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Rethinking Territorial-Border Security in The Mano River Region: Experiences of The Ebola Impacts On Peace and Development

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Abstract

The Mano River Region, which includes Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire have experienced decades of conflict and instability. Due to its underdeveloped healthcare infrastructure and porous borders, this region is particularly susceptible to infectious illness outbreaks. This paper explores the Ebola outbreak in post-conflict era as a captivating case study, illuminating the complex interplay between health, cross-border security, and peace. The Ebola outbreak that ravaged West Africa between 2014 and 2016 showed the numerous difficulties the Mano River Region has faced. It emphasises the value of cross-border cooperation, prompt information exchange, and a strong healthcare system in responding to such emergencies which undermine peace and development in the region. This event acted as a stimulus for improving regional and international preparedness and response systems. This study examines the takeaways from the Mano River Region's response to the Ebola outbreak, placing particular emphasis on the value of cross-border collaboration, community participation, and sustainable healthcare capacity building. Understanding these processes are essential to enhancing health security not only in this region but also in other fragile and conflict-affected environments around the world.

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Key Words: Cross-Border, Security, Health, Ebola, Mano River, Peace, and Development.

1. Introduction.

West Africa's borders present a significant challenge for effective border protection. The unrestricted movement of people between nations has contributed to the spread of the Ebola in the sub-region. The Mano River Region countries which include Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Cote Ivoire have been affected by violent conflict in the past and the Region's health systems are extremely underdeveloped and unable to effectively stop the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease. According to Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the American director of the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention:

*"Many of the health systems in the affected countries in West Africa were weak prior to the Ebola outbreak, and do not reach into rural areas effectively. Health care workers are often too few and not reliably present at facilities, and those facilities have limited capacity. Poor infection control in routine health care in these three countries, along with traditions such as public funerals and preparing bodies of the deceased for burial, make efforts to contain the illness more difficult. Furthermore, the porous land borders among countries and remoteness of many villages have greatly complicated control efforts."*¹

¹ Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, USA.

The Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan saw the first cases of the Ebola virus disease in 1976. When two unconnected Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever (EHF) epidemics occurred 800 kilometres apart in Southern Sudan and Northern Zaire (Yambuku), the illness was identified (Nzara). Thereafter it was given the name "Ebola" in honour of a nearby tiny river that served as the epicentre of the 1976 Ebola Virus outbreak. In ten nations in Central and West Africa, there have been a total of twenty-four outbreaks throughout the past few decades. More than ten thousand people have died because of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, which is the greatest recorded case of the disease in history and has afflicted many people in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The inaugural "One Africa, One Health" conference hosted by the Southern African Centre for Infectious Disease Surveillance (SACIDS) offered a thorough examination of the many species linked to the Ebola Virus. It was discovered that the five genetically unique members of the "Filoviridae family," namely the Zaire Ebolavirus (ZEBOV), Sudan Ebolavirus (SEBOV), Cote D'Ivoire Ebola Virus (CEBOV), Bundibugyo Ebola Virus (BEBOV), and Reston Ebola Virus, are the main causes of Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever (EHF) (REBOV). With a patient fatality rate as high as 90%, the Ebola haemorrhagic fever is known to cause significant human epidemics.

The World Health Organization (WHO) released its first announcement reporting a new Ebola epidemic in West Africa on March 23, 2014. This outbreak started in December 2013 in the Republic of Guinea in a forest named Gueckedou and

extended 80 kilometres to Macenta in the country's eastern region. A few months after the Ebola virus was discovered in Guinea, the disease continued to spread to nearby nations, with the first Ebola cases being reported in Liberia and Sierra Leone respectively.

The table below shows Ebola fatalities in the Mano River Region between 2014 and 2016:

Table 1. Mano River Union Countries with widespread transmission during the Ebola Crisis.

Country	Years	Total Cases (Probable, Suspected, Confirmed)	Total Confirmed Cases	Total Deaths
Guinea	2014 - 2016	3, 814	3,358	2,544
Liberia	2014 - 2016	10,678	3,163	4,810
Sierra Leone	2014 - 2016	14,124	8,706	3,956
Total	-	14, 630	15, 227	11, 310

Source: Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)²

² Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

1.1 Ebola virus disease causes and spread:

The handling of contaminated animal corpses is how the Ebola Virus Disease is spread among human populations. As a result, an infected woodland animal served as the first point of transmission. A prevalent habitat for the Ebola Virus epidemic is Africa's tropical forests, which support a diverse range of animal life. Moreover, human to animal transmission typically happens when individuals come into touch with the tissues and body fluids of sick animals, particularly with diseased non-human primates such as infected gorillas, chimpanzees, antelope, or bats. Human-to-human transmission can also happen when a person comes into direct touch with an infected individual's body fluids, such as blood, saliva, or excretions.

1.2 Border Security in the Mano River Region:

The Mano River Region still has a very difficult period regulating its borders in a way that protects its territory and sovereignty. Under the guise of regional integration, unrestricted migration from one nation to another without adequate security measures in place has harmed the security and prosperity of that region. Apart from the fact that border agencies frequently lack the necessary tools, funding, and training to perform their duties successfully, border security measures are not consistently included in national security policies. Also, the Mano River Region national governments' disregard for maintaining strong border security has significantly contributed to the occurrence of security risks including cross-border crime, illness, and instability in the area.

Particularly in comparison to other parts of the world, African border security measures are unique.

Map. 1 geographic arrangement of the countries within the Mano River Region: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Cote d'Ivoire.³



As stated in the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes' 2010 Annual Reports,

“West Africa is a paradise for organized crime, offering ideal conditions for trafficking contraband: a strategic location, ‘porous

³ Map of the geographic arrangement of the countries within the Mano River Region: Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia (ACCORD). A total of 28,616 cases of Ebola Virus Disease cases and 11,310 deaths were reported in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

*borders', weak governance, widespread poverty and extensive corruption."*⁴

1.3 Cross-Border Security and its implications on Peace and Development

The absence of efficient border control mechanisms is one of the biggest issues now confronting the Mano River Region of West Africa. The region has been negatively impacted by migration, undermining opportunities for growth and security. Because there is no efficient system in place to adequately monitor movements and illicit activities across these borders, the porous borders continue to fuel transnational organized crime and instability in the subregion. Major cross-border issues were highlighted in the 2004 United Nations Secretary General's Report on how to handle sub-regional and border challenges in West Africa, which stressed the continuous deterioration of the security sectors and national institutions of West African nations. Effective border control mechanisms have been severely weakened by the ongoing rise in cross-border trade and migration of individuals from West African nations in quest of better economic prospects elsewhere. In 2014, the Ebola Virus Disease spread due in part to migration from one nation to another in the Mano River Region without efficient border control mechanisms.

Although a few nations in West Africa have acknowledged the importance of efficient border control measures, few have

⁴ United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes' 2010 Annual Report.

border control security plans that they have also failed to put into practice. Significant security problems, such as infections and cross-border crimes, have resulted from national governments in West Africa's inability to regulate their borders properly. The World Health Organization (WHO) published a report on the first Ebola case that occurred in the Republic of Guinea in West Africa in December 2013 on March 23, 2014. The report states that Guinea was the first nation in the West African sub-region to report cases of the Ebola virus disease. Nonetheless, the illness persisted in spreading to nearby nations, first to Liberia and later to Sierra Leone. The United Nations' report (2014) states that the Ebola Virus Disease in the Mano River Region constitute a danger to global peace and security after evaluating the trend and nature of the epidemic. Amide also claims that Ebola virus Disease in the Mano River region is exceptional due to the following reasons:

First, this outbreak's death toll exceeds that of the previous 25 Ebola epidemics put together. Second, the West African Ebola outbreak is substantially different from earlier ones, which exclusively affected regions or populations. It has nearly completely consumed the three nations that have been worst hit, including both rural and urban areas. Also, it has taken longer since cases from the West African subregion are still being recorded and none of the three main epidemic locations had direct experience with the virus before.

2. Border security and immigration:

Nicholas Vaughan-Williams contends that there are significant linkages between migration and state borders. This is because important choices about who is legitimate or not, who constitutes a security concern or not, and who is allowed and who is not are typically decided at border crossing locations. In addition, according to figures from the United Nations on migration, there were roughly 191 migrants in 2005; by 2013, however, there were 232 million migrants, or 3.2% of the world's population. Migration can occur for a variety of reasons, including the desire to be closer to family members who live overseas, the need to flee war, oppression, and persecution, and the pursuit of economic opportunity. As a result of migration being seen as a security concern, border security and monitoring programs have improved in other parts of the world. These improved programs include the issuance of visas, passport checks at crossing points, passenger movement monitoring, and the introduction of biometric technologies into border crossings. However, this is not the case in the Mano River Region, where many nations, particularly those closest to the Ebola virus epicentres of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, frequently face difficult challenges in effectively and efficiently managing their borders and safeguarding their territorial sovereignty in general. The issues with border security have been made worse by these governments' poor institutions as well as their lack of cross-border collaboration and integration.

According to Wafula Okumu, (2008), border security is an essential factor of border management. The idea that states

should secure their territories and protect their citizens from both internal and external threats to their livelihoods as recognized under international law is argued to be missing in the African context. Moreover, a nation's strategic position affects the kind of activities that might occur along its borders; according to Wafula Okumu, (2008): "*Some nations are more at risk from the insecurity of other nations' borders than they are from their own.*"⁵

Prosper Addo (2006) also contends that maintaining peace and stability requires the management and regulation of cross-border operations. He claims that West Africa's porous borders, however, have been exploited by criminals because of the state's inability to adequately address such dangers and difficulties.

In his book "*Migration in West Africa: Patterns, Issues and Challenges*," (Yaro, 2018), lists several factors that are related to migration, including "long-distance trade, the search for pasture, urbanization and the growth of administrative centres, the demands of mining opportunities, industrial production and plantation agriculture, armed conflict, land degradation, drought, and rural poverty. Meanwhile, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) strongly supports the free movement of people within its sphere of influence, even though inadequate border security measures are said to be a contributing factor in the spread of the Ebola virus in West Africa and calls to increase border security that

⁵ Wafula Okumu, (2008).

will restrict the flow of people from one country to another have not yet been successful. However, the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration is a reflection of the obligation placed on member states as stated in Article 59 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, which states that member states' citizens have the right of entry, residence, and establishment and that member states must recognize these rights of Community citizens in their territories in accordance with the provisions of the Protocols relating thereto, such as Resolution 60/277 of the United Nations General Assembly on the subject. Borders, in Anderson's view, is of utmost importance, because they define the actual location of nations in the global system. The state runs the danger of losing a sizable portion of the money generated by the trade that passes through these routes, and it also allows for the access of smuggled items. As a result, the state's integrity was in a chaotic situation. Unsafe borders can eventually threaten stability and progress, which raises the possibility of conflict both within and beyond of a state's boundaries. Lack of a strong border security system, which is important in preventing spoilers from disrupting the state, is one of the characteristics of post-conflict nations. Borders may either bring prosperity by facilitating the exchange of products and services between collaborating governments, or they can be porous entry points for illegal activities including the trafficking of small guns, people, and narcotics. Weak/post-war nations like Sierra Leone and Liberia must defend themselves on the inside and engage in international trade by lawfully transferring people, products, and services, or else they risk relapsing into violence. Post-conflict governments

need to restructure their border security to successfully create peace.

Moreover, (Anderson, 1999), contends that maintaining secure borders is a difficult endeavour with many facets. Hence, it requires a variety of government organizations, expert skill sets, border officers, customs, import and export restrictions, surveillance of land crossings, air, and seaports, as well as transaction control. All of these are essential for managing dangers from illegal trafficking, facilitating legal mobility and trade, and stopping the spread of illnesses globally.

2.1 Public Health and Security:

Security and development in the West African sub-region have been severely impacted by the Ebola Virus Disease. Thus, the West African Ebola outbreak has a high potential to endanger state existence and ultimately lead to state failure in the West African sub-region. Also, in accordance with Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the director of the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, he described the Ebola epidemic in West Africa as the most complex challenge the world has ever faced:

“The current epidemic in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone is the first time an outbreak has been recognized in West Africa, the first-ever Ebola epidemic, and the biggest and most complex Ebola challenge the world has ever faced.... Many of the health systems in the affected countries in West Africa were weak prior to the Ebola outbreak.”⁶

⁶ Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, USA.

Given the inadequate healthcare system in the West African sub-region, this remark captures the scope of the Ebola outbreak and the catastrophic ramifications that would follow. The Ebola outbreak in the West African sub-region has had an impact on security as well as development in this region. In its Human Development Report, the United Nations Development Program notes:

“The concept of security goes beyond military considerations. It must be constructed in terms of the security of the individual citizen to live in peace with access to necessities of life while fully participating in the affairs of his/her society in freedom and enjoying all fundamental human rights.”

The Human Development Report outlined seven components of human security that should be taken into great consideration by policy makers; one of those is health security.

Furthermore, the Commission on Human Security (CHS) has expanded the definition of human security. It states that: *“Human security in its broadest sense embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that everyone has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her own potential.... Freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of the future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment-these are the interrelated building blocks of human and therefore national security.”* As stated in the World Health Organization’s charter:

'the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security.'

According to Stefan Elbe, establishing human security depends on the security of the health system. In addition, he points out that while preserving life is at the core of human security, this cannot be done without simultaneously bringing down the prevalence of deadly illnesses. Because endemic illnesses provide a significant threat to various other aspects of human security when they are present, they directly endanger human security. The new insecurity that mankind is experiencing, according to Colleen O' Manique and Pieter Fourie, is exemplified by health problems. So, to address health challenges that cut beyond national lines, such risks necessitate more complex types of governance as well as global public health governance.

2.2 Border Security and Development:

While economic growth was originally considered to be the sole indicator of development, this definition of progress has since been expanded. According to Frances Stewart, there are other dimensions of human well-being that should be considered, such as people's health, education, and security, therefore "economic growth" cannot be the sole metric used to support development. The United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index (HDI) acknowledges that "development is much more than just the expansion of income and wealth", but also ascertain that human development is "the process of enlarging people's choices."

Although these decisions may alter over time, each of these stages is crucial to human development to live a long and healthy life and have access to resources for a respectable and standard of living.

Amartya Sen (1999) asserts that development goals should include *“the enhancement of peoples’ capabilities and opportunities open to them to do a variety of things.”*⁷

Thus, the growth of peoples’ options and capacities should not just be restricted to revenue earning but also to health, education, and work. Hence, development in this sense refers not just to economic expansion but also to human development, which also encompasses human security. Moreover, studies have shown that security and development are intimately linked. Observations show that to attain global security, emerging nations need to be provided genuine development possibilities. In addition to many other vices, poor countries are characterized by great poverty, starvation, and illnesses. These vices directly endanger human existence, and these nations also serve as a breeding ground for other dangers including civil wars and opportunities for people and drug trafficking.

2.3 The development costs of insecurity:

Security and development go hand in hand. For instance, Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams claim that the idea of human security develops from the idea of human progress. Duffield (2001) adds that: *“development concerns have*

⁷ Amartya Sen (1999).

become increasingly important in relation to how security is understood." Meanwhile, according to Frances Stewart, "some development costs are obvious." He adds that advancements and unfolding events have intricate relationships with one another. West Africa's experience with the Ebola virus disease is not unique. The Ebola virus disease epidemic in West Africa has had an impact on the individuals and society as a whole because of the inadequate institutional ability and health infrastructure to control it. Several people have lost their little wages because of the interruption of economic activity and revenue creation among the population. On a national scale, the Ebola Virus Disease has shown the frailty and inadequacy of the afflicted states, including their lack of readiness to handle such medical catastrophes. State development is severely endangered when security fails. Insecurity has costs, many of which are clear.

Furthermore, the way the government is run has a big influence on how insecure people feel in society. The growth of weak nations might be further hampered by security threats, as was the case for Sierra Leone in the 1990s and Uganda in the 1970s and 1980s. Nonetheless, notwithstanding the spillover effects, one important method for estimating and comprehending the development cost of insecurity is to contrast the performance of war-affected nations with that of comparable countries in the same region that have not been touched by conflict.

It is true that there are a wide variety of sources of insecurity, such as terrorism, war, natural catastrophes, people trafficking,

and more. In two foundational papers, the Millennium Plan on Organized Crime and the Council Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism, the European Union began to elaborate on the effects of organized crime and terrorism as costs of growth. Officials from the European Union identified and thoroughly analysed the threat posed by organized crime and terrorism in these documents. They also made extensive use of words like “loss,” “harm,” “damage,” “destruction,” and “instability” in describing the likely effects and consequences that the two threats may have on states.

3. Conceptualizing Public Health Security, Migration and Cross-Border Management:

The notions of security and development, which have received a lot of attention from academics, will be discussed. Although, in a larger sense, border management and border security are crucial parts of security, they will be discussed individually to provide the reader a thorough knowledge of these ideas.

3.1 The concept of Security:

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) expanded the definition of security in its 1994 Report to include “human security,” which complements the prior emphasis on state security. The idea of “freedom from fear and freedom from want” implies that individuals should be safe from any risks, including violence, illness, and deprivation. Moreover, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states in its 1994 Report that:

“The concept of security has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust. It has been related to nation- states more than people, forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives. For many of them, security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression, and environmental hazards.”⁸

It is crucial to remember that weak nations specifically face security challenges due to the interaction of internal threats and state weakness.

Governmental trust and confidence are continuously undermined by the state’s incapacity to provide the peace, security, and order that its citizens need. The topic of whether national governments in the West African sub-region can ensure security for the people has been raised in the wake of the Ebola epidemic in West, which has resulted in the deaths of thousands of people and a breakdown in economic activity.

As a result, the term “security” in this sense refers to both “state security,” which entails defending a state’s sovereignty against foreign aggression, as well as “personal security,” which is focused on the safety and well-being of specific persons. The UNDP’s definition of human security goes beyond meeting

⁸ United Nations Development Programme Report (1994).

their most basic material requirements to include the absence of serious challenges to their economic or political security, including dangers to their jobs, income, health, environment, and safety from criminal activity. While dealing with conventional security notions, national and international policy tools were not better taken into consideration. In essence, human security aims to lessen and, wherever feasible, eliminate the uncertainties that permeate people's lives.

3.2 Border Security:

Essentially, a country's boundaries indicate where its administrative and judicial authority stops and determine the sovereignty of its area. With the definition of people's lives, customs, and languages, borders also more strongly denote national identity. Control, surveillance, protection, and administration of borders are all considered to be part of border security. For effective border security, the problems with cross-border migration have proven to be challenging and complicated.

Threats to security that result from migration have been linked to several problems, including terrorism and crime. As a result, border management now heavily considers concerns of border security. One of the numerous factors used to determine whether a state is strong, weak, or unsuccessful is its capacity to properly guard its borders. Moreover, border security, which includes border control, is typically broken down into two categories: borderline security and port security. Controlling border activity is covered in the first section, followed by

control of different ports, including airports, border posts, harbours, and points of entry and exit. Wafula Okumu claims that: “border security is about asserting territorial sovereignty by enforcing the boundary and protecting it through permanent surveillance.”

3.3 The concept of Border Management:

The idea of border management, which is a crucial component of border security, comprises managing and controlling the movement of people, products, and services over a nation’s borders with the goal of safeguarding national interests, particularly for the maintenance of peace and security. It is the duty of the state to defend its territory from foreign threat; these activities are generally carried out by government officials from departments like customs and immigration, with a mix of other agencies in accordance with local legislation. Kama, meanwhile, views border security as “*the legitimate control upon unauthorised and illegal endeavours that may arise at or around the state border due to political fluctuations or discrepancies in the internal security provision, as well as controlling lawful and unlawful trade, and the movement of illegal or unauthorised persons who may generate problems in internal security or lack the necessary authority to enter and reside in a territory.*”

To control how the States’ boundaries are drawn, there are different requirements. Borders can be managed in a variety of ways. By implementing an Open Border System, which requires only a transit pass or a simple form of identification, states may secure their borders.

Moreover, border management is “a manifestation of state sovereignty,” according to Wafula Okuma, therefore a state’s inability to control its borders successfully may seriously erode its legitimacy. Border security in Wafula encompasses a wide range of concepts, including border administration, surveillance, control, and protection. Securing borderlines (activities along the border) and managing ports (harbours, border posts, and airports) of entry are two aspects of border security that aim to either assist or restrict the movements of people, animals, plants, and products into and out of a nation. Border agents are entrusted with a lot of responsibility, including establishing rules for when people can legally cross borders with valid identification, such as a passport or visa; ensuring that plants and animals don’t spread disease; ensuring that excise taxes are implemented for goods; and suppressing illegal activity at the border.

3.4 The Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Concept:

“Coordinated border management” (CBM) is a technique for managing borders in which public service groups work together across portfolio boundaries to achieve a single goal, providing a persuasive government response to the challenges of border management. To ensure efficient processes and procedures are used by all regulatory agencies involved in border security and regulatory requirements that apply to people, goods, and vehicles crossing international borders, CBM can be understood as a methodical approach to managing border operations.

A coordinated border management system must also provide safe crossings to promote trade and speed up traveller clearance (WCO, 2009).

3.5 The Concept of Development:

With the end of the Second World War in 1945, the way that development is conceptualized has changed. The ideological conflict between the two main political blocs in the world – the capitalist West and the socialist East – had a considerable impact on the meaning and understanding of it. It was difficult to conceptualize development itself because of this challenge with development concepts and ideas. On the one hand, it is stated that economic growth results in development, while on the other, economic growth and development are obtained from structural adjustments, savings, and investments in an economy. The idea of development encompasses not just “economic growth” or advancement, but also the expansion of human options, such as access to food, security, and facilities for medical care. The idea of “human security” was devised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to include not just concentrating on state development but also the protection of individuals from all types of dangers to their development, such as hunger, sickness, catastrophes, and education. The UNDP claims that these are the “growing problems of security around the world.” Insecurity, however, has the potential to harm these development goals. Due to its terrible repercussions, the Ebola outbreak has negatively impacted the likelihood of development. The total cessation of

operations because of the emergency health rules put in place to control the epidemic has had a profound influence on the sociocultural, political, and economic fabric of society.

To address issues of unemployment, poverty, disease, hunger, illiteracy, and steadily rising crimes and wars, economic growth in most developing and developed countries around the world to deliver corresponding social goods in the late 1970s. This required new thinking and a redefinition of development from an economic growth-centered perspective to a human-centered approach. Hence, development is viewed as a more inclusive notion that considers both the physical and psychological factors that influence a person's well-being. It is a complicated phenomenon that is more state-than-human-centered.

4. Research Design and Methodology:

A range of approaches, including primary and secondary sources of data collection, was employed in this study as relevant academic works on the subject were reviewed.

These approaches were selected to complement the limitations of the academic literature and to produce reliable and unbiased results of the study. This study adopts a case study approach as it takes into consideration the Ebola crises as a major focus in explaining health security, cross-border dynamics, and sustainable peace in the Mano River Region. The study is conducted in two (2) border communities between Sierra Leone and Guinea (Pamlap border crossing), and Sierra Leone and Liberia (Bo-Waterside border crossing) respectively. Due to the

nature of the research design, a qualitative method to data analysis was used in this study. As data are analysed inductively, this provides a thorough understanding of research findings. This research used both primary and secondary sources of data since they offer a wide range of information about the subject being studied.

Table 2. Selection of Interviewee Participants in two (2) border crossings.

Category of participants	Male	Female	Location
Security Personnel	5	5	Pamlap/ Bo-Waterside Border Crossing
Immigration Officers	10	10	Pamlap/ Bo-Waterside Border Crossing
Health Practitioners	10	10	Pamlap/ Bo-Waterside Border Crossing
Border Community Stakeholders	5	5	Pamlap/ Bo-Waterside Border Crossing
Total	30	30	

Source: Interviews of selected participants through purposive sampling technique.

4.1 Research Population:

This study uses a small n qualitative data by recruiting sixty (60) participants, including border community stakeholders,

security personnel, immigration officers, and healthcare professionals. This offers a comprehensive grasp of the nature of regional health, cross-border security, and sustainable peace. The participants' distribution by sex is shown in the table below.

4.2 Instruments for Data Collection:

The main instrument applied in this study was unstructured interview to gain deeper understanding of the subject under study.

This method provided a detailed description of the nexus between cross-border dynamics, health security and sustainable peace in the Mano River Region.

4.3 Ethical Considerations:

Ethical considerations of the research are central in this study as participants choices and data policy are prioritized. This gives credibility and reliability of the study. Some of the limitations that arise during the research is the challenge in accessing government data.

5. Findings and Discussions

The rapid spread of the Ebola virus disease in the Mano River sub-region is the result of insufficient border management mechanisms. Some of the factors responsible for poor control systems include but are not limited to the followings:

5.1 Porosity of borders:

The porous nature of Africa's land borders makes them a threat to effective security. Because there is no suitable method to adequately monitor people's movements across these boundaries, cross-border crimes and insecurity continue to plague the sub-region. Due to its porous nature, it also serves as an economic opportunity and livelihood for borderland communities. According to Daniel Hernandez Joseph:

“The dynamism produced by these borderland communities expands the challenges and demands of border management beyond the traditional issues of law enforcement and surveillance and into the whole greater agenda of public administration: health, education, infrastructure, social and economic development, culture, arts, and most notably trade and transnational modes of production.”

5.2 Lack of Institutional capacity:

The poor border control and management systems also result from weak or lack of effective and efficient government institutions. Most West African countries do not have the required institutions needed to effectively manage their borders, and some of these countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone have been affected by civil wars which destroyed the available states' infrastructure. There are also problems of inadequate border personnel deployed on the borders and those available sometimes lack the necessary skills required to effectively manage these borders. Also, the lack of facilities and equipment to effectively secure and manage these borders has added to the problems.

5.3 Lack of regional cooperation and integration:

The lack of cooperation at all levels; local, sub-regional and regional spheres of development have greatly affected the way African borders are managed. For instance, most border management programmes do not include border communities into their planning and implementation. Security personnel are normally deployed into these borders with the exclusion of local interests or community members, even though they are more familiar with the border terrain and have intimate knowledge on the area to be secure. At regional level, there is usually little or no cooperation between different countries' security departments such as immigration, customs, police, and intelligence. Therefore, this failure of collaboration between countries in the Mano River Region to effectively secure their borders have added to the problems associated with border management, as effective border security requires close cooperation and intelligence sharing at all three levels discussed above.

5.4 Lack of political will and commitment:

It is also important to note that; in addition to lack of regional cooperation and integration, there is also lack of commitment especially with resources that could be used to provide an effective border management system in the Mano River sub-region.

5.5 Lack of proper border demarcation:

Border insecurity in Africa has been greatly exacerbated by improper border demarcations in addition to the aforementioned factors. As a result, managing African borders has become quite challenging. More than 75% of the borders that define Africa are either inadequately or not designated. Helmoed-Romer Heitman added that "one cannot govern what one does not patrol." For instance, due to a lack of resources to patrol them, Africa's maritime borders are more challenging to control and unsafe. It is evident that very few maritime borders have been established to yet, which has raised the dangers to national security. Many of these maritime borders are not signposted, patrolled, or otherwise supervised, therefore they have increasingly turned into transit points.

5.6 Corruption amongst border security personnel:

Another major factor contributing to poor control and management system in Africa is high level corruption amongst border security personnel, such as immigration officials. The issue of illegal border crossing is widely known in Africa; for instance, illegal border crossing points also known as "*mice or rat routes*", are normally used by smugglers who are often charged a fee depending on the circumstances and difficulty of border crossing. Meanwhile, due to high level of corruption amongst immigration officials, the president of Sierra Leone; Ernest Bai Koroma, accused immigration officials of selling Sierra Leonean passports to foreigners, and the issue of police fleeing passengers at checkpoints. According to president Koroma, he notes that: "a Sierra Leonean passport can be

bought by any African for \$250 to \$500.”⁹ This depicts the level of corruption that exists in the borders of the Mano River Region as free movements of people from one country to another are unavoidable due to corrupt public officials.

6. Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations:

6.1 Strengthening health systems:

According to the research findings, it is evident that the current health systems of the Mano River Region countries are not good enough to address epidemics such as the Ebola Virus Disease. In as much as the experience of civil wars may have contributed to the problems, the Mano River Region leaders need to improve their current health systems. This could be achieved through effective and efficient national, regional, and international cooperation with civil society organizations, governments, and the international community. The Ebola virus disease had a significant impact on the region's health systems, which also caused companies to close, which had a negative impact on people's ability to support themselves. Education was also disrupted, and progress completely stopped. To address this problem and prevent similar outbreaks in future, health systems need to be improved. Improving facilities in rural communities by providing good health systems in rural areas and provide facilities such as good roads to access these areas, clean water, and electricity in these communities. Increasing community hygiene and developing a

⁹ Ernest Bai Koroma, former president of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

conducive environment that minimises other health problems such as malaria and diarrhoea.

6.2 Increasing resources for good health infrastructure:

To achieve good health system in the Mano River Region; affected countries should allocate a reasonable budget for health programmes. This can also be achieved through effective collaboration and partnership with civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, national governments, and the international community. Special funding needs to be allocated to build strong health infrastructure across the region. Building strong health infrastructure such as hospitals, providing good medicines and ambulances. Increasing staffs in the health sector and encouraging young people to enrol in health programs. It is evident that the limitation of qualified staffs in the health sector also contributed to the rapid spread of the disease in the Mano River Region. Therefore, by increasing resources in both human and financial resources, it will help greatly in addressing such epidemics.

Due to poor health care systems in affected countries, leaders of these countries highly depended on the international community for support in terms of health staffs, finances, and health instruments.

6.3 Building capacity for health workers:

Capacity building is a strong way of addressing epidemics such as the Ebola Virus Disease. Health workers should be well trained in various areas of expertise. Effective trainings and mentorship

should adequately be provided to health workers so that they will have the motivation and confidence to do their work effectively. Also, resources; wages and health care facilities should be adequately provided for health care workers, so that their work cannot be comprised and affected for not being adequately paid or not having the necessary tools to do their work. Also, national governments should encourage young people to enrol in health care systems, provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and build their capacities.

6.4 Increasing awareness on health issues for all communities:

Community empowerment should be a central plan of action for West African governments. This is because, they are the most affected both in terms of their livelihood and security. By increasing awareness for all communities on health issues will minimize the level of transmission of future health outbreaks such as the Ebola Virus Disease. Due to lack of knowledge and cultural issues such as burial method; washing of deceased, the Ebola Virus Disease spread rapidly. Therefore, by addressing this issue, national governments, civil society organizations, local organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the international community, should ensure that rural communities are properly educated and empowered to contain future outbreaks of similar character. The lack of community empowerment is a major factor that contributed to the rapid spread of the Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa.

Therefore, community sensitization, empowerment and education should be provided to all communities in West Africa, so that they feel part of the process and not marginalized

6.5 Building trust and confidence between governments and community people:

Trust building is a key factor that can build relationships. Due to lack of trust of people on their governments in providing the security they deserve; this also undermines the efforts of governments and non-governmental organizations in the fight against the Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa. This generally affected the process because people have lost trust and confidence on their governments in West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease. Some people have the perception that, it is a clear negligence of governments to address the menace.

Meanwhile, others have the view that, the Ebola Virus Disease is a made weapon to fight Africans; this lack of education, trust and confidence of people contributed to the rapid spread of the Ebola Virus disease in West Africa. Also, people fail to adhere to precautionary measures put in place by West African governments through World Health Organization's advice. This undermines the process and thus contributed to the rapid spread of the disease. Therefore, West African governments should serve as custodians to the people; provide them with the security they need and build trust and confidence. People feel that the 'social contract' between West African governments and the people is not provided. Civil society organizations and

non-governmental organizations should play a great role in improving relationships between the people and the governments.

6.6 Incorporating health programs in the school curriculum:

One of the major problems affecting West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease is the limitation of health curriculums in their schools' programmes. The lack of basic knowledge of most students of West African countries contributed in the poor level of awareness of the Ebola Virus disease. School children have little or no knowledge about the Ebola Virus Disease and its precautionary measures. It is evident that the Ebola Virus Disease affected all sectors of society including education, but the lack of basic knowledge also contributed to the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease. This is because school children do not have the basic understanding as to how to prevent transmission, and their parents too at home may not give them adequate information that could have been provided in school.

Therefore, the Mano River Region countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease should ensure that health education is provided across all levels of education; primary, secondary, and tertiary, irrespective of the field or career a student may want to specialise in.

6.7 Building capacity and incorporating inhabitants across borders:

One of the major problems affecting border management of West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease is the marginalization of local inhabitants across borders to participate in border security. This situation continues to be the case of affected countries. Due to the fact local inhabitants have a good knowledge on these borders; they would serve as great contributors to effectively manage these borders. In building the capacities of these people through education and trainings, they would contribute to effective border security.

6.8 Ensuring effective and efficient cooperation of West African countries in border management:

Poor border security has been identified in this dissertation as a major factor for the rapid spread of the Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa.

To ensure effective border security of West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease, national governments of West Africa need to embark on high level of regional cooperation in border management. This is because the level of cooperation at the time of the Ebola outbreak was not good enough to contain the disease. Although, affected countries have had high level of meetings to address the situation, this must be continuous and should not be ignored when the disease is declared free across these countries. There should a continuous regional cooperation of governments of West Africa so that border security is not only limited to national priority, but also regional priority.

6.9 Increasing capacities and skills of border security personnel:

One of the major problems affecting West African countries in effectively managing their borders is the lack of trained and qualified security personnel. This situation contributed to the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease across these porous borders. Therefore, as part of the recommendations, it is important to build the capacities of border security personnel through education and training so that they will have vast experience on security issues. Therefore, through capacity building, borders across West Africa should be more secured; there should also be a sub-regional cooperation of affected countries, with the support of civil society groups and non-governmental organizations. The process should not be abandoned, but rather should be done on the regular basis so that security personnel will acquire the necessary skills needed to effectively secure their borders.

6.10 Improving wages for border security personnel:

Border security personnel should be provided with strong support to do their work effectively and efficiently. The minimum wages provided to border security personnel would contribute in less performance and this could undermine the efforts of national governments, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations and the international community at large.

Security personnel would be forced to collect bribes due to poor wages allocated to them, and this would affect both security

and development of these countries. Therefore, in order to maintain effective and efficient border security of West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease, security personnel should be encouraged by improving their wages, as this will limit bribery and ensure good performance. A collaborative effort is needed by all affected governments, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, and the international community to achieve this.

6.11 International Partnership and foreign relations with countries across the globe:

West African countries should improve on their foreign policy relations especially on security issues. This is a lacuna that needs to be closed; due to poor level of interaction and collaboration with international governments on security issues, these borders could be classified as 'porous', and could not provide the desired security for inhabitants across West Africa. West African governments should be more prepared to improve on their foreign policy relations on security. This is because; security is paramount and is a major pointer for any country's development. The Ebola outbreak that spread across West Africa is a typical example to this, all sectors of society is affected, and development collapsed.

Therefore, security issues should be a major focus of West African countries and allocate a reasonable amount of budget through partnership and collaboration with foreign governments.

6.12 Addressing corruption in Border Communities:

Corruption has been identified as a major problem across West Africa. Every sector is affected by corruption, and this trend highly undermines the level of performance. If West Africa is to move from underdeveloped to developed status, corruption should be addressed entirely. Border security is also affected because of the level of corruption that exists across these borders. Migration across West Africa becomes simpler when money is spent. Security personnel accept bribes due to poor wages allocated to them, and this situation has become a 'culture' rather than a habit. West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus disease should learn lessons from countries such as Nigeria, Senegal, and Ivory Coast, to manage their borders effectively and efficiently. Corruption cannot be addressed alone; it must be a collaborative effort from all sectors of society; national governments, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, and the international community. A major focus of West African countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease is to address the issue of corruption and provide opportunities such as increasing wages of employees.

This will limit the level of corruption and possibly eradicate it at once; and the outcome of this will be high performance of workers.

6.13 Improving border instruments and tools:

West African borders has been labelled as 'porous' because they lack the necessary tools and instruments needed to maintain

effective border system. The lack of instruments such as scanners has contributed to the increased in transnational organised crimes and activities. Drug and human trafficking occur frequently across these borders. Small arms and light weapons are smuggled by criminals to facilitate their work. This is a common event that happens across Sierra, Liberia, and Guinea. In relation to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, migration became a daily activity; people choose to migrate everyday across these countries to seek better job opportunities. However, these people are not properly screened and there is a possibility they might be carrying the Ebola Virus Disease, although symptoms are not shown. Due to the complexities of diseases such as the Ebola Virus Disease, and its window period is between 1 to 21 days, border instruments need to be provided by West African countries through a collaborative effort between national governments, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, and the international community.

6.14 Effective collaboration between governments, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the international community:

Effective collaboration and partnership are important in addressing issues of security and development. Although national governments are the primary focus of every citizen; it is important to note that national governments cannot absolutely achieve the desired security without the collaboration of other important sectors such as non-governmental organizations, civil society groups and the international community. Therefore, effective collaboration is

needed between all sectors of society to ensure effective security and development.

6.15 Creating an effective checks and balances to effectively manage West African borders:

Another important factor in ensuring effective border security in West Africa is to have a checks and balances' system that could limit corruption, increase performance, and promote development. This is important because it provides employees such as border security staffs with designated roles and responsibilities and ensures there is transparency and accountability in all borders across the Mano River Region. This is also another lacuna that needs to be closed, and it is essential to maintain this process throughout and should not be only implemented on short term basis but rather it should be a continuous process.

If West African borders is to move from a 'porous' status to a more developed and improved one, the idea of checks and balances in the security sector has to be fully implemented. Once this instrument is put in place, it reduces the chances of corruption and under performance. It increases trust and confidence between governments and the governed, due to transparency and accountability also and promotes security and development in the West African sub region. Finally, the above recommendations address some of the problems identified during the research and thus serve as suggestions for governments and policy makers in the West African sub region to effectively respond to them.

6.16 Promoting the culture of peace in border communities:

Facilitation of dialogue in border communities to address the unique challenges faced with respect to cross-border dynamics in the region is a significant initiative to foster cooperation and maintain border stability. This also requires empowering local stakeholders to take the lead in promoting peace and awareness especially in porous border areas.

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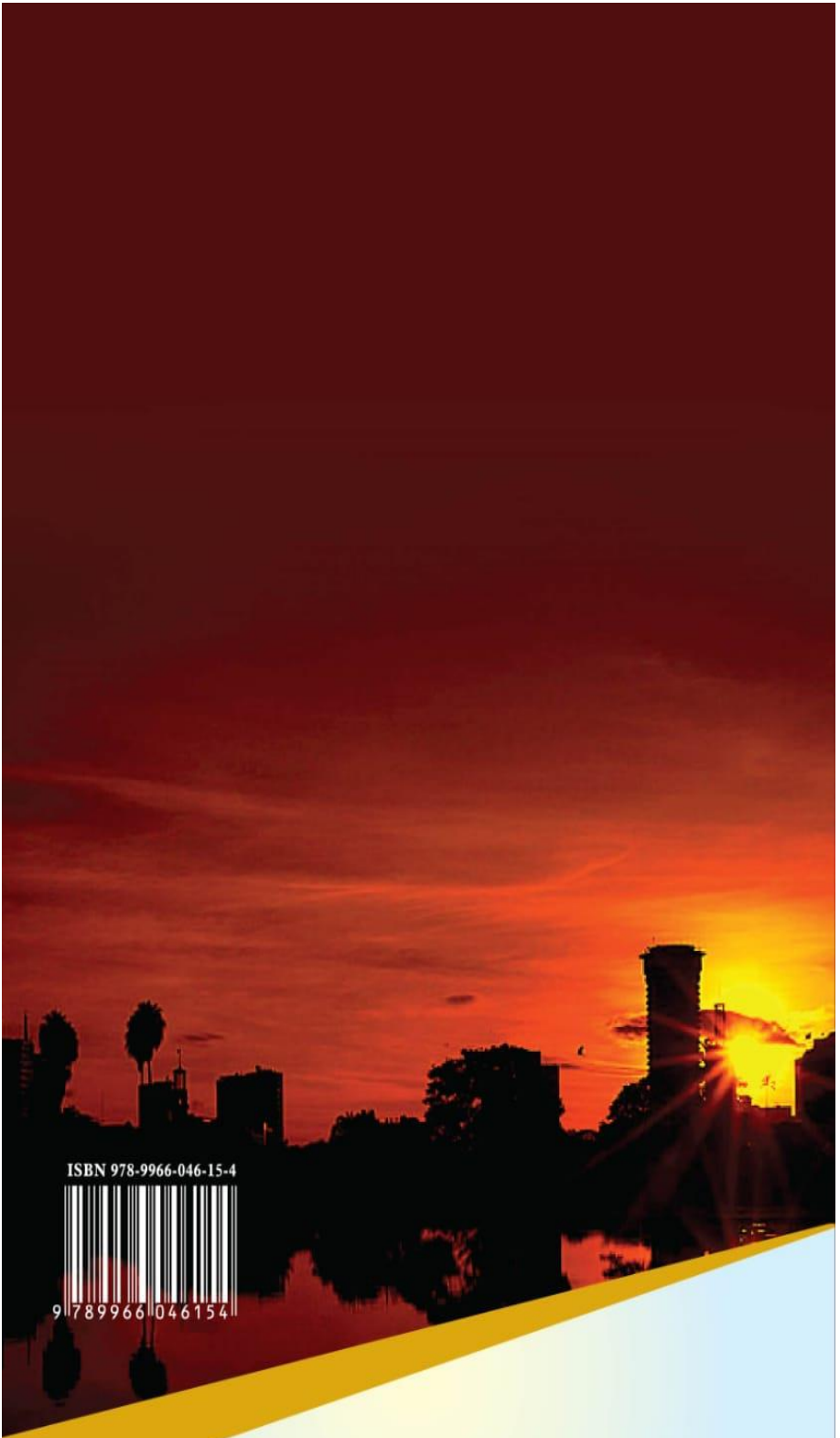
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