Spearman's rank correlation to determine whether there is a relationship between ungoverned spaces and cross-border crime within the borderline of Nigeria and Niger.

Table 1: Aggregation of attacks on Civilians in ungoverned border communities across Nigeria and Niger borderline between 2020 and 2024

Country- Niger Republic			Country- Nigeria		
Region	**Community**	**Number of attacks**	**State**	**Community**	**Number of attacks**
Diffa	1. Bosso 2. Diffa 3. Maine soroa	16 13 4	**Katsina**	1. Zango 2. Baure 3. Jibia	189 152 48
Zinder	4. Magaria	19	**Jigawa**	4. Maigatari	24
Tahoua	5. Bangui 6. Tsernaoua 7. Birni-N'Konni	12 23 9	**Kebbi**	5. Kwalaye 6. Maiyama 7. Nageda	209 438 321
Dosso	8. Doumega 9. Sabonbirni	21 29	**Zamfara**	8. Rafintsaka 9. Sabonbirni	684 892
Maradi	10. GuidanRoumdji	35	**Sokoto**	10. Tunugara	735

Source: ACLED 2025

Furthermore, a face-to-face interview was conducted with the Executive Secretary of Nigeria's Border Communities Development Agency, and a telephone interview with the Head of Le Commission Nationale des Frontiers

du Niger, a department under the Nigerien Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The interview was to elicit information on how the Nigerian and the Nigerien governments have taken advantage of the NNJCC to promote the presence of government in these vulnerable border communities.

Findings and Discussion

For the first specific objective of this paper. The following Spearman's Rank Correlation Formula was applied not only to determine whether there is a relationship between ungoverned spaces and the security of borderline communities but also to determine the strength of these relationships. The Spearman's rank correlation formula applies

$$1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)} = \rho$$

Where;

ρ = Spearman's rank correlation coefficient
d = difference between the two ranks of each observation
n = number of observations.

The decision rule for Spearman's rank correlation states that a perfect positive monotonic relationship should result in +1; conversely, a perfect negative relationship will result in in-1. However, in interpreting the strength of the relationships, Spearman's rank correlation coefficients are ranked as follows;

0 to 0.20: Negligible
0.21 to 0.40: Weak
0.41 to 0.60: Moderate
0.61 to 0.80: Strong
0.81- 1.00: Very Strong.

Table 2: Spearman ranking for attacks on Civilians in ungoverned border communities across Nigeria and Niger borderline between 2020 and 2024

S/N	Attacks in Niger X	Attacks in Nigeria Y	RX	RY	D	D^2
1.	16	189	6	7	-1	1
2.	13	152	7	8	-1	1
3.	4	48	10	9	1	1
4.	19	24	5	10	-5	25
5.	12	209	8	6	2	4
6.	23	438	3	4	-1	1
7.	9	321	9	5	4	16
8.	21	684	4	3	1	1
9.	29	892	2	1	1	1

10.	35	735	1	2	-1	1
						52

$$1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)} = \rho$$

$$1 - \frac{6 * 52}{10(100-1)} = \rho$$

$$1 - \frac{312}{990} = \rho$$

$\rho = 0.68$

This means that there is a strong relationship between ungoverned spaces and security challenges along the communities in Nigeria-Niger borderlines. This implies that due to the inactivity of both the Nigerian and the Nigerien governments on the border isa strong relationship between the escalation of violence against citizens in these communities.

Having established the relationship between ungoverned spaces and border management problems, it suffices to interrogate the efforts of the Nigerian and Nigerien governments in accommodating these frontier communities into the national mainstream. This interrogation assumes the regime of securitization. The existence of a bilateral agreement- NNJCC, which goes beyond ECOWAS and the AU, portends hopes for border communities; however, the reality shows stark differences. According to the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria's Border Communities Development Agency, the reason for the poor presence of the government in most border communities is not unconnected to the problems of coordinating government activities at those extremes. According to him:

> It is true that the government has not done enough to cater to border communities in terms of institutions, but the Nigerian government has constantly catered to the social needs of the people in these areas. For instance, the agency is constantly in touch with residents on boundaries and borderlines who feel marginalized by the government, to restore their hopes in the government. Although everyone should appreciate the position of the government because if ever there are government institutions in these areas, they will not only be patronized by well-meaning Nigerians, rather it will be used to serve foreign nationals in the region.[19]

[19] Bernard, S.H, &Daful, M.G. Assessment of the Impact of Ungoverned Spaces on Insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria. *Ghana Journal of Geography*. Vol 13(2) 2021 31-65

On his part, the Head of Le Commission Nationale des Frontiers du Niger does not fully share the sentiments of his Nigerian counterpart. He maintained that the NNJCC provided a platform for a more elaborate collaboration than mere concern for borderline communities. Speaking through an interpreter, he said,

> The government of Niger must not build institutions in border communities to prove that it is respecting the NNJCC agreement. All policies and programmes of our government are for all Nigeriens, no matter their place of residence. When there are infractions anywhere, be it on the border, we respond to them, so I can't say that there is an absence of government anywhere in Niger. Maybe we can say that in recent times there have been some security challenges, but insecurity is a global phenomenon. You can see that, despite our political differences, we are still collaborating with our sub-regional neighbours to stem the tide of insecurity. We try to tackle insecurity in every part of Niger without considering the area in focus. As part of our concerns towards the frontiers, we also work with local intelligence, so there is no area of Niger that is ungoverned.[20]

Perhaps the positions of both Executive Secretary of the Nigeria's Border Communities Development Agency and the Head of Le Commission Nationale des Frontiers du Niger have certain implications. First, they were both playing down the effects of ungoverned border communities on insecurity in the management of these borders. This ultimately implies that there is currently no joint effort to tackle insecurity in border communities through addressing the problem of ungoverned spaces. In fact, their positions reveal that ungoverned spaces have not been characterised as a key factor aiding insecurity along the borderlines. In addition, these responses reveal that the criminal elements operating in these ungoverned spaces are emboldened by the fact that no existing bilateral approach exists to address the vulnerability of ungoverned spaces in the border regions. Above all, there is no end in sight for criminal elements operating in ungoverned border communities, not only because of the absence of governance in these areas, but also because the limitrophe nations have not identified it as a threat to borderline security.

Conceivably, the idea of bringing government closer to the people is the whole essence of local government. This discussion will be incomplete without examining the role of local government, but the place of local government is limited by several factors. First, local governments in Nigeria have no constitutional powers to engage with international governments without the

[20]Garba, D.. Armed banditry in North West borderlands and the need for deeper Nigeria-Niger Republic bilateral security relations. *Journal of Conflict Resolution and Social Issues*, 2(1), 2021, 35-49

Federal Government. Secondly, the challenges of local government's capacity to provide adequate security in all the local government areas in Nigeria have been extensively studied. The ongoing debates about state police in Nigeria's National Assembly are a step in the right direction if they eventually come to fruition, because the state can gain intelligenceon the sociology of borderline communities with more security agents in the ranks of the state. However, the onus is on the federal government to coordinate the efforts of other levels in order to ensure that borderline communities are integrated into the mainstream of national life.

Conclusion

The literature on insecurity in the Sahel areas of sub-Saharan Africa is awash with studies on border porosity, weak institutional mechanisms, and the impact of external influence. Quite a few studies have paid attention to ungoverned spaces, but none of them has empirically established how ungoverned spaces relate to border management challenges. This paper has applied a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches to examine the empirical relevance of ungoverned spaces and insecurity along the borderlines of Nigeria and the Niger Republic. The paper found that there is a strong relationship between ungoverned spaces and attacks on civilians in border communities, both in Nigeria and the Niger Republic. The study also found that there is currently no bilateral agreement to address the issues of ungoverned spaces in these border communities. These findings, by implication, led this paper to conclude that the absence of governance in most border communities is a source of border management challenges between Nigeria and the Niger Republic.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. The Nigerian and Nigerien governments across federal, state, and local government levels, where applicable, should strategically locate government institutions within border communities.
2. In order to promote the presence of government in most border communities, the Nigerian government should expedite action in creating state police, which will enable frontier states to spread intelligence networks to areas previously out of coverage.
3. The federal government of Nigeria should expand the agro-rangers initiatives to also improve the presence of government, especially members of the intelligence community, in hitherto ungoverned border communities.
4. In order to promote cross-border policies that will promote the presence of governance in border communities, the governments of Nigeria and the Niger Republic should set aside their political differences and enter into an agreement that will condition both countries to make sizeable investments in border communities.