

## Particularity of cross-border Infrastructure Project: case study of Northern Corridor

Cezzy KANIONGA KANIONGA

Program Officer,  
Private Sector Investment Promotion

Northern Corridor Transit and Transport  
Coordination Authority (NCTTCA)

*\*Please note that the views expressed in this article are my own, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of NCTTCA.*

*Cezzy Kanionga is Program Officer of Private Sector Investment Promotion in NCTTCA in Kenya. Prior to join NCTTCA in 2013, he worked as senior project manager at the Multimodal Freight Management Office (OGEFREM) in Democratic Republic of Congo. Cezzy holds a Master 2 in IT application for Project Management, Studies and Multimedia from University of Paris VI Marne-la-Vallée, France. He also has diploma of Project Assessment, Analysis and Planning from "Centre de Perfectionnement en Technique de Développement (CEPETEDE)" of Kinshasa, DRC, and diploma of Project Management from Central Institute of Technology of Perth, Australia.*

### 1. Presentation of the NCTTCA

#### Establishment and description

The transport corridor linking the Kenyan seaport of Mombasa, on the Indian Ocean coast, with Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Southern Sudan is referred to as the Northern Corridor. It is the busiest Corridor in East and Central Africa handling in the region of 24 million tons of import/export cargo through the Port of Mombasa of the countries mentioned above. The corridor also handles a substantial volume of intra-regional trade estimated to be over 3 million tons per annum.

The Northern Corridor is a multi-modal transport corridor, combining surface modes of transportation, which include road, rail, inland waterways and pipeline. The main road network runs from Mombasa Sea Port through Kenya and Uganda to Kigali in Rwanda, Bujumbura in Burundi and to Bukavu, Goma, Kindu and Kisangani in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The road network also links Kenya and Uganda to Juba in South Sudan. The rail network runs from Mombasa Sea Port through Nairobi, Malaba, and Kampalato Kasese in Western Uganda, close to the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. A branch line radiates from Nakuru to Kisumu on Lake Victoria, from where rail wagon ferries link to the railway system in Uganda at Port Bell. Another rail branch line runs from Tororo in Eastern Uganda to Pakwach in the Northern Uganda, from where river steamers used to provide links with Nimule in South Sudan. The oil pipeline runs from Mombasa through Nairobi and Nakuru to Kisumu and Eldoret in western Kenya, from where the land

locked countries access their fuel imports. The Corridor also links Mombasa to Northern Tanzania and Ethiopia.

The institutional framework for the management of the corridor has been established by the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Agreement (NCTTA), a Treaty signed by the countries of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and DR Congo and of which South Sudan joined recently, for the facilitation of transit traffic and trade along the Northern Corridor.

The Treaty instituted the Northern Corridor Transit Transport Coordination Authority (NCTTCA). A Council of Ministers in charge of transport from the signatory countries plays the active role of supreme body for the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty.

The NCTTA provides the basic framework for cooperation among the contracting States in the facilitation of trade and traffic movement in their respective territories to and from the sea through the port of Mombasa. Prior to the Treaty, transit trade operated on the basis of bilateral agreements, which did not offer a coherent framework for standardized services and transit trade procedures across the different Member States.

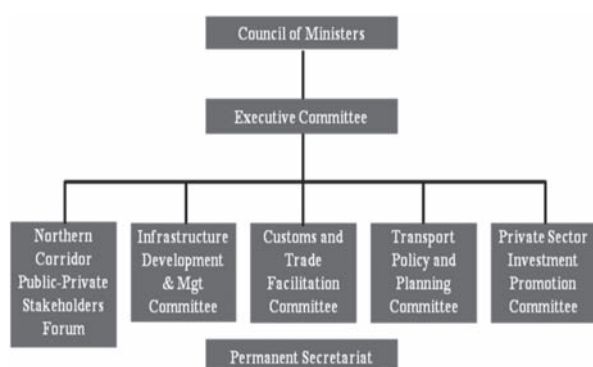
#### Mandate of NCTTCA

The overall mandate of the NCTTCA is the removal of all obstacles to the flow of trade and services along the Northern Corridor. In fulfilling this mandate, the objectives of the NCTTCA are as specified in Agreement and they include:

- To facilitate trade, the movement of persons, vehicles and goods in domestic, regional and international transport;
- To stimulate economic and social development in the territories of the contracting parties;
- To transform the Corridor into a Development

- Corridor which, in addition to offering safe, fast and competitive transport and transit services that secure regional trade, will stimulate investments, encourage sustainable development and poverty reduction;
- To implement strategies for accelerating economic and social growth along the Corridor while ensuring environmental sustainability.

Institutional framework of NCTTCA



Source : NCTTCA

Figure 1: Institutional Structure of NCTTCA

The Council of Ministers comprises of Ministers responsible for transportation matters in each of the Contracting States is the top most policy organ of the Authority. It is the policy making body of the NCTTCA and its decisions are binding on all contracting parties. Below the Council of Ministers is the Executive Committee. This is an inter-governmental Committee composed of Permanent Secretaries or their equivalents that are responsible for transport matters in each of the Contracting States. The Executive Committee is primarily responsible for initiating general principles and policies governing the NCTTCA, as well as strategies for transport and trade facilitation, infrastructure development and harmonization of national policies. The Executive Committee is also the organ responsible for resourcing the Secretariat, in terms of human and financial resources, and the supervision of the Secretariat. The executing organ of the NCTTCA is the Permanent Secretariat. It is based in Mombasa and it is responsible for coordinating implementation of the Northern Corridor Agreement and any other decisions and resolutions made by the Council of Ministers and the Executive Committee.

A number of Specialized Committees have been put in place to synthesize and make appropriate recommendations

to the Executive Committee. These are: (i) Northern Corridor Public-Private Stakeholders Forum; (ii) Committee on Infrastructure Development and Management; (iii) Committee on Transport Policy and Planning; and (iv) Committee on Customs and Transit Facilitation and (v) Private Sector Investment Promotion Committee.

The Northern Corridor transport systems are dominated by road and rail transport modes. Road transport accounts for over 95% of all freight and rail transport accounts for less than 5%. Air transport is predominantly for passenger traffic between the member states of the Northern Corridor. However, due to the poor state of road infrastructure in the DRC and the lack of a rail network, goods are transported by rail/road up to Goma, Beni or Bunia and then airlifted to Kisangani, Kindu and other destinations within the eastern part of that country. As a result consumer prices are 3 to 4 times more expensive in places like Kisangani and Kindu.

2. Overview infrastructure cross-border projects in the Northern Corridor

Identification of regional projects in the Northern Corridor

Early in this decade, more precisely in 2010, NCTTCA developed the Northern Corridor Spatial Development Program (NCSDP). This important document identified economic impact areas in the Northern Corridor region and shaped a series of integration projects in the various sectors of Transport, Mining, Energy, Information Technology and Services in general. The NCSDP also identified challenges and strengths to the realization of these projects for the transformation of the Corridor in an economic development Corridor.

In 2011, the Northern Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan was developed by building on previously developed NCSDP. The plan includes 36 projects and priority actions for the implementation of projects.

These projects are divided between roads, railways, seaports, inland waterways, pipelines, border crossings, but also special emphasis was placed on capacity building including institutional support to States in PPPs. A total project costs over a period from 2011 to 2030 was estimated at 4.5 billion dollars.

The identification of projects through the Northern Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan also informed the

Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), for which in the Priority Action Plan for the transport sector, retains the modernization of the Northern Corridor road as one of the highest priority of the program with an estimated cost of 1 billion US dollars.

But the biggest challenges remains the mobilization of funding for the implementation of these regional projects. Nevertheless with greater willingness at the highest political level in the member States, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to develop the implementation of the Space Program and the Northern Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan.

With regards to the projects at Member States level and which are subject of monitoring by NCTTCA, there is the initiative of the Northern Corridor integration projects. This initiative stems from the will of Heads of States from Northern Corridor to actually see things moved. Therefore heads of states of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan agreed to meet every two months for monitoring and overseeing by themselves the implementation of the integration projects. In the particular sector of rail ways, one of the biggest projects overseen by the heads of States is the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR).

### 3. Northern Corridor Cross-border Infrastructure projects: features and issues

The Northern Corridor itself is a cross-border transport infrastructures project. Many cross-border projects are being implemented in rail ways, roads, inland waterways, border posts and pipeline sectors.

In railways, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan have agreed under Northern Corridor Integration Projects to develop a Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) stretching from Mombasa to Nairobi, Kampala, Kigali, Juba and Kisangani. To interconnect all the Northern Corridor Member States, NCTTCA has been requested to facilitate, through advocacy, the extension of the SGR projects in the rest of the Member States. Therefore NCTTCA organized Bilateral Technical Meetings between Uganda and DRC on Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) in coordination with the Ministry of Works and Transport, Republic of Uganda on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and June 2015 in Kampala, Uganda.

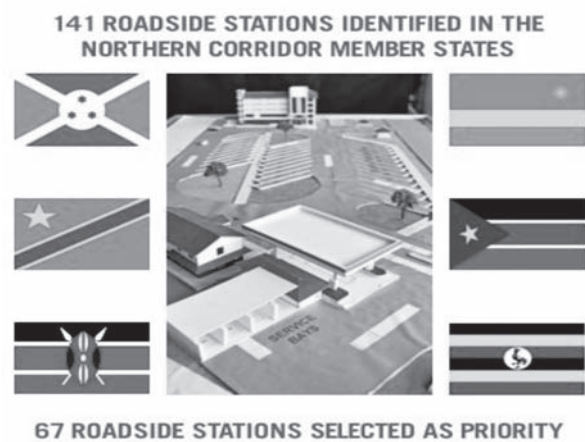
Some sections of the Northern Corridor road network are being developed as cross-border projects such as the



Note : The 1987.7 meters long Tsavo Super Bridge, with the highest point of 35.1 meters being constructed by China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) will run over the Tsavo River and the existing meter gauge railway.

Source : Xinhuanet.com

road section from Mbarara via Mpondwe in Uganda to Kisangani via Kasindi and Beni in DRC. Some bridge projects on the Northern Corridor road network are developed between countries as cross-border projects. In border posts' domain, NCTTCA has initiated the One Stop Border Post (OSBP) as cross-border projects between DRC and Uganda, Rwanda and Uganda, Rwanda and DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. In the domain of road modernization and road safety, many other cross-border projects are ongoing such as the Roadside Stations program (RSS).



Source : [www.roadsidestations.org](http://www.roadsidestations.org)

NCTTCA as an intergovernmental agency does not implement projects for the Member States. The project are undertaken by the Member States themselves. The NCTTCA's role is to monitor the implementation process and report to the Member States on progress achieved. On behalf of the Member States, NCTTCA also seeks funds from donors to implement projects. The Organization

conducts also project studies up to feasibility stage. It is on the basis of studies undertaken that the Member States carry on the construction phases of projects.

With regard to cross-border projects, NCTTCA organizes bilateral meetings between concerned countries and comes up with agreement on the way forward for the implementation of such projects. In this process a certain number of issues are addressed. At implementation level, issues faced are relating to funding, politic crisis between the concerned countries, project management and capacity building within the member states, etc.

Upon completion of project, issues related to management, maintenance and reporting are addressed. But currently, most of cross border project are managed independently from each other country. This does not allow the setting of common standard among countries. Once a project has been completed, each country tries to manage the section or component within its territory in accordance with its own regulation. This represents a challenge to NCTTCA in terms of harmonization of rules related to implementation and management of cross-border projects. It is against this background that the organization seeks to come up with guidelines applicable to all Member States.

The projects are taken in their globality for the interest of the whole region in view to facilitate the monitoring and the request for funding from donors. Cross-border infrastructure allows to have uniform infrastructure standards in the region. Efforts should be kept in the process of harmonization of rules among the Member States. This will enhance the regional integration process.