



SDG16
INNOVATION
CHALLENGE FOR
PEACE & SOCIAL
COHESION

New Research Findings

**PROMOTING INNOVATION FOR
PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION**

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In consultation with
UNDP-Nigeria



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Part 1: New Strings: Inclusive Citizen-centric Efforts for Peace and Security



1.1. Introduction:

Nigeria, often called the “giant of Africa” because of its human and material resources, has the potentialities of being among the leading nations of the world in socio-economic prosperity. However, the country finds itself among the least well off, ranking as the poverty capital of the world.¹ A cause and effect of this is that Nigeria is also one of the least secured countries,² as it battles a host of insecurity challenges, and is now argued to belong to the rank of failed States.³ No doubt, insecurity⁴ is persistent and prevalent in Nigeria. Accordingly, there is an overarching need to deepen understanding of the context and dynamics of Nigeria’s insecurity challenge towards proffering effective and sustainable counteracts.

Insecurity: While the definition of insecurity has been widely contested, David Baldwin however opines that “one way of determining the value of security is to ask what life would be like without it”.⁵ He refers to this approach as the prime value approach. King and Murray contend that the idea of security contains two key elements which are “an orientation to future risks and a focus on the risks of falling below some critical threshold of deprivation”.⁶ While there are different forms of security such as economic security, social security, environmental security, and political security, it is significant to note that security is both an individual and collective good. The absence of which can be referred to as insecurity. Today, Nigeria experiences various forms and dynamics of insecurity.

1 Endpovery Peter Fry “Nigeria: Poverty Capital of The World” <https://www.endpoverty.org/blog/nigeria-poverty-capital-of-the-world>

2 Ugo Chuks Okolie, Okwu A. Onyema and Ugo S. Bassey, Poverty and Insecurity in Nigeria : an Empirical study (2019) 6 (2) International Journal of Legal Studies DOI: 10.5604/01.3001.0013.7419 <https://ijols.com/resources/html/article/details?id=197240&language=en>

3 Foreign Policy Rober I Rotberg and John Campbell “Nigeria is a Failed State” <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/05/27/nigeria-is-a-failed-state/> Proshare “Failed States Index: Nigeria Ranked 15 out of 177 Nations” <https://www.proshareng.com/news/Nigeria%20Economy/Failed-States-Index--Nigeria-Ranked-15-out-of-177-Nations/7135>

4 Insecurity is the state of being vulnerable or subject to harm, danger, or injury either in one’s person or properties. Insecurity results in death, injury, harm, trauma, damage, or psychological stress.

5 Boko Haram which is also known as *Jamā’at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da’wah wa’l-Jihād*, is a jihadist organization that specialises in the use of terrorism to propagate its political ideology which is inimical to all forms of Western education. Its goal is the creation of an Islamic Caliphate in Nigeria.

6 Baldwin, D. A. (1997). The concept of security. *Review of international studies*, 23(1), 5-26.

Much of the manifestation of insecurity is the effect of deep-seated grievances and discontents relating to political relevance, economic resources, inattention to citizen's welfare and security by the State, and dwindling economic opportunities for citizens. These issues precipitate insecurity, manifesting as Boko Haram insurgency, herders-farmers clashes, ethno-religious crisis, abductions and violent attacks by bandits and other outlaws, separatist agitations and related violence, and a ferocious spate of kidnappings for ransom.

The result of Nigeria's insecurity challenge is that for many a citizen, life is precarious, whether in their homes, in transit, or in places of work, worship, business or leisure. The insecurity leaves in its trail, the destruction of lives and properties, loss of livelihoods, displacement of persons, disintegration of communities, and the creation of an overall ominous cloud of fear. The insecurity challenge is enormous, creating a toxic atmosphere of palpable tension, and an eerie apprehension among citizens. But while Nigeria continues to grapple with Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east,⁷ the insecurity challenges that have gained more foothold in Nigeria in recent times are abductions and violent attacks by bandits in the north-west and north-central parts of the country,⁸ farmers-herders violent clashes scattered across the country,⁹ kidnapping for ransom scattered across the country,¹⁰ and violent attacks by separatists (commonly referred to as "unknown gunmen") in the country's south-east.¹¹

In November 2013, the Nigerian jihadists groups, Boko Haram and Ansarul were classified by the United States as "Foreign Terrorist Organizations" and are "Specially Designated Global Terrorists". Hence, this listing is one aspect of the increased international attention being paid to Nigeria and its relationship to regional security threats, especially concerning maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and militant Islamism in the form of Boko Haram and Ansaru.

7 Weeraratne, S. (2017). Theorizing the expansion of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 29(4), 610-634.; Aro, O. I. (2013). Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: its implication and way forwards toward avoidance of future Insurgency. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3(11), 1-8.; Adenrele, A. R. (2012). Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria as a symptom of poverty and political alienation. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(5), 21-26.

8 MacEachern, S. (2020). Boko Haram, bandits, and slave-raiders: identities and violence in a Central African borderland. *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue canadienne des études africaines*, 54(2), 247-263.; Attah, N. E., Sambo, U., Sule, B., Bello, M. A., & Saragih, M. Y. (2021). COVID 19 and Increased Security Challenges in Northern Nigeria: Interrogating Armed Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria. *SIASAT*, 6(1), 33-44.; Onwuzuruigbo, I. (2021). Enclaves of banditry: Ungoverned Forest spaces and cattle rustling in Northern Nigeria. *African Studies Review*, 64(1), 168-191.

9 Bamidele, S. (2018). 'LAND BANDITS' OR 'LAND GRABBERS': FULANI HERDSMEN AND LOCAL FARMERS INCESSANT BLOODY CLASHES IN NIGERIA. *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Africanos= Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, 3(6).; A U, O., & B I, I. (2009). Causes, effects, and resolution of farmers-nomadic cattle herders' conflict in Delta state, Nigeria.; Madu, I. A., & Nwankwo, C. F. (2020). Spatial pattern of climate change and farmer-herder conflict vulnerabilities in Nigeria. *GeoJournal*, 1-17.; Okoli, A. C., & Atelhe, G. A. (2014). Nomads against natives: A political ecology of herder/farmer conflicts in Nasarawa state, Nigeria. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 4(2), 76-88.

10 Ibrahim, B., & Mukhtar, J. I. (2017). An analysis of the causes and consequences of kidnapping in Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 11(4), 134-143.; Ibrahim, Y. K., & Ahmad, A. A. (2020). Causes of kidnapping in Nigeria and proposed solutions. *Journal of social sciences research*, 6(5), 512-517.; Onuoha, F. C., & Okolie-Osemene, J. (2019). The evolving threat of kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria. In *Internal Security Management in Nigeria* (pp. 233-258). Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.

11 Okpalaojiego, E. C. (2021). CAUSES AND IMPLICATIONS OF INSECURITY ON ENTREPRENUARIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS OPERATIONS IN NIGERIA: THE PANACEA. *Academic Journal of Current Research*, 8(6).; Innocent, A. P., Ibn-Mohammed, I., & Eikojonwa, O. (2021). Single Story Sellers Everywhere: Deconstructing Media Reportage on Banditry in Nigeria. *Review of Politics and Public Policy in Emerging Economies*, 3(1), 27-39.

Boko Haram, literally meaning “western education is forbidden” emerged in 2002 as a Salafi jihadist movement under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf.¹² The group opposes what its views as the “westernization” of Nigeria, including Christianity, and aims to create an Islamic state. After the killing of their founder, Mohammed Yusuf, and under the new leadership of Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram became much more violent, emerging as one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world.¹³ The abduction of Chibok girls¹⁴ and later, Dapchi boys,¹⁵ and its ransacking and occupation of territories in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe State has put paid to all doubts of the enormity of the insecurity challenge posed by Boko Haram. And, while the group is more active in Borno and Yobe states, the effects of the group’s activities in Adamawa state, especially in Michika, Madagali, Mubi, Hong, Gombi, Maiha, and Yola LGAs is no less horrendous.¹⁶ For example, the violent attacks by the group on the Federal Polytechnic, Mubi between 2012 and 2014, left many students dead, and paralyzed academic activities in the school. To underscore, the magnitude of the issue, it is reported that Adamawa State is the second most affected state by the Boko Haram with at least 200, 000 displaced.¹⁷

Moreover, in different parts of the country, especially in the north, there are pockets of ungoverned spaces and territories under effective control of bandits, militias, insurgents, and other outlaws.¹⁸ For all these, three eminent Nigerians- Prof. Wole Soyinka, Sultan of Sokoto Muhammad Sa’ad Abubakar, and Bishop Mathew Hassan Kukah- have lamented that the situation is dire. While Prof. Soyinka described Nigeria as a warzone,¹⁹ the Sultan bemoaned the high rate of insecurity in the north, labeling the region as the “worst place” to live in Nigeria.²⁰

12 Thurston, A. (2017). *Boko Haram: the history of an African jihadist movement* (Vol. 65). Princeton University Press.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Augustine, C., Daniel, J. D., Abdulrahman, B. S., Mojaba, D. I., Lubele, M. I., Yusuf, J., & Katsala, G. J. (2019). Impact of Boko Haram insurgency on poultry production in Mubi region of Adamawa State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Animal Science*, 21(3), 145-150.

16 Relief web 8 March 2017 “ACAPS Crisis Profile- Northeast Nigeria: Adamawa State Crisis Profile 2017” <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/acaps-crisis-profile-northeast-nigeria-adamawa-state-crisis-profile-2017>

17 Cook, D. (2018). *The Boko Haram Reader: From Nigerian Preachers to the Islamic State*. Oxford University Press.; Adelaja, A. O., Labo, A., & Penar, E. (2018). Public opinion on the root causes of terrorism and objectives of terrorists: A Boko Haram case study. *Perspectives on terrorism*, 12(3), 35-49.

18 Raleigh, C. and Dowd, C., 2013. Governance and Conflict in the Sahel’s ‘Ungoverned Space’. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 2(2), p.Art. 32. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.bs> John Sunday Ojo (2020) Governing “Ungoverned Spaces” in the Foliage of Conspiracy: Toward (Re)ordering Terrorism, from Boko Haram Insurgency, Fulani Militancy to Banditry in Northern Nigeria, *African Security*, 13:1, 77-110, DOI: 10.1080/19392206.2020.1731109

19 Sunday Aikuola TheGuardian 8 December 2020. “Nigeria at war, in war zone, says Soyinka” <https://guardian.ng/news/nigerians-at-war-in-war-zone-says-soyinka/>

20 Abel Ejikeme, ‘Worst Place to Live’: Bandits Overrunning Northern Nigeria, Sultan of Sokoto Laments AriseTv <https://www.arise.tv/worst-place-to-live-bandits-overrunning-northern-nigeria-sultan-of-sokoto-laments/> People think North is safe but that assumption is not true. In fact, it’s the worst place to be in this country because bandits go around in the villages, households, and markets with their AK 47 and nobody is challenging them. They stop at the market, buy things, pay and collect change, with the weapons openly displayed.”

For Bishop Kukah, Nigeria has become a nation wrapped in desolation, with the prospects of becoming a failed state.²¹

Participants in this study also referred to recent insecurity issues outside the region of study. The 725 participants in this study referred to one or more of the following recent events:

Bandits killing a Deputy Police Officer, eight policemen and two vigilantes.²²

Nineteen people killed in Igbariam, Anambra State.²³

Abductors killing two more students of Greenfield University, in Kaduna State, after killing three of them earlier following the failure of the government to meet their demands.²⁴

Hoodlums attacking Lagos State University and destroying several vehicles.²⁵

Gunmen killing nine persons around Chukwuemeka Odumegwe Ojukwu university.²⁶

Gunmen attacking soldiers at Amasiri, Ebonyi State,²⁷ and

Boko Haram hoisting its flag at Shiroro Local Government area of Niger State,²⁸ to mention just a few.

In the context of the above, from a youth perspective, this work teases out the major emergent drivers of insecurity in the selected northern Nigeria states of Kaduna, Katsina, Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Adamawa and Taraba. This is more so that both at the forefront and at the biting end of the insecurity challenges are the youths of Nigeria, who constitute more than half of the country's population, hence solving the insecurity challenge in the country must have a youth focus.²⁹ The second part of this work identifies some existing mechanisms for sustained youth contribution to peace and social cohesion from the selected seven states.

1.2: Methodology

This work utilizes a mix-methodological approach by analyzing both primary and secondary sources. It relies on qualitative research data generated from doctrinal studies. It also produced data from semi-structured verbal interviews of 25 respondents across the seven states of study, and a survey questionnaire of 700 respondents conducted online. The research raises issues of theory and practice that are interdisciplinary and different from existing scholarly literature. Consequently, the research method employed is two-prong: the doctrinal and sociological (including socio-legal) research methods. This research was partly desk-based and involved qualitative analysis and interpretation of documentary material, both primary and secondary.

21 FULL TEXT: Bishop Kukah's Christmas Message That Sparked Reactions December 30, 2020. <http://saharareporters.com/2020/12/30/full-text-bishop-kukahs-christmas-message-sparked-reactions>

22 Maishanu, A.A. (2021) Bandits Kill Nine Police officers, Two Vigilante Members in Kebbi – Official. *Premium Times*. P.A1

23 Nweagwu, U. and Awka O.O. (2021). 19 feared killed as hoodlums attack Anambra community. *The Guardian*. P.A1

24 Aljazeera (2021). Nigeria: Kidnappers Kill Two More Captive Students. *Aljazeera*. P.A1

25 Punch (2021). Photos: Hoodlums Attack LASU, Destroy Vehicles. *Punch*. P.A1.

26 Ujumadu, V. (2021). Breaking: Gunmen Kill 9 Persons, Several Cows, As Fear Grips Ojukwu University Town in Anambra. *Vanguard*. P. A1

27 Anioke, O. (2021). Gunmen Kill Two Soldiers at Ebony Military Checkpoint. *The Nation*. P.A1.

28 Laleye, D. (2021). Boko Haram Has Hoisted Flag in Niger Village, Says Governor. *ThisDay*. PA1

29 TheGuardian Tunde Eso 19 March 2015 "Solving Nigeria's insecurity challenges with youth integration" <https://guardian.ng/features/solving-nigerias-insecurity-challenges-with-youth-integration/>

use of textual and discourse analysis for the sources of data was employed. The data was derived from texts, publications, books, reports and websites. These documents contain recording of state, stakeholders, NGOs and even policy opinions and perspectives on the major emergent drivers of insecurity in mostly the selected northern Nigeria states of Kaduna, Katsina, Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Adamawa and Taraba. Doctrinal discourses here evaluate both disciplinary and interdisciplinary academic perspectives that critique, analyze and theorize citizen-centric efforts for community peace and social cohesion.

The semi- structured (audio) interviews culminated to 2 hours, 20 minutes and was recorded and digitally stored. A prepared script was utilized. However, as the interview unfolded necessary adjustments were made, for example utilizing probing questions and permitting the participants to “go off script” when appropriate or would interfere with their narrative if abruptly redirected. There were 700 survey respondents (separate from the 25 voice interviewees). Of the 700 survey responses, 98 (14%) were from Adamawa, 97 (13.9%) were from Benue, 112 (16%) were from Plateau, 86 (12.3%) were from Nasarawa, 56 (8%) were from Katsina, 171 (24.4%) were from Kaduna, 58 (8.3%) were from Taraba, while 22 of them were not residents of any of the required states making up 3.1% of responses. The total number of respondents engaged for this work is 725 respondents.

Part 2: Data Findings



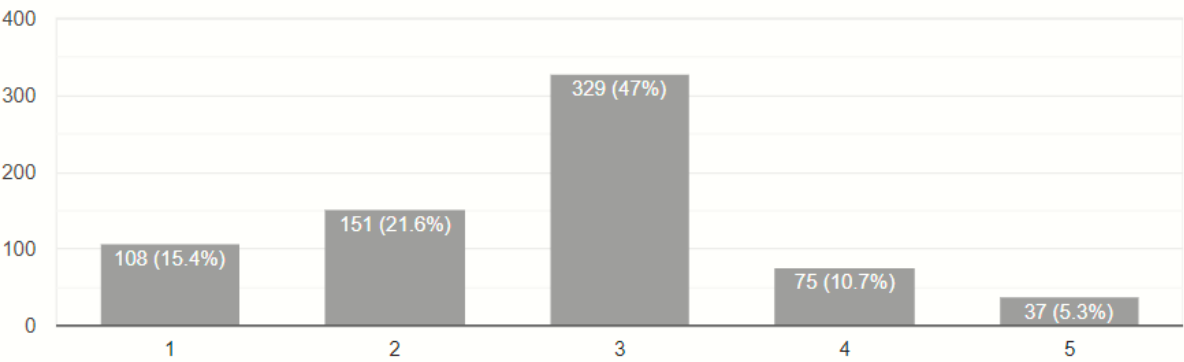
General

■ Survey questions:

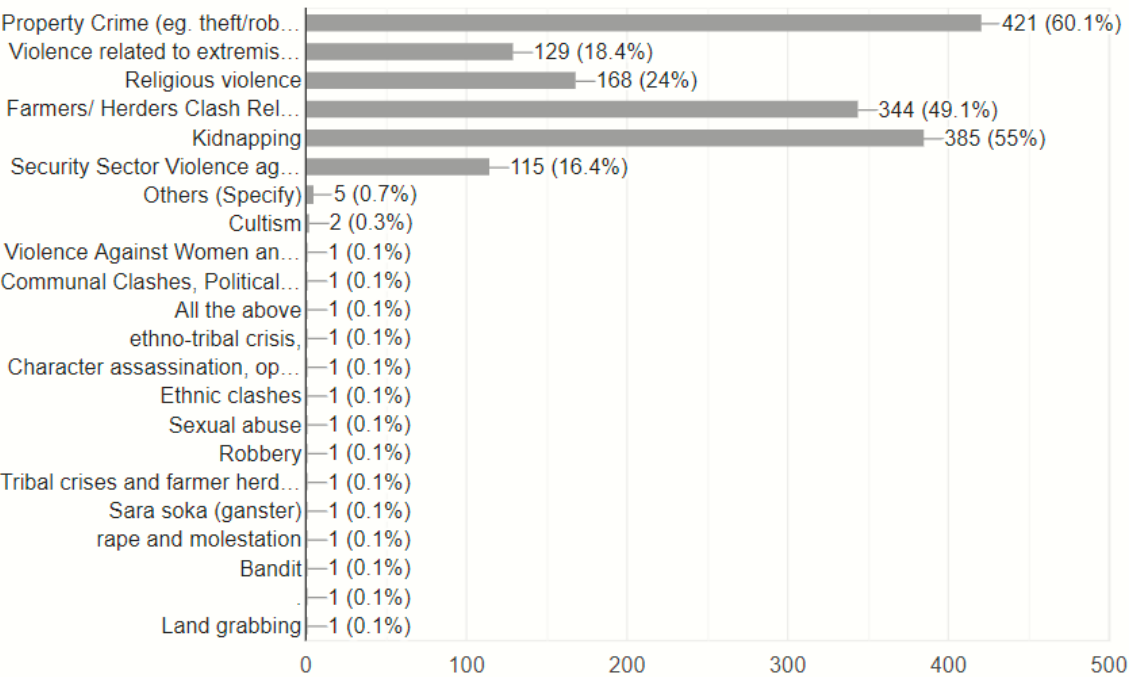
1. State of Residence
2. Local Government Area (in the state you reside)
3. Gender
4. Age
5. Religion
6. Do you identify as having a disability?
7. Highest Academic Qualification
8. Employment Status
9. How would you rate the level of physical safety in your community?
10. What are the most common forms of insecurity/violence in your community?
11. What are the TWO most affected demography by violence in your community?
12. Have you been a victim of violent crime?
13. Has any of your family members been a victim of violent crime?
14. What, in your opinion, are the main causes of conflict/ violence in your community/ state?
15. Which of the following would BEST decrease violence and extremism in your community?
16. To what extent do you trust the government to improve the security challenges in your community?
17. To what extent do you trust the government to improve the security challenges in your community?
18. Do you think young people play a significant role towards peace-building in Nigeria?
19. If you answered yes, what role can youth play?

From the 725 respondents we engaged for this study, this is the result from the survey

For the question “How would you rate the level of physical safety in your community,” the total vote was 1802 among 672 valid respondents,³⁰ with the total rating coming to an average of 2.7 over 5.

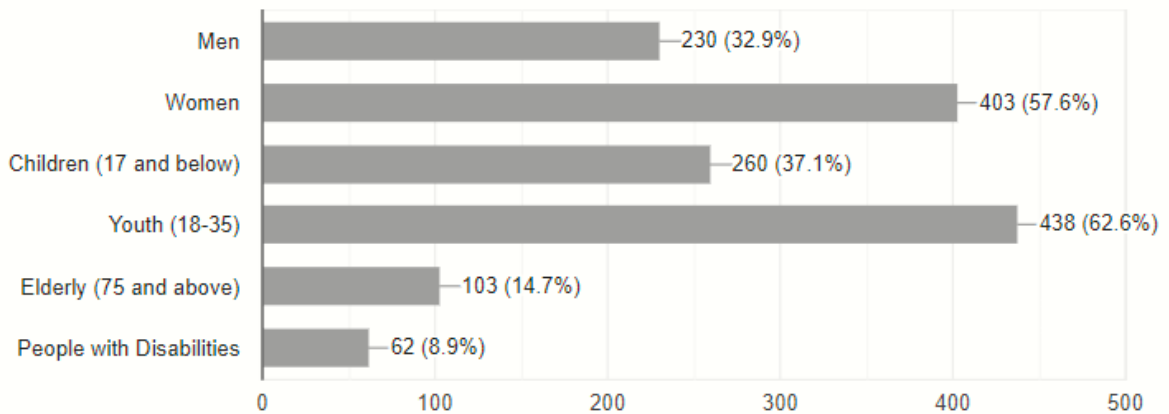


The most common forms of insecurity/ violence are Property Crime (e.g. theft/robbery/vandalism) at 421 (60.1%), Kidnapping at 385 (55%), Farmers/ Herders Clash Related Violence at 344 (49.1%), Religious violence at 168 (24%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians at 115 (16.4%) and Violence related to extremism at 129 (18.4%), Cultism at 2 (0.3%) and then “Other” at 5 with 0.7%. Rape and molestation at (0.1%), Character assassination at 1 (0.1%), oppression at 1 (0.1%), injustice at (0.1%) Ethnic clashes at 1 (0.1%), Sexual abuse at 1 (0.1%) Land grabbing at 1 (0.1%), “Sara soka” (gangsterism) at 1 (0.1%), bandits at 1 (0.1%) Cultism at 1 (0.1%), Communal Clashes at 1 (0.1%), and Political Clashes at 1 (0.1%).

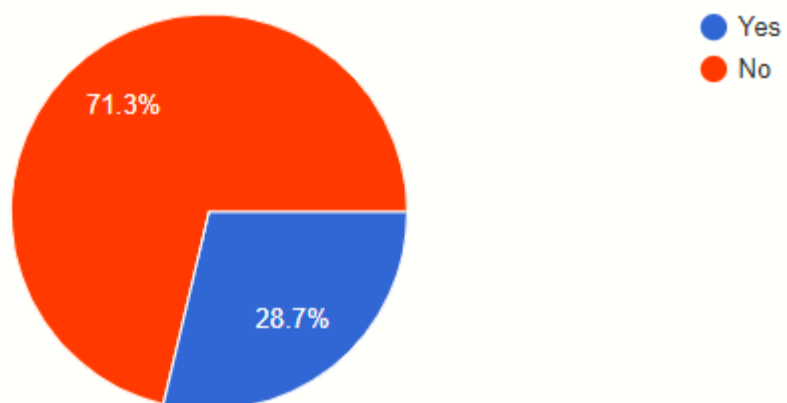


³⁰ Of the 725 responses, a few of them were incomplete, invalid, or repeated. This evaluation of the state-by-state data is limited to 672 valid responses (the data file of all responses is available with the authors).

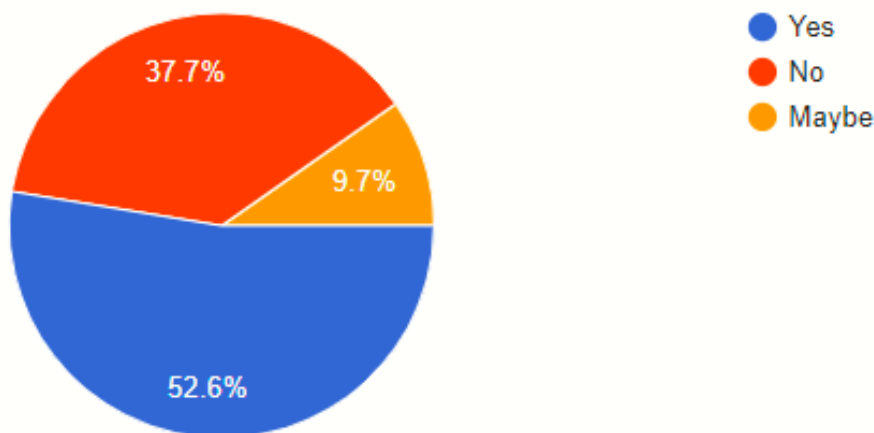
For “What are the two most affected demography by violence in your community?” the ranking was as follows: Youth with 438 (62.6%), Women with 403 (57.6%), Children with 260 (37.1%), Men with 230 (32.9%), the Elderly with 103 (14.7%) and People with Disabilities with 62 (8.9%).



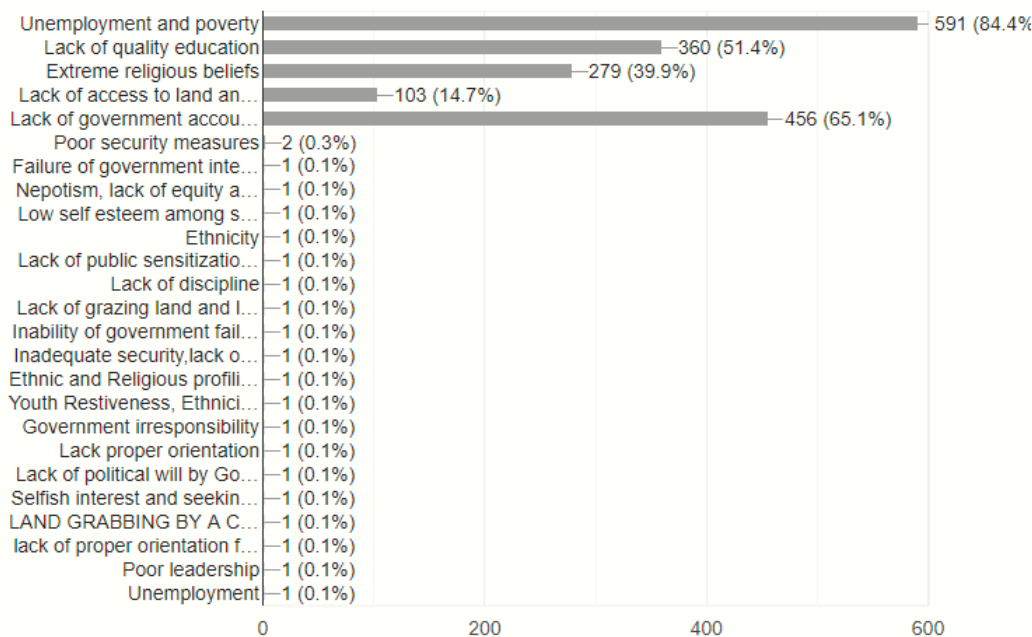
To the question “Have you been a victim of violent crime”, 499 (71.3%) said “No”, while 201 (28.7%) said Yes.



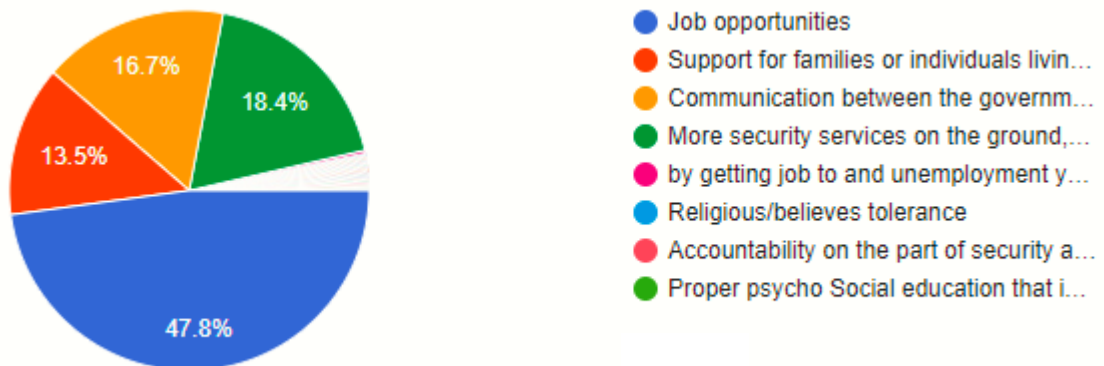
For “Has any of your family members been a victim of violent crime”, 368 (52.6%) of respondents said Yes, 264 (37.7%) said No and 68 (9.7%) said Maybe.



For “the main causes of conflict/ violence in your community/ state”, respondents voted as follows: Unemployment and poverty at 591 (84.4%), Lack of government accountability/corruption at 456 (65.1%), Lack of quality education at 360 (51.4%), Extreme religious belief at 279 (39.9%), Lack of access to land and natural resources such as oil at 103 (14.7%), Poor security measures at 2 (0.3%), Ethnic bias at 1 (0.1%), Land grabbing by a certain ethnic group at 1 (0.1%), Lack of grazing land at 1 (0.1%), lack of proper orientation at 1 (0.1%), Ethnic and Religious profiling of Criminals at 1 (0.1%), Nepotism, lack of equity and fairness at 1 (0.1%), Youth Restiveness at 1 (0.1%), Bandits at 1 (0.1%), Lack of public sensitization of people of the community at 1 (0.1%), Poor leadership at 1 (0.1%), Lack of discipline at 1 (0.1%), lack of proper orientation for the security personal on their main duty at 1 (0.1%), Selfish interest and seeking for power by all means at 1 (0.1%).



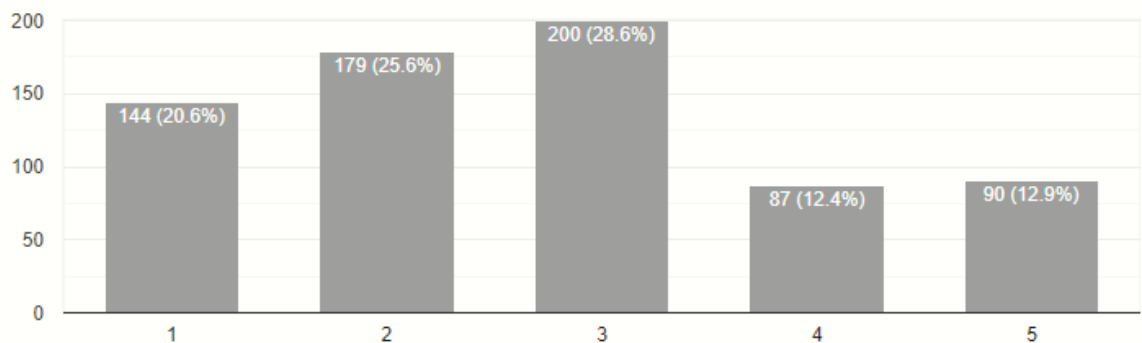
Which of the following will best decrease violence and extremism in your community?



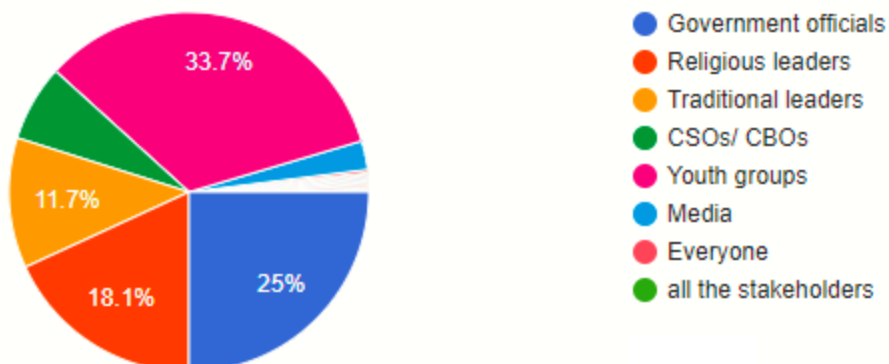
For “to what extent do you trust the government to improve the security challenges in your community?” the respondents’ rating totaled 1820, an average of 2.7 out of 5.

To what extent do you trust the government to improve the security challenges in your community?

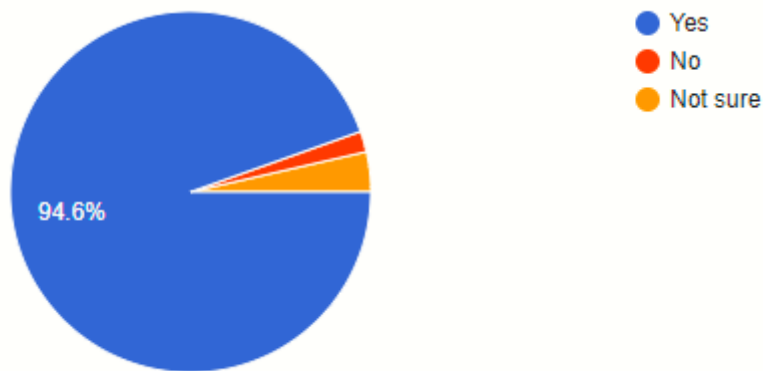
700 responses



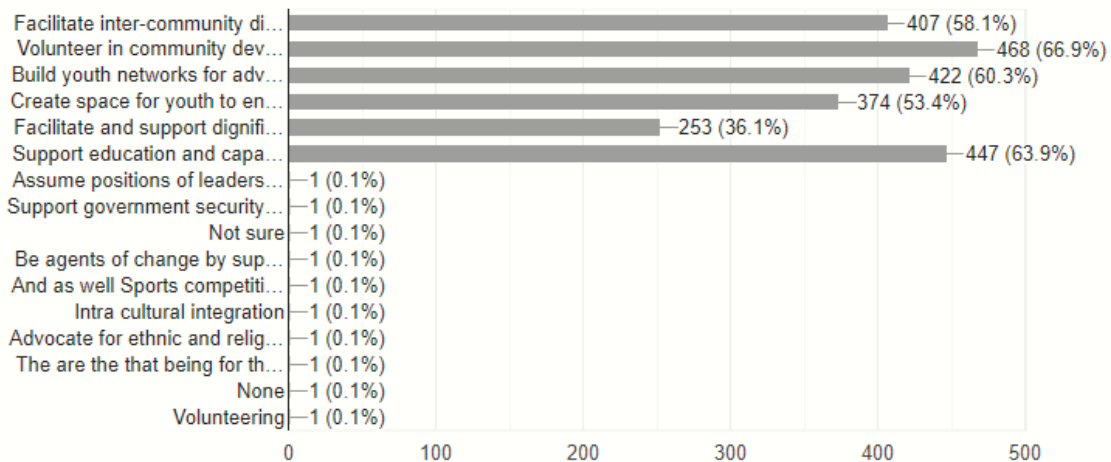
Who can play a leading role in decreasing violence/conflict in your community?



Do you think young people play a significant role towards peacebuilding in Nigeria?



If you answered yes, what role can youth play? (Tick all that apply)



■ 2.1. Adamawa State

The following local governments were represented: Fufore, Ganye, Girei, Guyuk, Hong, Jada, Jimeta, Lamurde, Madagali, Maiha, Michika, Mubi, Mubi North, Mubi South, Numan, Yola, Yola North and Yola South.

51 (53%) of the respondents identified as men, while 44 (46%) were women and 1 (1%) was non-binary.

13 (13.5%) were aged 18 to 24, 41 (42.7%) aged 25 to 29, 33 (34.4%) were aged 30 to 35, while 9 (9.4%) were Above 35.

84 (87.5%) identified as Christian, 11 (11.5%) identified as Muslim and 1 (1%) preferred not to say. 49 (51%) were unemployed, 28 (29.2%) were employed part-time/Informal employment, 9 (9.4%) were students, 8 (8.3%) were employed full-time, 1 (1%) was a musician and 1 (1%) was self-employed.

95 (99%) identified as not living with a disability while 1% did.

60 (62.5%) had Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree, 22 (22.9%) had Ordinary National Diploma/ National Certificate Education, 8 (8.3%) had Masters Degrees, 3 (3.1%) had Secondary School Certificates, 2 (2%) had Higher National Diplomas, 1(1%) had Postgraduate Diploma.

Have you been a victim of violent crime? 64 (66.7%) said "No", 32 (33.3%) said "Yes". Have any members of our family been victims: 51 (53.1%) answered Yes, 33 (34.4%) answered No, 12 (12.5%) answered Maybe.

How would you rate the level of physical safety in your community? 260 (Average Score: 2.7).

To What extent do you trust government: 270 (Average score: 2.8).

According to respondents, Most Common forms of Insecurity are: Property Crime (eg. theft/robbery/vandalism) at 62 (64.6%), Violence Related to Extremism at 51 (53.1%), Farmers/Herders Clash Related Violence at 48 (50%), Kidnapping at 47 (49%), Religious violence at 25 (26%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians 17 (17.7%)

The main causes of the violence were said to be Unemployment and poverty by 92 (96%) of respondents, Lack of government accountability/corruption by 63 (66%), Lack of quality education by 54 (56.2%), Extreme religious belief by 50 (52%), Lack of access to land and natural resources by 16 (16.7%). The most affected demographic is Youth 64 (66.7%), Women 54 (56.3%), Men 33 (34.4%), Children 26 (27%), Elderly 10 (10.4%), People with Disabilities 4 (4.2%).

Job opportunities 53 (55.2%), More security services on the ground, e.g., increased police presence 15 (15.6%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty 13 (13.5%), Communication between government and community (12.5), Giving jobs to unemployed youths especially graduate 2 (2%), government bringing perpetrators to justice 1 (1%).

Who can play a role in decreasing violence: Religious Leaders 30 (31.25%), Youth Groups 23 (24%), Government officials 22 (23%), Traditional Leaders 11 (11.5%), Media 5 (5.2%), CSOs/CBOs 4 (4.2%), Everyone 1 (1%).

Do young people play role in peace building: Yes 90 (93.8%), No 4 (4.2%), Not Sure 2 (2%). If yes, role Youth can play: Volunteer in community development activities 68 (70.8%), Support education and capacity-building for peace 66 (68.8%), Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges 56 (58.3%), Build youth networks for advocacy 56 (58.3%), create space for youths to engage in political processes 44 (45.8%)

■ 2.2. Benue State

The following local governments were represented: Ado, Agatu, Apa, Bauchi, Buruku, Gboko, Guma, Gwer West, Gwer East, Katsina-Ala, Konshisha, Kwande, LOGO, Makurdi, Ogbadigbo, Ohimini, Otukpo, Ushongo, Vandeikya.

65 (67.7%) of respondents identified as male, while 31 (32.3%) were female. 14 (14.6%) identified as aged 18 to 24, 40 (41.7%) were 25 to 29, 30 (31.2%) were 30 to 35, and 12 (12.5%) were above 35. 93 (96.9%) were Christians, 2 (2.1%) were Muslim and 1 (1%) preferred not to say. 89 (92.7%) identified as not disabled, 1 (1%) preferred not to say, 3 (3.1%) said Yes Self Identify, 2 (2.1%) said Yes Visual, 1 (1%) said Yes Emotional.

44 (45.8%) were unemployed, 30 (31.3%) were employed part-time/informal employment, 9 (9.4%) were employed full-time, 10 (10.4%) were students and 3 (3.1%) were self-employed.

73 (76%) had Undergraduate Bachelor's Degrees, 6 (6.3%) had an Ordinary National Diploma/National Certificate of Education, 10 (10.4%) had a Master's Degree, 6 (6.3%) had a Secondary School Certificate, and 1 (1%) had Higher National Diploma.

Have you ever been a victim of a violent crime? 56 (58.3%) said No, 40 (41.7%) said Yes. Have any of your family members been victims? 64 (66.7%) said Yes, 24 (25%) said No, 8 (8.3%) said Maybe.

They rated the level of physical safety in their communities 235 (Average Score: 2.4) and trust in government was rated 240 (Average Score: 2.5). For the most common forms of insecurity, the respondents voted as follows: Farmers/Herders Clash Related Violence 80 (83.3%), Property Crime e.g. theft/robbery/vandalism 61 (63.5%), Kidnapping 33 (34.4%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians 24 (25%), Violence related to extremism e.g. Boko Haram 13 (13.5%), Religious violence 6 (6.3%), Cultism 1 (1%), Communal Clashes 1 (1%), Political Clashes 1 (1%).

For the causes of violence, they voted as follows: Unemployment and poverty 80 (83.3%), Lack of government accountability/corruption 72 (75%), Lack of quality education 42 (43.8%), Lack of access to land and natural resources 21 (21.9%), Extreme religious beliefs 18 (18.8%), Land grabbing by a certain ethnic group 1 (1%), Lack of grazing land 1 (1%). According to the respondents, the most affected demographics are Youth 61 (63.5%), Women 61 (63.5%), Children 46 (47.9%), Men 38 (39.6%), Elderly 28 (29.2%) and People with Disabilities 13 (13.5%).

For what would best decrease violence, they voted as follows: Job opportunities 33 (34.4%), More security services on the ground, e.g. increased police presence 28 (29.2%), Communication between the government and community 17 (17.7%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty 13 (13.5%), Deliberate poverty reduction 1 (1%), Dialogue with opposition 1 (1%), engagement of youth in some programme 1 (1%), Federal government support to help state implement effectively the anti-grazing law 1 (1%). For who could play a role in decreasing violence, they voted as follows: Youth groups 45 (46.9%), government officials 26 (27%), Traditional leaders 13 (13.5%), Religious leaders 6 (6.3%), CSOs and CBOs 5 (5.2%), Media 2 (2%), All the stakeholders 1 (1%).

For “Do young people play role in peace building?” respondents voted as follows: 92 (95.8%) said Yes, 3 (3.1%) said Not Sure, 1 (1%) said No. For what role youths can play, they voted as follows: Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges 63 (65.6%), Support education and capacity-building for peace 62 (64.6%), Build youth networks for advocacy 61 (63.5%), Create space for youth to engage in political processes 51 (53.1%), Facilitate and support dignified livelihoods 33 (34.4%), Not sure 1 (1%).

■ 2.3. Kaduna State

The following local governments were represented: Barnawa, Birnin Gwari, Chikun, Igabi, Jaba, Jema'a, Kachia, Kaduna South, Kaduna, Kaduna North, Kajuru, Karji, Kaura, Lere, Makarfi, Sabon Gari, Sanga, Soba, Southern Kaduna, Zangon Kataf and Zaria.

107 (63.3%) of respondents were male, 59 (35%) were female, and 3 (1.7) preferred not to say. 28 (16.6%) were aged 18 to 24, 59 (34.9%) were aged 25 to 29, 55 (32.5%) were aged 30 to 35 and 27 (16%) were above 35. 87 (51.5%) were Christian and 82 (48.5%) were Muslim. 151 (89.3%) had no disability, 10 (5.9%) said Yes Physical, 3 (1.8%) said Yes Visual, 3 (1.8%) said Yes Hearing, 1 (0.6%) said Yes Mental and 1 (0.6%) preferred not to say.

90 (53.3%) of the respondent had an Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree, 31 (18.3%) had Ordinary National Diploma/National Certificate of Education, 26 (15.4%) had a Masters Degree, 10 (5.9%) had a Secondary School Certificate, 8 (4.7%) had Higher National Diploma, 2 (1.2%) had PhD, 2 (1.2%) had a Primary School Leaving Certificate. 50 (29.6%) were unemployed, 43 (25.4%) were employed part-time/informal employment, 34 (20.1%) were employed full-time, 33 (19.5%) were students, 4 (2.4%) were self-employed, 2 (1.2%) were contract staff members, 1 (0.6%) was an NYSC member, 1 (0.6%) was a peace practitioner and 1 (0.6%) was retired.

They rated Physical Safety 453 (Average Score: 2.7), and rated trust in government: 437 (Average Score: 2.6).

The most common forms of violence/insecurity are as follows; Kidnapping at 118 (69.8%), Property Crime (e.g., theft/robbery/vandalism) at 92 (54.4%), Religious violence at 53 (31.4%), Farmers/ Herders Clash Related Violence at 52 (30.8%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians at 31 (18.3%), Violence related to extremism e.g., Boko Haram at 24 (14.2%), Character assassination at 1 (0.6%), oppression at 1 (0.6%), injustice at 1 (0.6%).

The most affected demographics were voted as follows: Youth at 102 (60.4%), Women at 100 (59.2%), Children at 63 (37.3%), Men at 53 (31.2%), the Elderly at 27 (16%) and People with Disabilities at 14 (8.3%).

To the question "have you been a victim of crime", 129 (76.3%) said No, 40 (23.7%) said Yes. To "have any members of your family been victims of crime", 78 (46.2%) said Yes, 74 (43.8%) said No, and 17 (10%) said Maybe.

On the main causes of violence and insecurity, they voted as follows: Unemployment and poverty at 135 (79.9%), Lack of government accountability/corruption at 115 (68%), Lack of quality education at 89 (52.7%), Extreme religious beliefs at 73 (43.2%), Lack of access to land and natural resources, such as oil at 13 (7.7%), Poor leadership at 1 (0.6%), Lack of discipline at 1 (0.6%).

For the best way to decrease violence in their communities, they voted as follows: Job opportunities at 68 (40.2%), Communication between the government and community at 44 (26%), More security services on the ground, e.g. increased police presence at 29 (17.2%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty at 25 (14.8%), Sensitizing on the long term effect of violence at 1 (0.6%), Religious tolerance at 1 (0.6%), government bringing perpetrators to justice at 1 (0.6%).

For “who can best lead efforts to decrease violence”, participants voted as follows: Youth Groups at 54 (32%), government officials at 42 (24.9%), Religious leaders at 31 (18.3%), traditional leaders at 21 (12.4%), CSOs/CBOs at 12 (7.7%), Media at 4 (2.4%) and Everybody at 4 (2.4%).

Can youth, do it? 158 (93.5%) said Yes, 9 (5.3%) said Not sure and 2 (1.2%) said No. On how the youth can decrease violence, they voted as follows: Volunteer in community development activities at 117 (69.2%), Support education and capacity-building for peace at 107 (63.3%), Build youth networks for advocacy at 104 (61.5%), Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges at 97 (57.4%), Create space for youth to engage in political processes at 92 (94.4%), Facilitate and support dignified livelihoods at 67 (39.6%).

■ 2.4. Katsina State

The following local governments were represented: Batagarawa, Baure, Daura, Dutsinma, Faskari, Funtuua, Igabi, Ingawa, Jibia, Kaita, Kankara, Katsina, Katsina Central, Kusada, Malumfashi, Matazu, and Sabon Gari

38 (67.9%) of respondents were male and 18 (32.1%) were female. 9 (16%) were aged 18 to 24, 21 (37.5%) were aged 25 to 29, 20 (35.7%) were aged 30 to 35 and 6 (10.7%) were above 35. 51 (91%) identified as Muslim and 5 (9%) identified as Christian. 54 (96.4%) had no disability. 1 (1.8%) said Maybe, and 1 (1.8%) answered Yes Physical.

32 (57.1%) had an Undergraduate Bachelor’s Degree, 14 (25%) had an Ordinary National Diploma/National Certificate of Education, 4 (7.1%) had a Secondary School Certificate, 3 (5.4%) had a Master’s Degree, 2 (3.6%) had a Higher National Diploma, 1 (1.8%) had a Certificate in Inter Religious Dialogue. 20 (35.7%) of the respondents were Unemployed, 14 (25%) were Students, 14 (25%) were Employed part-time/informal employment, 6 (10.7%) were Employed full-time, 2 (3.6%) were Self Employed.

They rated the level of physical safety in their communities 158 (Average Score: 2.8). They rated trust in government: 178 (Average Score: 3.1).

They rated the most common forms of insecurity in their communities as follows: Kidnapping at 45 (80.4%), Property Crime e.g., theft/robbery/vandalism at 28 (50%), Farmers/ Herders Clash Related Violence at 19 (34%), Violence related to extremism e.g. Boko Haram at 4 (7.1%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians at 3 (5.4%) and Religious Violence at 2 (3.6%). The most affected demographics are Youth at 34 (60.75%), Women at 32 (57.1%), Men at 25 (44.6%), Children at 14 (25%), Elderly at 7 (12.5%), People with Disabilities at 7 (12.5%).

To the question “have you ever been victim of crime”, 53 (94.6%) said No and 3 (5.4%) said Yes. To the question “have any of your family members been victims of crime”, 26 (46.43%) said Yes, 26 (46.43%) said No, and 4 (7.14%) said Maybe.

For the main causes of violence and insecurity, they voted as follows: Unemployment and poverty at 48 (85.7%), Lack of quality education at 40 (71.4%), Lack of government accountability/corruption at 36 (64.3%), Extreme religious belief at 8 (14.3%) and Lack of access to land and natural resources, such as oil at 7 (12.5%).

On the best way to decrease violence, respondents voted as follows: Job opportunities at 28 (50%), More security services on the ground, e.g., increased police presence at 11 (19.6%), Communication between the government and community at 8 (14.3%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty at 8 (14.3%) and 1 (1.8) non-vote.

For “Who can lead decrease in violence” they voted as follows: Youth groups at 20 (35.7%), government officials at 17 (30.4%), traditional leaders at 8 (14.3%), religious leaders at 6 (10.7%) and CSOs/CBOs at 5 (8.9%). On if the youths can play a role in decreasing violence, 54 (96.4%) said Yes and 2 (3.6%) said No.

On what the youth can do, respondents voted as follows: Volunteer in community development activities at 35 (62.5%), Support education and capacity-building for peace at 34 (60.7%), Create space for youth to engage in political processes at 32 (57.1%), Build youth networks for advocacy at 29 (51.8%), Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges at 28 (50%), Facilitate and support dignified livelihoods at 17 (30.4%).

■ 2.4. Nasarawa State

The following local governments were represented: Akwanga, Doma, Karu, Keana, KEFFI, Kokona, Lafia, Lafia North, Mararaba, Masaka, Nasarawa Eggon, Obi and Toto.

60 (69.8%) of respondents were Male and 26 (30.2%) were Female. 9 (10.5%) were aged 18 to 24, 37 (43%) were aged 25 to 29, 34 (39.5%) were aged 30 to 35, and 6 (7%) were Above 35. 69 (80.2%) identified as Christian and 17 (19.8%) were Muslim.

83 (96.5%) had no disabilities, 2 (2.3%) preferred not to say and 1 (1.2%) said Yes Emotional.

38 (44.2%) were Unemployed, 10 (11.6%) were Students, 1 (1.2%) was a Proprietor, 1 (1.2%) was an NYSC Corps member, 25 (29%) were Employed part-time/Informal employment, and 11 (12.8%) were Employed full-time. 55 (64%) had an Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree, 12 (14%) had a Masters Degree, 2 (2.3%) had a Secondary School Certificate, 17 (19.8%) had an Ordinary National Diploma/National Certificate of Education.

To the question: what are the common forms of violence in your community, they responded as follows: Farmers/ Herders Clash Related Violence at 60 (70%), Property Crime (e.g. theft/robbery/vandalism) at 57 (66.3%), Kidnapping at 38 (44.2%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians at 15 (17.4%), Religious violence at 14 (16.3%), Violence related to extremism e.g. Boko Haram at 8 (9.3%), Ethnic clashes at 1 (1.2%), and Sexual abuse at 1 (1.2%).

They rated the level of physical safety in their communities at 240 (Average Score of 2.8) and their level of trust in government at 246 (Average Score of 2.9). According to the respondents, the most affected demographics are Youth at 49 (57%), Women at 43 (50%), Children at 33 (38.4%), Men at 30 (34.9%), Elderly at 11 (12.8%), People with disabilities at 8 (9.3%).

To the question "have you victim of crime?", 63 (73.3%) said No, and 23 (26.7%) said Yes. To "have any family members been victims of crime", 51 (59.3%) answered Yes, 29 (33.7%) answered No, and 6 (7%) said Maybe.

For the main causes of violence, they voted as follows: : Unemployment and poverty at 74 (86%), Lack of government accountability/corruption at 49 (57%), Lack of quality education at 48 (55.8%), Extreme religious beliefs at 30 (34.9%), Lack of access to land and natural resources, such as oil at 16 (18.6%), Ethnic bias at 2 (2.3%), Nepotism, lack of equity and fairness at 1 (1.2%), Youth Restiveness at 1 (1.2%), Bandits at 1 (1.2%) , Lack of public sensitization of people of the community at 1 (1.2%).

According to respondents, the best way to decrease violence is in the following order: Job opportunities at 52 (60.5%), More security services on the ground, e.g. increased police presence at 11 (12.8%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty at 10 (11.6%), Communication between the government and community at 9 (10.5%), Serious proper religious awareness at 1 (1.16%), Public sensitization at 1 (1.16%), Accountability on the part of security agents at 1 (1.16%), and Equity and fairness at 1 (1.16%).

On "who can lead decrease in violence", they voted as follows: Youth groups at 31 (36%), religious leaders at 15 (17.4%), traditional leaders at 13 (15.1%), government officials at 23 (26.7%), CSOs/CBOs at 4 (4.7%). Can the youth play a significant role? 82 (95.3%) said Yes, 3 (3.5%) said Not Sure and 1 (1.2) said No.

On what role the youth can play, they voted as follows: Volunteer in community development activities at 60 (69.8%), Support education and capacity-building for peace at 56 (65.1%) Build youth networks for advocacy at 55 (64%), Create space for youth to engage in political processes at 51 (59.3%), Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges at 50 (58.1%), Facilitate and support dignified livelihoods at 33 (38.4%).

2.6. Plateau State

The local governments represented are Barikin Ladi, Bassa, Bokkos, Jos, Jos North, Jos South, Kanam, Kanke, Langtang south, Mangu, Mikang, Pankshin, Plateau and Wase.

72 (64.3%) of the respondents are Male, 34 (29.2%) are Female, and 1 (0.9%) is Non-binary. 10 (8.9%) were aged between 18 and 24, 44 (39.3%) were aged 25 to 29, 44 (39.3%) were aged 30 to 35 and 14 (12.5%) were above 35. 93 (83%) were Christian and 19 (17%) were Muslim.

108 (96.4%) had no disabilities, 1 (0.9%) said Yes Physical, 1 (0.9%) said Yes Visual, 1 (0.9%) said Maybe, 1 (0.9%) preferred not to say.

31 (27.7%) were unemployed, 29 (25.9%) were employed part-time/informal employment, 23 (20.5%) were students, 20 (17.9%) were employed full-time, 8 (7.1%) were self-employed and 1 (0.9%) was a retiree.

For academic qualifications, 76 (67.8%) had Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree, 15 (13.4%) have a Masters Degree, 12 (10.7%) had Ordinary National Diploma/National Certificate of Education, 7 (6.3%) had Secondary School Certificate, 1 (0.9%) had a Higher National Diploma, and 1 (0.9%) had a PhD.

To the question, have you ever been a victim of violent crime, 77 (68.8%) of respondents said No, while 35 (31.2%) said Yes. To the question "Have any members of your family been victims?" they replied as follows: 61 (54.5%) said Yes, 39 (34.8%) said No, 12 (10.7%) said Maybe.

They rated the level of physical safety in their communities 303 (Average Score: 2.7) and the extent to which they trust their government 283 (Average Score: 2.5). According to respondents, the common forms of violence include Property Crime e.g. theft/robbery/vandalism at 72 (64.3%), kidnapping at 50 (44.6%), Religious violence at 41 (36.6%), Farmers/Herders Clash Related Violence at 38 (33.9%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians at 14 (12.5%), Land grabbing at 1 (0.9%), Sara soka (gangsterism) at 1 (0.9%), bandits at 1 (0.9%).

For the main causes of violence, they voted as follows: unemployment and poverty at 93 (83%), Lack of government accountability/corruption at 64 (57.1%), Extreme religious beliefs at 57 (50.9%), lack of quality education at 47 (42%), Lack of access to land and natural resources 14 (12.5%), Poor security measures at 2 (1.8%), lack of proper orientation at 1 (0.9%), Ethnic and Religious profiling of Criminals at 1 (0.9%).

For the most affected demographic, they voted as follows: Youth at 77 (68.8%), Women at 65 (58%), Children at 45 (40.2%), Men at 25 (22.3%), the Elderly at 10 (8.9%) and People with disabilities at 6 (5.4%).

On what would best decrease the violence, they voted as follows: Job opportunities at 56 (50%), More security services on the ground, e.g. increased police presence at 20 (17.9%), Communication between the government and community at 17 (15.2%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty at 15 (13.4%), Government taking full responsibility of providing basic amenities and security at 1 (0.9%), enlightenment and proper communication and interaction 1 (0.9%), Prosecuting culprits at 1 (0.9%), and Proper psycho Social education that improves the self-esteem of young people at 1 (0.9%).

On “who can lead the decrease in violence”, they voted as follows: Youth Groups at 46 (41%), Government Officials at 24 (21.4%), Religious Leaders at 22 (19.6%), CSOs/CBOs at 8 (7.1%), Traditional Leaders at 7 (6.3%), Media at 4 (3.6%), and Everyone at 1 (0.9%).

To the question, do young people play a role in peace building, 109 respondents (97.3%) said Yes, 2 (1.8%) said Not Sure and 1 (0.9%) said No. For the roles youth can play, they voted as follows: Support education and capacity-building for peace at 72 (64.3%), Build youth networks for advocacy at 68 (60.7%), Volunteer in community development activities at 68 (60.7%), Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges at 63 (56.3%), Create space for youth to engage in political processes at 58 (51.8%), Facilitate and support dignified livelihoods at 41 (36.6%).

2.7. Taraba State

The following local governments were represented: Ardoa Kola, Donga, Ibi, Jalingo, Karim Lamido, Lau, Sardauna, Takum, Ussa, Wukari, Yorro and Zing.

28 (49.1%) were Male and 29 (50.9%) were Female. 8 (14%) were aged 18 to 24, 22 (38.6%) were aged 25 to 29, 23 (40.4%) were aged 30 to 35 and 4 (7%) were above 35. 49 (86%) identified as Christian and 7 (12.3%) identified as Muslim while 1 (1.7%) preferred not to say.

All 57 (100%) reported No Disability.

27 (47.4%) of the respondents were unemployed, 11 (19.3%) were Employed part-time/Informal employment, 10 (17.5%) were Employed full-time, 8 (14%) were Students and 1 (1.8%) was a retiree. 33 (57.9%) had Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree, 10 (17.5%), Master's Degree, 7 (12.3%) had Ordinary National Diploma, 4 (7%) Secondary School Certificate, 1 (0.8%) had Advanced Certificate, 1 (0.8%) had Higher National Diploma in view, 1 (0.8%) had Primary School Leaving Certificate.

They rated the level of physical safety in their communities at 153 (Average Score: 2.7). They rated the trust in government at 166 (Average Score: 2.9).

According to the respondents, the most common forms of insecurity are as follows: Kidnapping 42 (73.7%), Farmers/Herders Clash Related Violence at 39 (68.4%), Property Crime e.g. theft/robbery/vandalism at 32 (56.1%), Religious violence at 25 (43.9%), Violence related to extremism at 8 (14%), Security Sector Violence against Civilians at 7 (12.3%), rape and molestation at 1 (1.8%). The most affected demographics were voted as: Youth at 37 (64.9%), Women at 34 (59.6%), Men at 21 (36.8%) Children at 21 (36.8%), Elderly at 10 (17.5%), People with disabilities at 5 (8.8%).

To the question “have you ever been victim of a violent crime”, 38 (66.7%) said “No” and 19 (33.3%) said Yes. To the question “have any members of your family been victims of violent crime”, 27 (47.4%) said No, 24 (42.1%) said Yes, and 6 (10.5%) said Maybe.

According to the respondents, the main causes of the violence are: Unemployment and poverty at 47 (82.5%), Lack of government accountability/corruption at 43 (75.4%), Extreme religious beliefs at 36 (63.2%), Lack of quality education at 26 (45.6%), Lack of access to land and natural resources, such as oil at 10 (17.5%), lack of proper orientation for the security personal on their main duty at 1 (1.8%), Selfish interest and seeking for power by all means at 1 (1.8%).

The best ways to decrease violence in their communities were voted as: Job opportunities at 29 (50.8%), More security services on the ground, e.g., increased police presence at 12 (21%), Communication between the government and community at 7 (12.3%), Support for families or individuals living in poverty at 6 (10.5%), Boundary demarcation at 1 (1.8%), Provision of required infrastructure at 1 (1.8%) and Government neutrality at 1 (1.8%).

On who can lead decrease in violence: Religious leaders at 17 (29.8%), Youth groups at 12 (21%), traditional leaders at 10 (17.5%), government officials at 8 (14%), CSOs/CBOs at 7 (12.3%), Media at 2 (3.5%) and Neutral body at 1 (1.8%).

Can the youth lead efforts to decrease violence? 51 (89.5%) said Yes, 5 (8.7%) said Not sure, 1 (1.8%) said No. What can youths do: Volunteer in community development activities 36 (63.2%), Build youth networks for advocacy at 36 (63.2%), Facilitate inter-community dialogue and exchanges 36 (63.2%), Support education and capacity-building for peace at 35 (61.4%), Create space for youth to engage in political processes at 33 (57.9%) and facilitate and support dignified livelihoods at 22 (38.6%).

Part 3: Fresh Lens: Emerging Drivers of Insecurity from a Youth Perspective



■ 3.1. Adamawa State

“We are directly at the receiving end of the violence we experience here. Our husbands die and leave us as widows to take care of all these children, which we cannot do on our own.... Without our husbands here to protect us, we are at the mercy of rapists.”

– Female Participant, Yola North, Adamawa State

Located in Nigeria’s north-east region, Adamawa state is a product of the split of the defunct Gongola State into Adamawa and Taraba states in 1991. Adamawa shares boundary with the Republic of Cameroon to the east, Borno state to the north, Gombe state to the west, and Taraba state to the south. Adamawa’s proximity to Borno state makes it susceptible to Boko Haram attacks. Indeed, the spike in violence and terrorist activity in Adamawa state led President Goodluck Jonathan to declare a state of emergency in the state in May 2013. The insecurity in Adamawa state is related to the high level of poverty and unemployment, low economic productivity in the state.³¹ Adamawa has been severely impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency. The insecurity situation in Adamawa is like those of neighboring Borno, and Yobe states. Since Boko Haram is a major security problem in Adamawa, it is pertinent to understand that causal factors of the insurgency.

³¹ OCHA “Nigeria-Adamawa State: Humanitarian Situation Analysis for January to August 2020”

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ocha_nga_adamawahumanitariansituationaloverview_28092020.pdf

Illiteracy and unemployment are some of the factors that fuels the Boko Haram insurgency. For instance, education is an effective means for increasing a person's economic prospects in life. But many youths are anxious about getting jobs, despite very few being available in the state. Even the educated graduates are in despair, not to talk of illiterates.³² This trend has led the youth to resort to violence and insurgency as a means of survival. A large number of the Nigerian people, mostly youth, have become frustrated and lost hope and have taken to violence.³³ Poverty is another factor responsible for the insurgency in Adamawa state.

“Boko Haram keeps trying to convince us that they have more power than the government. It won't be strange to see that several young people here believe them.” - Male Participant, Mubi North , Adamawa

Aside Boko Haram insurgency, herder-farmer clashes which has taken an inter-communal crisis angle is emerging as the most critical driver of insecurity in Adamawa State. The tensions between farmers and herders have exacerbated due to changing migration patterns leading to destruction of farms by herders, added pressure around land use, and encroachment by farmers onto grazing routes. The growing scarcity of resources is further compounded by the increase in Nigeria's population, desertification, and influx of people from areas affected by the conflict with Boko Haram. Previously, farmers and herders were able to amicably resolve their disputes through established traditional system worked, but with farmers now increasingly cultivating their lands in the dry season blocking grazing areas and diminishing water resources by their need of water for irrigation and farmers now also rear cows and not just draught oxen, meaning their cattle need grazing areas too, making the competition stiffer.³⁴

The herder-farmer violence is more prevalent in Numan, Demsa, Lamurde and Mayo-Belwa LGAs.³⁵ For example, the violence between Hausa and Chibo ethnic groups in Lamurde LGA claimed 73 lives and displaced at least a thousand in May 2020.³⁶ There is also the violent conflict between nomadic Fulani herdsman and the Bachama people of the Numan Federation, which conflict has spiraled to ethno-religious inter-communal crisis.³⁷ At least seven villages in Numan and Demsa LGAs were attacked on 4th December 2017, by suspected Fulani gunmen, leaving at least 51 people dead.³⁸ The attack seemed to be a reprisal for the about 80 Fulani killed in Shelewo, a Fulani village, on 20th November, 2017, by suspected Bachama armed men.³⁹ Similarly, at least 27 Fulani by suspected Bile armed men who attacked Fulani villages in Mayo-Belwa LGA on 14 July 2018.⁴⁰

32 Usman, S. A. (2015) Unemployment and poverty as sources and consequence of insecurity in Nigeria: the book haram insurgency revisited. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 9(3): 90-99

33 Onuoha, F. C. (2014) Why do youth join book haram? United States Institute of Peace Special Report No. 348. Washington: USIP

34 Amnesty International “Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria” p.13 2018 <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>

35 OCHA “Adamawa State: Humanitarian Situation Overview” 25 October 2019 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/adamawa_humanitarian_situation_overview_191107.pdf

36 Reliefweb 19 May 2020 “Flash Update 73 killed and more than 1,000 displaced by inter-communal clashes in Adamawa State” <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/flash-update-19-may-2020-covid-19-nigeria-73-killed-and-more-1000-displaced-inter>

37 UN Universal Periodic Review 18 November 2018 “Right of Indigenous People (Farmers) and the Herders t life, peace and security in Numan Federation in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria” <https://uprdoc.ohchr.org/uprweb/downloadfile.aspx?filename=5837&file=EnglishTranslation>

38 Amnesty International, Nigeria: Dozens killed as military launches airstrikes on villages beset by spiraling communal violence, 30 January 2018 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/nigeria-dozens-killed-as-military-launches-air-attacks-on-villages-beset-by-spiraling-communal-violence/>

39 Amnesty International “Harvest of Death” page 25

40 Ibid.

While the herder-farmer clashes is primarily occupation in context as a dispute between sedentary farmers and nomadic cattle herders, the ethnic composition of the farmers (been mainly indigenous ethnic groups) and of the herders (been mainly Fulani persons) means that the conflict often takes an ethnic coloration. Accordingly, majority of the attacks by both sides were retaliatory, which then affected nearby communities because of the ethnic connection with the targeted communities.⁴² The attacks were severe, and with impunity, often lasting for several hours without security response.⁴³

The third and final major driver of insecurity in Adamawa state is the activity of kidnappers who routinely abduct persons for ransom. Kidnapping is a serious driver of insecurity in Adamawa State, with different incidents reported from time to time.⁴⁴ Kidnapping by criminal gangs is prevalent across Adamawa State with abductors demanding a ransom of millions of Naira to release captives.⁴⁵ Sometimes the kidnappers send letters to individuals threatening to kidnap them if they don't pay a certain amount of money.⁴⁶ It was reported that one concerned citizen lamented that the spate of kidnapping in Adamawa state is so dire cutting across all strata of social ladder from menial jobbers to politicians, to business people and other professionals like academics, journalists and health workers, with another lamented that people are being kidnapped on a daily basis with some of the residents fleeing their homes for fear of being kidnapped and the do not sleep with their two eyes closed for fear of kidnappers.⁴⁷ It has been asserted that the rise in kidnapping is occurring against a backdrop of economic destruction caused by violence in northern Adamawa and farmer-pastoralist conflict in central and southern zones, continuing fear that prevents people from resuming livelihoods and weak governance, leadership and security provision.⁴⁸

41 Relief web 8 March 2017 "ACAPS Crisis Profile- Northeast Nigeria: Adamawa State Crisis Profile 2017" <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/acaps-crisis-profile-northeast-nigeria-adamawa-state-crisis-profile-2017>

42 Amnesty International "Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria" p.7 2018 <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>

43 Ibid.

44 Premium Times "Police arrest 32 suspects over alleged kidnapping in Adamawa" December 1, 2020 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-east/428933-police-arrest-32-suspects-over-alleged-kidnapping-in-adamawa.html> ;Daily Trust Kabiru R. Anwar 5 May, 2021 "Female Journalist Abducted in Adamawa" <https://dailytrust.com/female-journalist-abducted-in-adamawa>

45 OCHA "Adamawa State: Humanitarian Situation Overview" 25 October 2019 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/adamawa_humanitarian_situation_overview_191107.pdf

46 Daily Trust Amina Abdullahi "Adamawa: 4 Suspected Kidnappers Arrested With Threat Letters" April 21 2021 <https://dailytrust.com/adamawa-4-suspected-kidnappers-arrested-with-threat-letters>

47 Premium Times Iro Dan Fulani "Adamawa communities protest upsurge in kidnapping, allege police collusion" January 7, 2020 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-east/371549-adamawa-communities-protest-upsurge-in-kidnapping-alleged-police-collusion.html>

48 Managing Conflict in Nigeria Policy Brief: Gender Relations in Adamawa" December 2019 https://www.iustice-security.ng/sites/default/files/mcn_policy_brief_gender_relations_in_adamawa.pdf

■ 3.2. Benue State

“If our traditional leaders, can be held accountable, we will fix this farmer-herder crisis” - Male Participant, Gboko , Benue State

Benue State is in north-central Nigeria. It has faced perhaps, the most severe of the perennial clash between farmers and herdsman. Cattle herdsman operate within an expansive geography oscillating between their major base within the savannah in the rainy season in and move southwards for water and grass during the dry season, they often clash with farmers during these movements, Benue straddles the south and the north, and often called the “food basket” of the nation it has good pastureland, hence usual conflict with the herders. About 80% of Nigerians living in Benue state are employed in the agricultural sector. Many are farmers while others are pastoralist.⁴⁹ In the past, these two groups co-existed without any problems. In recent times however, the hitherto harmonious co-existence became acrimonious.⁵⁰

Of the 700 youth participants surveyed, 97 of them are domiciled in Benue (also, the focus group discussion and interviews carried out for this research engaged 5 youth participants from Benue too). The respondents from Benue mostly allude to the following factors as drivers of insecurity in the state:

Destruction of farmlands by Fulani herds, politicization of native/nomad differences through mobilization of clannish, ethnic, religious, or other primordial sentiments.

Changing resources access rights whereby traditional access rights to communal grazing and water are being obstructed by the individual tenureship of farmers

Inadequacy of land resources due to environmental degradation and other climatic factors in the face of upsurge in population

Culture of criminal brigandage and opportunism among the youths of both sides of the conflict divide

Inefficient land use laws and management system

Politicization of indigineship

Clashes between nomadic cattle herders and farmers in Nigeria's Middle Belt have killed thousands of people and displaced half a million over the past decade.⁵¹ Many people have been uprooted by the so-called ‘farmer-herdsman’ conflict. At least 160,000 displaced people are scattered across Benue state, according to 2019 estimate. Here, displaced communities, mostly farmers are living in camps or settlements.⁵² Although multi-layered and complex, the farmer-herdsman conflict is in large part driven by competition for land resources. Migratory herders are being pushed even further south in search for land for cattle to graze upon.

49 Daudu, S. Chado, S. S. & Igbashal, A. A. (2009) Agricultural information sources utilized by farmers in Benue State, Nigeria. *Production Agriculture and Technology Journal* 5(1): 39-48

50 Yaro, S. D. & Tseer, T. (2019) Exploring the state of human insecurity in Nigeria: the root causes of the farmer-herdsman conflict in Benue state and its manifestation on the livelihoods of rural farmers and pastoralists *ADRRJ Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 16:5(4): 60-98

51 <https://www.msf.org/refugees-idps-and-people-move>

52 Mdecins Sans Frontiers “The forgotten farmer-herdsman conflict in middle belt states” 1 september, 2020. Nigeria <https://www.msf.org/forgotten-farmer-herdsman-conflict-middle-belt-states-nigeria>

Some of the underlying causes include environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change such as desertification, reducing fertile land. In addition, the ongoing violence in traditional grazing areas in the northwest is forcing many herders to flee. The land that herders settle on, however, is claimed by farmers. In 2018, a sudden violent escalation of previously seasonal clashes between herdsmen and farmers forced and estimated 300,000 people from their homes and killed 1,300. Many once successful farms have been destroyed, even where land is still usable, many people report being too scared to return to cultivate it. The spiraling herder-farmer clashes is a result of dispute over access to land resources, in the face of failure of the government to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to protect lives and properties which inaction fuels impunity and breeds attacks and reprisals.⁵³ Several villages have been deserted and burnt down, with farmers absent from their farms, following attacks by suspected Fulani men.⁵⁴ The growing scarcity of resources is further compounded by the increase in Nigeria's population, desertification and influx of people from areas affected by the conflict with Boko Haram in parts of northeast Nigeria (mainly Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states). Some of these attacks were well planned and coordinated and perpetrators (on both sides) appeared to have taken measures to hide their identities, wearing uniforms and other disguise and at times masks and operating in a coordinated fashion. Many attacks happened at night or very early in the morning while some happened during the day.⁵⁵

Benue state has since been wrapped in a series of conflicts dating as far back as the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates by the colonial masters in 1914.⁵⁶ Initially, the region itself was divided into North and South.⁵⁷ It is noteworthy that the Tiv have been involved in other fights with their neighbours in states that border Benue.⁵⁸ The recurrent fight between Tiv and Jukuns saw some attacks launched in some villages within the state. The Tiv have also been involved in fights with other ethnic groups like Alago, Mada and Migili which are all in Nasarawa State.⁵⁹ However, the most recent fracas involving Benue indigenes (mostly Tivs) and other groups has remained the Farmer-herders conflict. There have been fierce and bloody attacks and reprisal attacks between these two groups. Some Fulanis accuse local farmers of blocking their grazing routes and cultivating their grazing fields.⁶⁰ The farmers also accuse the Fulani herdsmen of destroying their farmlands, raping some of their women and destroying their sources of drinking water by allowing their animals to drink from the same rivers that they drink from.⁶¹ These accusations and counter accusations have led to fierce clashes between the two groups. Hence, reinforcing the problem of insecurity in Benue state.

53 Amnesty International "Harvest of Feath: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria" p.6 2018
<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid at 16.

56 Alubo, S. O. (2013) Citizenship rights and ethnic contestations in central Nigeria. Lagos: University Press

57 Adamu, A. and Ben, A. (2017) Nigeria: Benue state under the shadow of herdsmen terrorism. Amsterdam: World Watch Research and Open Doors International.

58 Alubo, O. (2006) Ethnic conflict and citizenship crises in the central region. Ibadan: University Press

59 Adamu, G. (2002) The issues in the Tiv-Jukun conflict. Jos: Target Publishers

60 Kwaja, C. M. A & Bukola, I. A. A. (2018) Responses to conflict between herdsmen and farmers in the middle belt of Nigeria: mapping past efforts and opportunities for violence prevention. Forum on farmer and herder relations in Nigeria. Search for Common Ground: 5-6

61 Ojo, H. (2016) Nigeria: farmers and herders clash over land. Institute for Peace and War Reporting. 19 August

Cattle rusting is a major factor responsible for the insecurity in Benue state. As soon as the relationship between the farmers became soured, criminal elements from both sides took advantage of the situation and began to rustle cattle.⁶² Many herders admitted to loosing thousands of bandits. At the beginning, this began as a result of revenge for defenseless farmers whose crops were destroyed by armed herdsman.⁶³ However, with time it became sophisticated and served as a source of income for many. Also, unemployment which is a major problem in Nigeria plays a major role in fueling the conflict thereby worsening the insecurity situation in Benue state as several unemployed youths turn to banditry to make a living since it affords them an opportunity to request for payments on ransom.

Benue enacted the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law, 2017, commonly called the anti-grazing law.⁶⁴ The law prohibited open grazing of cattle and other livestock and provided for establishment of ranches. Offence to openly graze cattle and other animals, herders are expected to apply and obtain land from government at designated places for ranches establishment. The solution has become a problem itself, stiff opposition by the Fulani herders' major source of incessant clashes. Thousands of them migrated to Nasarawa state, which did not have such a law in place.

Scarcity of and competition for resources, mainly land, water and pasture has been a driver of insecurity in Benue.⁶⁵ There are a combination political, economic, and environmental factors that increase tensions.⁶⁶ On April 25, 2021, three students of the Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi were kidnapped by gunmen while studying near a lecture hall within the institution.⁶⁷ This was shortly after gunmen killed three and kidnapped two foreign national in an ambush in Benue State on April 7, 2021.⁶⁸ Kidnapping is almost routine in Benue State.⁶⁹

62 Kehinde, E. A.; Uchechukwu, C. U. & Mamuh, P. (2015) Effect of cattle rustling on income of farmers in Benue state, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology* 16(2): 78-83

63 Anonguku, I. Obinne, C. P. O. & Daudu, S. (2008) A socio-economic analysis of livestock pilferage in rural and urban areas of Benue state, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences* 17(2): 169-172

64 Unini Chioma TheNigerianLawyer "The Benue Anti-Open Grazing Law – Download Copy" January 14, 2018

<https://thenigerianlawyer.com/the-benue-anti-open-grazing-law-download-copy/>

65 <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>

66 Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust "Long Read: Violence in Nigeria's 'Middle Belt' States: Ethnic and Religious Dimensions" March 19, 2021 <https://www.hart-uk.org/blog/long-read-violence-in-nigerias-middle-belt-states-ethnic-and-religious-dimensions/>

67 Vanguard Peter Duru "Three Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi students kidnapped by gunmen" 26 April, 2020 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/04/three-federal-university-of-agriculture-makurdi-students-kidnapped-by-gunmen/>

68 GardaWorld "Nigeria: Gunmen kill three and kidnap two in Benue State" <https://www.garda.com/crisis24/news-alerts/465151/nigeria-gunmen-kill-three-and-kidnap-two-in-benue-state-april-7>

69 Channels TV "Police Arrest Suspected Kidnap Kingpin, Another in Benue" May 24, 2021

<https://www.channelstv.com/2021/05/24/police-arrest-suspected-kidnap-kingpin-another-in-benue/>

■ 3.3. Kaduna State

Kaduna state, located in north-west Nigeria, has a projected population of about 8.2 million people, and is the third most populated state in Nigeria after Kano and Lagos states.⁷⁰ The population in Kaduna is young, with about 85 % of its inhabitants under 35 years of age.⁷¹ Kaduna was first founded as a military hub for the British colonialists, before it metamorphosed into the capital of the defunct Northern Protectorate, and upon Nigeria's independence, the capital of the Northern Region.⁷² Kaduna state is therefore, both a political and commercial center, with a heterogeneous population and a cosmopolitan outlook.

Kaduna, once a peaceful state, is now one of the hotbeds of insecurity in Nigeria. In 2020 alone, Kaduna state experienced at least 220 violent events resulting to the deaths, abductions, and displacements of thousands of persons, as well as the destruction of hundreds of communities.⁷³ Dishearteningly, the situation shows no sign of decelerating, in fact it is exacerbating.⁷⁴ The Governor of Kaduna state, lamented that Kaduna, which was home to people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds, has since the beginning of the 1980's been witnessing a cycle of violence that has killed thousands of people, and sharply divided the state along ethno-religious lines, with the majority Muslim persons of the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group predominating northern Kaduna while the diverse other ethnic groups⁷⁵ that mainly profess the Christian faith are concentrated in southern Kaduna.⁷⁶

But, while the conflict in Kaduna manifests as ethno-religious, it is actually driven by a long history of fierce competition and grievances over political power, territory, economic opportunities and agricultural resources. This competition which pits the Christian-inclined diverse ethnic groups in southern Kaduna against the more politically and economically empowered Muslim-inclined Hausa-Fulani of northern Kaduna, gives the conflict its ethno-religious coloration. However, the real drivers of the conflict include rural banditry, cattle rustling, water and land use and access disputes, farm and herding disputes, access to political power and economic resources, environmental degradation and climate change, existence of criminal gangs, arms proliferation, high youth unemployment, and even the prevalence of drug abuse.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ <https://citypopulation.de/php/nigeria-admin.php?adm1id=NGA019>

⁷¹ <https://kdsg.gov.ng/about-kaduna/>

⁷² Council on Foreign Relations Ethnic and Religious Violence Worsen in Kaduna (February 5, 2021), John Campbell <https://www.cfr.org/blog/ethnic-and-religious-violence-worsen-kaduna>

⁷³ Confronting Nigeri'a Kaduna Crisis by Olajumoke Ayandele Feb 2, 2021: Africa Center for Strategic Studies. <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/confronting-nigerias-kaduna-crisis/>

⁷⁴ Killing fields: 1,525 Nigerians killed in six weeks of 2021 Clifford Ndujihe, March 1, 2021, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/03/killing-fields-1525-nigerians-killed-in-six-weeks-of-2021/>

⁷⁵ There is no ethnic group called Hausa-Fulani. Hausa ethnic group is different from Fulani ethnic group. However, there is a strong symbiotic relationship between the two groups, resulting from inter-marriages, similarities in culture, and the strong Islamic ties that bind them. Historically, the Usman dan Fodio jihad transformed Hausa city states to Fulani ruled caliphate and emirates. Today, the two ethnic groups are conterminous. Hence, the use of Hausa-Fulani is only a matter of convenience.

⁷⁶ Channels TV Chimezie Enyiocha "Kaduna Conflicts: El-Rufai Inaugurates Peace Commission" November 5, 2017 <https://www.channelstv.com/2017/11/05/kaduna-conflicts-el-rufai-inaugurates-peace-commission/>

⁷⁷ Chatham House Leena Koni Hoffman "Violence in Southern Kaduna Threatens to Undermine Nigeria's Democratic Stability" <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2017/02/violence-southern-kaduna-threatens-undermine-nigerias-democratic-stability>

According to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, 220 violent events in recent times have resulted in nearly a thousand fatalities.⁷⁸ Moreover, there have been roughly 400 persons abducted for ransom and hundreds of communities destroyed causing the displacement of more than 50,000 people.⁷⁹ Over the last one year, Kaduna state has recorded the highest number of political violence and fatalities in Northern Nigeria.⁸⁰

Insecurity in the state revolves around three different but mostly overlapping factors:

Farmer-Herder Conflicts: The intensified nature of the farmer-herder conflict in Kaduna can be traced to an expansion of primarily pastoralist militia groups in the Northwestern states of Nigeria. Attacks from pastoralist militias seeking grazing pastures for their herds have provoked reprisal attacks by community vigilante groups seeking to protect their farms, leading to further retaliation by the militias. This cycle of conflict has accelerated as pastureland has become scarcer due to population pressures and environmental degradation across Northern Nigeria. As herders search further for grazing land, farmers and their settlement are also expanding into new areas to sow their crops. This dual expansion has rapidly increased competition over shrinking land resources in Kaduna state.⁸¹ However, both sides of the Kaduna's farmer-herder clashes increasingly use small arms smuggled into North West Nigeria by gun importers who sell and distribute them through illicit markets. The worrisome case by which weapons are accessed has encouraged both farmers and herders to arm themselves, deepening the cycle of violence in Kaduna.

"I know who these gang members are. They are guys like me. But nobody can do anything about them due to the level of impunity here. Some of them say they are "hustling" which means they will do anything to ensure they make money and get power. So, if I challenge them, they may hunt me down too. I try to avoid any problems with them. As someone who is not in a gang, I am vulnerable because I don't have money and I also don't have any protection." – Male participant, 20's Chikun, Kaduna State.

Criminal Gangs: Organized criminal gangs have exploited the absence of a robust security presence by ambushing travelers on highways, abducting persons for ransom, rustling cattle from pastoralists and imposing fines and taxes in the form of "harvest fees" on local farmers. These activities further escalate tensions between locals which the gangs aggravate through the buying and selling of weapons on black markets that they control. Military operations in 2016 and early 2017 expelled some criminal groups operating in Kaduna state.⁸² However, these campaigns were not sustained long enough to hold territory. This enabled the criminal gangs to reorganize and return. Hence, the combination of a limited security presence and a 40 percent unemployment rate in Kaduna state (the highest in Northern Nigeria)⁸³ facilitated recruitment by criminal groups. Also, with nearly 44 percent of residents living below the National poverty line, Kaduna's poverty headcount ratio is said to be three times higher than Anambra's in South East Nigeria and ten times higher than in Lagos.⁸⁴

78 Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (2019) Political violence skyrockets in the sahel according to latest ACLED data. ACLED (Online) 28 March

79 Ayandele, O. (2021) Confronting Nigeria's Kaduna Crisis. African Center for Strategic Studies. 2 February

80 International Crisis Group (2020) Violence in Nigeria's northwest: rolling back the mayhem. Report No. 288, 18 May.

81 International Crisis Group (2018) Stopping Nigeria's spiraling farmer-herder conflict. Report No. 262, 18 July.

82 Conflict Armament Research (2020) Nigeria's farmer-herder conflict: domestic, regional and transcontinental weapons sources. London: CAR

83 Yakubu, K. N. (2020) Rise of informal security providers in Kaduna state. Development Frontiers in Crime, Livelihood and Urban Poverty in Nigeria. 26 March

84 Oxfam (2017) Inequality in Nigeria: exploring the drivers. United Kingdom: Oxfam

Violent Extremist Organizations: After 7 years of inactivity, the militant Islamism group, *Ansaru* staged a complex ambush in January 2020 targeting the convoy of the Emir of Potiskum and killing dozens of Nigerian soldiers.⁸⁵ However, distinguishing these attacks from those of other criminal groups provides insights into the persistent issues of local grievances stemming from Kaduna's worsening insecurity and socioeconomic conditions. *Ansaru's* ideological campaign casts democratic rule as corrupt and incompatible with Islam while offering weapons and economic opportunities to new recruits, including young people.⁸⁶ Efforts by the group to expand from Kaduna into neighboring states and its ability to target Nigerian soldiers underscores the border security threat *Ansaru* poses to the region. Armed men killed at least 366 people in multiple attacks in Kaduna state between January and July 2020.⁸⁷

Gender-based violence as an endemic issue in Kaduna: *"Speaking as someone who works on gender-based violence here, rape has become such a recurring issue that the State House of Assembly proposed castration as punishment for perpetrators... During the lockdown, rape cases escalated further but the culture of silence here makes the women not to talk. Recently, we got a call in the office that a girl was raped and dropped in the mosque, and another was raped, and her lifeless body was found by the graveyard site. These episodes are many. Asides the rape and killings, even domestic abuse has become rampant. There was this popular case of the refinery staff that brought a girl from the village and her own children will hold the girl down and she will be using fire to burn the girl's private part. I don't know why these issues always get swept under the carpet. Even the Jennifer case that was trending on twitter happened here in Narayi. Some boys had raped a girl, and she became unconscious. You must have seen the video on twitter where she was being resuscitated, and they were giving her milk to revive her. The issue now is that we keep fighting for justice, but the system is corrupt."* – Activist, Male 20's Kaduna

85 Weiss, C. (2020) *Ansaru* publicly returns to Nigeria. FDD's Long War Journal. 17 January.

86 Weiss, C. (2020) Al-Qaeda linked group claims attacks in northwestern Nigeria. FDD's Long War Journal. 8 August.

87 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/08/nigeria-government-failings-leave-rural-communities-at-the-mercy-of-gunmen/>

■ 3.4. Katsina State

Katsina, located in north-west Nigeria, and created in 1987 out of Kaduna State, is the 4th largest state in Nigeria with an estimated population of 5.8 million persons, a population who are mainly Muslims and of the Hausa of Fulani ethnic group extraction.⁸⁸ The state shares boundary with Kaduna to the south, Jigawa and Kano to the East, Zamfara to the West and Niger Republic to the North. Although the government websites would want you to believe that “The State is one of the most peaceful States in the Federation”,⁸⁹ peace has long eluded the state. The activities of bandits, cattle rustlers and insurgents have made extinguished peace and security from Katsina State.⁹⁰ Only recently, the state was in the news following the abduction of 344 schoolboys in Kankara.⁹¹ The Kankara abduction, as many other equally serious but less reported incidents, appears to be purely mercenary with kidnappers after ransom payments.⁹²

Katsina state is presently affected by banditry, cattle rustling and kidnapping which was heightened from around 2017 and 2018 and has gone on till date.⁹³ This situation has affected mainly eight major Local Government Areas which are: Jibia, Batsari, Safana, Dnamusa, Kankara, Faskari, Dandume and Sabua. However, the situation in Katsina state has since degenerated further and in January 2019, with the governor of the state noting that “Katsina State is under serious siege by bandits and kidnappers, even me as the governor am not safe”.⁹⁴ The violence in Katsina state seems multi-faceted, much of it can be explained as either violent farmers-herders conflict or attacks by bandits and other criminal elements for commercial reasons, with the two issues overlapping in certain ways.⁹⁵ Insecurity in Katsina state as a result of the violent conflict between herders and farmers, has an occupational and ethnic dimension. This is because pastoralism and especially transhumance, is an occupation predominated by the Fulani people, while crop cultivation is an occupation dominated by the Hausa people. The conflict originates in disputes between the Fulani cattle herders and the Hausa crop farmers over land use and land access. Insecurity in Katsina state as a result of the violent conflict between herders and farmers, has an occupational and ethnic dimension. This is because pastoralism and especially transhumance, is an occupation predominated by the Fulani people, while crop cultivation is an occupation dominated by the Hausa people. The conflict originates in disputes between the Fulani cattle herders and the Hausa crop farmers over land use and land access. While disputes between farmers and herders in Katsina state, over land resources is not new and were for the most part amicably resolved, the dispute has now taken a violent shape.

⁸⁸ <https://www.katsinastate.gov.ng/about-katsina/>

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Libby George Reuters Fact-box: The Violence and insecurity affecting Nigeria, March 2, 2021 <https://www.reuters.com/world/violence-insecurity-affecting-nigeria-2021-03-02/>

⁹¹ Premium Times Abubakar Ahmadu Maishanu Dec 12, 2020 “Many students missing as gunmen attack Katsina secondary school” <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/nwest/430858-many-students-missing-as-gunmen-attack-katsina-secondary-school.html>

⁹² Council on Foreign Relations John Campbell Feb 18, 2021 Kidnapping and Ransom Payments in Nigeria <https://www.cfr.org/blog/kidnapping-and-ransom-payments-nigeria>.

⁹³ Orjinmo, N. (2020). Katsina: The Motorcycle Bandits Terrorizing Northern Nigeria. *BBC*. P.A1.

⁹⁴ Bello, B. and Marama, N. (2019). Nobody's Safe in Katsina Now. Gov Masari Cries Out. *Vanguard*. P.A1

⁹⁵ Violence in Nigeria's North West: Rolling Back the Mayhem: International Crisis Group Report 288 18 May 2020, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/288-violence-nigerias-north-west-rolling-back-mayhem>

The exacerbation of the conflict owes to shrinking land resources resulting from changes in environmental conditions and in climate, coupled with demographic pressures, leading to intense competition for the now limited resources.⁹⁶ While the herders employ militias in order to secure their access to land resources, the farmers, in the face of inadequate governmental security support, form armed vigilantes, to secure their communities and resources.

However, these armed vigilantes have become a problem themselves, as they not only mete out harsh sanctions to real or perceived perpetrators of robberies and raids, but they also indiscriminately torch Fulani settlements. In so doing, the activities and atrocities of the vigilantes further aggravate tensions between the herders and the farmers. As the conflict intensify, the Fulani militias become more daring and their objective expands from securing resources for transhumance to indiscriminate violent attacks on Hausa communities for destruction, abduction for ransom, rustling of animals and general pillage. And as violence escalates, both groups through varied criminal enterprise especially robberies and abduction for ransom, are both able to raise huge financial outlay, and to acquire more sophisticated arms and ammunitions from the black market. Hence, and in view of government's inability to rein in the challenge, what started as a conflict over land resources but transformed into rivalry between herder-allied militias and armed community farmer-allied vigilantes, has now metamorphosed into a cycle of violent conflict affecting everyone in both the Fulani settlements and the Hausa communities in varied ways.

Another category of insecurity in Katsina state consists of primarily criminal elements associated as gangs and referred to as "bandits." These bandits have seized upon the weak security system and the availability of large tracts of ungoverned spaces in the state, to engage in large scale cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, and pillage and attacks on traders, artisans and farmers, as a commercial enterprise. Accordingly, the bandits, lacking political or ideological project, cohesion or centralized command, act autonomously, and sometimes in rivalry with one another.⁹⁷ Cumulatively, violent conflict and attacks orchestrated by bandits and herder-associated militias is now prevalent in at least eleven local government areas of Katsina state, with Batsari, Danmusa, Faskari, Kankara and Safana, among the worst hit.⁹⁸ Spurred by ease of access small arms and light weapons, the violent attacks by these criminal elements have mushroomed, and the overall security situation in the state has deteriorated. Nonetheless, proper bandits who are not herder-allied militias tend not to get involved directly in feuds between farmers and herders (and their armed vigilante allies) but are primarily focused on their illicit enterprises of generating revenue through cattle rustling, robberies and abductions.

96 Olarewaju, L. Y., & Kyarem, R. N. (2021). IMPACT OF BANDITARY ON FOOD SECURITY IN KATSINA STATE. *Journal of Conflict Resolution and Social Issues*, 1(2), 113-125.

97 Violence in Nigeria's North West: Rolling Back the Mayhem: International Crisis Group Report 288 18 May 2020, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/288-violence-nigerias-north-west-rolling-back-mayhem>

98 Ibid.

Indeed, one dimension of the conflict is as between the bandits and the herders, as the bandits raid herds or herder settlements in order to rustle cattle. Another dimension of the conflict is as between the bandits and the rural communities, whereby the bandits generate revenue through kidnapping for ransom and raid of the communities for pillage or loot. When the bandits raid and pillage rural communities, they raze houses, torch barns, rape women and abduct persons. In some cases, the bandits write letters to village heads demanding that residents pool money and pay them to be spared deadly attacks or impose “harvest fees” on local farmers as permit for access to farms. Oftentimes, too, the bandits lay ambush on travellers on the highway, robbing some, abducting others, and killing those who resist or are unable to pay ransom.

Overall, the violent attacks in Katsina State have forced rural dwellers to flee their homes, with tens of thousands of people displaced.⁹⁹ The spate of killings is also evidence of failure of authorities to protect the people. Inability of authorities to bring attackers to justice is fuelling dangerous conspiracy theories that only escalate the violence. Hearteningly, the State Government has empaneled a committee on victims of banditry titled “executive committee on improvement of welfare of orphans and widows of victims of banditry, cattle rustling and insurgency in the affected Local Government Areas of Katsina State.”¹⁰⁰

It is however pertinent to understand the other major drivers of the insecurity situation in Katsina, which are highlighted below:

High rates of drug abuse: In the North-West geo-political zone of Nigeria, there is high rate of drug abuse and Katsina state is not exempted since its one of the major states in that region. Many youths in the state are engaged in the abuse of drugs which affect their health and push them to commit crimes which lead to insecurity. According to a national survey, Katsina state is ranked second after Kano state in terms of drug abuse nationwide with 2,173 cases of arrest by National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).¹⁰¹ Even the bandits who engage in banditry and Kidnapping are involved in drug abuse.¹⁰² There is therefore a tendency that some of those who engage in drug abuse might end up in banditry and kidnapping for ransom.

High rates of unemployment: There is a high rate of unemployment in Nigeria.¹⁰³ The unemployment rate in the country currently stands at 33% making it the second highest in the world. In Katsina state the required number of industries to employ the teeming youths who become the agents of insecurity and others are not available.¹⁰⁴ The Katsina state government remains the largest employer of labour in the state and the government has often failed to adequately replace those that have retired or died.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/08/nigeria-government-failings-leave-rural-communities-at-the-mercy-of-gunmen/>

¹⁰⁰ Katsina State Government Website “Committee on Victims of Banditry” <https://www.katsinastate.gov.ng/committee-on-victims-of-banditry/>

¹⁰¹ Mu’azu, U. F. (2018), *Prevalence of Drug Abuse Among Youths in Daura Town, Daura Local Government Area, Kastina State*. Kastina Journal of Science Management and Technology.

¹⁰² Bello, B. (2020) ‘I Saw Over 1,000 bandits carrying AK-47 rifles, some under the influence of drug’. *Vanguard*. P.A1

¹⁰³ Olurounbi, R. (2021). Nigeria Unemployment Rate Rises to 33%, Second Highest on Global List. *Bloomberg*. P. A1

¹⁰⁴ Munshi, N. (2021). Why ‘The Kidnapping Industry is Thriving in Nigeria’. *Financial Times*. P.A1

¹⁰⁵ Mutawalli, B. U. (2020) Harnessing natural resources for youth employment generation in Katsina State, Nigeria *Direct Research Journal of Public Health and Environmental Technology* 5(3): 41-48

One of the industries that employ a large number of workers was the Katsinas Steel Rolling Company (Dana Steel PLC) which has been privatized leading to the sacking of many workers of the company. A study has shown that from the 1980s to date a number of industries in Katsina, Dutsinma, Kankara and Funtua have stopped functioning as a result of these problems.¹⁰⁶ The rate of unemployment is actually making banditry and kidnapping become an increasingly viable option for some. Furthermore, the desire to acquire wealth at all costs even if it means committing heinous crimes further complicates matters on the ground. Some of the Fulani bandits in the state fall into this category as they steal other people's cattle in a bid to acquire wealth or to be seen to be wealthy.¹⁰⁷ In the last few decades, some of the Fulani people have lost cattle through conflicts between themselves and others such as farmers, over land grazing routes, and even women so they have the desire to own cattle and be wealthy once again.¹⁰⁸

High Level of Poverty: Poverty is another factor responsible for the high rate of insecurity in Katsina state. A previous study indicated the prevalence of abject poverty in the rural areas of Katsina state. The prevalence of poverty has made some people to work as informants or logistic suppliers to the bandits operating from the forest.¹⁰⁹ Hence, owing to the rising levels of poverty, the more the rate of crime increases rural areas, as well as the urban centers. At present, the fear is that the level of poverty is partly responsible for the growing kidnapping for ransom economy in the state.

High levels of illiteracy: This is another major driver of insecurity in Katsina due to the fact that many children and youths do not go to school or have not been able to continue their studies.¹¹⁰ Data on literacy rates published by the National Bureau of Statistics revealed that Katsina state is among the states in Nigeria where majority of the people can neither read nor write.¹¹¹ It is mostly the illiterate youths that are lured to work for armed bandits. The bandits themselves also lack the basic education that will enable them to distinguish between what is right and wrong. Low literacy among the youths does not allow them to weigh the risk of engaging in criminal activities that threatens the peace and security of Katsina state.

106 Ladan, S. I, Ladan U. B (2011), Issues and Challenges of Industrial Development in Katsina State. *Danmama International Journal of Islamic Culture and Heritage*.

107 Orjinmo, N. (2020). Katsina: The Motorcycle Bandits Terrorizing Northern Nigeria. *BBC*. P.A1.

108 Milailu, N (2016). Making Sense of Nigeria's Fulani-Farmer Conflict. *BBC*. P.A1

109 Alhassan, R. (2019). Nigerian Troops Arrest Bandits' Logistic Supplier, Weapon Manufacturer. *Daily Nigerian*. P.A1.

110 Ojewale, O. (2021). Rising Insecurity in Northwest Nigeria: Terrorism Thinly Disguised as Banditry. *Brookings*. P.A1

111 Amzat, A. (2017) Despite decades of funding, literacy level in the northern states remain low. *The Guardian (Nigeria)* 24 July

■ 3.5. Nasarawa State

Nasarawa state in the North-central geo-political zone of Nigeria, shares a boundary with Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Months after the creation of the state, violence set in giving birth to insecurity. There were bloody clashes between the Ebira Igbira and Bassa in Toto local government over Chieftdoms and Chieftaincy.¹¹² Months later there was another violent conflict between the Tiv and some ethnic groups in Arve, Keana, and Obi local government of the state.¹¹³ This led to the gruesome beheading of the Sarkin Azara, Alh. Musa Ibrahim on the 12th of June 2001 (International Crisis Group, 2017).¹¹⁴

Nasarawa state has since become a notorious conflict spot, as evidenced when news broke out that about 74 officers and men of the Nigerian Police Force, as well as other security agents were killed during an operation in Alakyo village.¹¹⁵ This act was however only the climax of unreported killings, invasion, murder, arsons, and intense bloody ethnic conflicts between and involving the Eggon, Alago, Tiv, Mighiti, Mada, Gwandara, Bassa and Fulani.¹¹⁶

It has been argued that much of the conflicts which cause insecurity in Nigeria, can be described as socio-environmental conflicts which happens when two or more interdependent actors disagree as to the distribution of certain material or symbolic elements related to the control, use of, and access to natural resources and act on the basis of these inconsistencies.¹¹⁷ To this extent, climate change and environmental factors have been identified to be at the root of the ongoing farmer herder conflict, a conflict now ranked six times as deadly as Boko Haram insurgency, in Nasarawa State as well as in neighboring Plateau, Benue, Taraba and Adamawa states.¹¹⁸

The major driver of conflict in Nasarawa state is the relationship between farmers and the Fulani herdsmen who migrate as a result of climate change which has increased the level of insecurity in the far North, thereby affecting Katsina, Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi and Taraba states.¹¹⁹ Added to this challenge, is the issue of animosity which has often made the peaceful resolution of conflict in the state a mirage.¹²⁰ The political quest for which ethnic groups have political dominance have remained undiluted as the political atmosphere is mostly tensed on matters of politics in the state.

112 Best, S. G. (2004) Protracted communal conflict and conflict management: the Bassa-Ebira conflict in Toto local government area, Nasarawa state, Nigeria. Ibadan: John Archers.

113 Oota, L. (2018) Nasarawa south lost over 50 people, 83 villages to herdsmen attacks in one month-TIDA. Sun News Online. 18 February.

114 International Crisis Group (2017) Herders against farmers: Nigeria's expanding deadly conflict. Report No. 252, 19 Spetember.

115 Government of Nasarawa State (2014) Government views and decisions on the report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the recent killing of Nigerian security forces personnel in Alakyo village of Lafia local government area. Lafia: Government Printer

116 Enna, D. M. & Ugwu, A. C. (2015) Conflict transformation in Nasarawa state: the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) option. *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration* 3(3): 58-73

117 Fatile Jacob Olufemi and Adejobi O. Samson "Climate Change, Environment and Conflicts in Nigeria" *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, ISSN: 2046-9578, Vol.6 No.1 (2012) p. 12
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332877158_Climate_Change_Environment_and_Conflicts_in_Nigeria

118 Luke Unger Organization for World Peace March 15, 2021 "Climate Change and The Nigerian Farmer-herdr Dispute"
<https://theowp.org/reports/climate-change-and-the-nigerian-farmer-herder-dispute/>

119 European Asylum Support Office (2021) Nigeria security situation: country of origin information report. 16 June

120 Abass, I. M. (2014) No retreat no surrender conflict for survival between Fulani pastoralists and farmers in northern Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal* 8(1): 331-346

The conflict between nomadic herders and static farmers initially a result of desertification and drought in the northern Sahel region of the country, compounded by Islamic terrorism in the northeast of the country that instigated mass migration of these herders south in search for fertile pastures and constant water supply for grazing. Disagreements and conflicts over grassland, property and space has been exacerbated by increased presence of militias within Nigeria and new government laws banning herder practices in Benue and Taraba States. While tension between herders and farmers have existed since the Fourth Nigerian Republic's founding in 1999, violent clashes have become increasingly frequent in the last few years, causing significantly more casualties than those by Boko Haram and displacing hundreds of thousands more.¹²¹ The availability of weapons on the black market has meant that even small disputes end with fatal consequences. Part of the reason is worsening bite of insecurity with millions of unemployed youths, quickly take up to criminality, 'green jobs' for climate sustainability, vocation and skill training, investments in small and medium scale enterprises.

The areas worst affected by herder-farmer violence such as Keana, Awe, Obi, Doma and Lafia LGA are proximate to Benue state, and it is reasonable to assert that it is a spillover from Benue.¹²² This is moreso that the attacks were said to be directed mostly at persons of Tiv ethnic origin and perceived as furtherance of Fulani-Tiv crisis in Benue. The conflict has led to the displacement of communities, loss of lives and livelihoods, and this seems to have flared up following the anti-open grazing law passed in neighboring Benue State.¹²³ The movement of herdsmen affected by Benue State's anti-open grazing law is causing a lot of tension in border communities between Nasarawa and Benue states.¹²⁴ An additional element of the situation is ethnicity as the Tiv is the majority ethnic group in Benue state but minority in Nasarawa.

Another angle to the insecurity is that displaced bandits from north east and north west who move to Nasarawa state because of the hilly and rocky terrain in the state.¹²⁵ The poorly managed political system is a contributing factor which has been responsible for insecurity in the state. Politics has been turned to an avenue whereby those who have access to political power sponsor thugs, gunmen, and even hired killers to destroy lives and property, particularly those of their opponents. Therefore, poor management of the political system has been attributed to the spread of insecurity in Nasarawa state.

121 Luke Unger Organization for World Peace March 15, 2021 "Climate Change and The Nigerian Farmer-herdr Dispute" <https://theowp.org/reports/climate-change-and-the-nigerian-farmer-herder-dispute/>

122 Linus Oota TheSun "Nassarawa South lost over 50 people, 83 villages to herdsmen attacks in one month-TIDA" 18 February, 2018 <https://www.sunnewsonline.com/nasarawa-south-lost-over-50-people-83-villages-to-herdsmen-attacks-in-one-month-tida/>

123 Oludayo Tade The conversation "What's triggered new conflict between farmers and herders in Nigeria" 1 September, 2020 <https://theconversation.com/whats-triggered-new-conflict-between-farmers-and-herders-in-nigeria-145055>

124 Punch "Anxiety as displaced herdsmen make Nassarawa new home" Taiwo Ojoye 18 November 2017 <https://punchng.com/anxiety-as-displaced-herdsmen-make-nassarawa-new-home/>

125 Wole Mosadomi Vanguard "Insecurity: Displaced bandits from N-East, N-West now in Nassarawa, Gov Sue raises alarm" August 19, 2020, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/08/insecurity-displaced-bandits-from-n-east-n-west-now-in-nassarawa-gov-sue-raises-alarm/>

■ 3.6 Plateau State

Plateau state is the epicenter of “indigene-settler” conflict in Nigeria with the state capital, Jos, being the home turf. Nigeria’s legal regime allows local officials the authority to extend or deny basic rights to citizens in their jurisdictions, thereby creating incentives for the politicization of ethnicity and escalating intercommunal violence. Rival communities may perceive that their security, and even their very survival, can only be ensured through control of state power. Conflict therefore becomes inevitable, as a matter of survival. Communal clashes across ethnic and religious fault lines in and around Jos central have claimed thousands of lives, displaced hundreds of thousands and fosters a climate of instability. The conflict in Jos is often characterized as inter-religious or inter-ethnic, mainly between the Christian dominated ethnic groups, and the predominantly Muslim Hausa-Fulani groups. But as an identity conflict, these are socially constructed stereotypes that are manipulated to trigger and drive violence in Jos.

The diversity of the Middle belt region means that land-based conflicts easily become conflated with grievances related to ethnicity, religion and political power. The ethnic or religious dimensions of the conflict have subsequently been misconstrued as the primary driver of violence when, in fact, disenfranchisement, inequality, and other practical fears are causes. Capitalizing on such conditions, many political rivals have instrumentalized the ethnic and religious diversity of Jos to manipulate and mobilize support. Each outbreak of violence worsens suspicions and renders communal reconciliation more difficult, deepening the cycle and further incentivizing polarization. A study commissioned by the office of the president in 2003 concluded that while ethnic plurality plays a role in the conflict, “underpinning these sources of antagonism and triggers are deeper systemic issues at the center of which is the relationship between political power and access to economic resources and opportunities”¹²⁶

Impunity is a driver of conflict: Justice and accountability have also been lacking. Since communal violence first emerged in 1994, few charges have been brought against perpetrators, and no credible prosecutions have been pursued. The highly connected individuals and politicians involved in fomenting tensions are equally effective in using their influence to protect perpetrators of violence. With each passing incident of violence that results in few arrests and no prosecutions, citizens confidence in law enforcement, judicial institutions, and government, in general, diminish. As a result, a governance vacuum in Jos is worsening. Increasingly fearful and suspicious communities are turning towards nonstate actors. Citizens rely almost entirely on these groups for protection, humanitarian assistance. Indigeneship provides an institutionalized incentive for political opportunists to build power based on exclusion.

¹²⁶ Ibid

Jos has had a turbulent history with ethno-religious clashes which have claimed the lives of thousands of Nigerians.¹²⁷ People across the Middle Belt talk about settler/indigene divide, but its edges are sharper in Jos than anywhere else: at the heart of it is a contest about resources as successive state and local governments have failed to manage the resources fairly; politicians have sharpened ethnic and religious divisions as they try to shore up their own bases of power. The fighting pits the mainly Muslim Hausa settlers against the mainly Christian indigene groups in Jos, the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom.¹²⁸

Apart from the above discussed causal factors of insecurity in Plateau state, the media has tended to complement these issues by serving as a platform for the ideological struggle between the elite which has resulted in disadvantaging groups in the society. The role of media is also serving as a catalyst for conflict escalation because of the power they must influence public perceptions and behavior.¹²⁹

■ 3.7. Taraba State

Taraba State is in the north-east region of Nigeria but identifies as part of what is usually called the “middle belt”¹³⁰ of Nigeria. It is bounded in the west by Nasarawa and Benue states, by Plateau state at the north-west, Bauchi and Gombe states at the north, Adamawa state at its north-east, and the Republic of Cameroon at its southern and eastern boundary. For years, there has been a cycle of violent conflicts in Taraba State, so much so that it can be said that peace and security has long eluded the state. Created in 1991 from the defunct Gongola State, Taraba State has is home to over thirty ethnic groups (the highest in Nigeria),¹³¹ and is therefore heterogeneous, and with a cosmopolitan outlook.

128 The Africa Report “Nigeria: Fixing the middle belt” Tayo Fagbule, 31 May 2010 <https://www.theafricareport.com/9190/nigeria-fixing-the-middle-belt/>

129 Ibid.

129 Weinmann, G. (2000) *Modern media and reconstruction of reality*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

130 Barnes, Andrew E. "The Middle Belt Movement and the Formation of Christian Consciousness in Colonial Northern Nigeria." *Church History* 76, no. 3 (2007): 591-610. Accessed June 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27645035>.

131 Agbu, A. D., Mohammed, I., & Joseph, M. P. *The Political Development of Taraba State 1991-2019*.

However, since its creation, the state has become a flashpoint of ethno-religious, and now farmers-herders conflicts, and kidnappings, culminating in loss of lives and properties, displacement of persons, and destruction of communities. Indeed, while for Nigeria's heterogeneous population, overlapping ethno-religious identities mark the fault-lines along which political claims and violent conflicts are made,¹³² with the numerous ethno-religious crisis witnessed in Taraba state since its creation, the state, perhaps, illustrates this tendency much more than any other State.¹³³ The cyclic crisis between the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups which has emerged as an intractable conflict since the 1990s¹³⁴ in southern and central parts of the state is the most challenging prominent ethnic crisis in the state. At the crux of the conflict is the constitutional issue of citizenship rights, land tussle, fear of ethnic domination, and the agitation for political inclusion by the Tiv's. Over the years, these issues intermittently lead to violent confrontations between the two ethnic groups, with the government failing to sustainably resolve it.¹³⁵

While the cycle of the Tiv-Jukun crisis persists, the two major emerging drivers of insecurity in Taraba state are the phenomenon of herders-farmers clashes as well as kidnapping for ransom. The farmers-herders conflict in Taraba state often takes an ethno-religious coloration as a crisis between Muslims and Christians or Fulani and the ethnic group in question as while most herders are Fulani and Muslim, the farmers are Christians of other ethnic groups.¹³⁶ The conflict is thus mostly co-extensive with ethno-religious crisis. For example, it has manifested as a crisis between Kona and Fulani in Jalingo and Ardo-Kola LGAs,¹³⁷ and as between Yandang and Fulani in Lau LGA.¹³⁸ Also, the 2013-2015 in Wukari LGA was originally a herders-farmers conflict but degenerated into ethno-religious communal clashes between Jukun/Christians and Hausa-Fulani/Muslims. Overall, there have been instances of herders-farmers violent conflict in almost all the LGAs, with Takum, Donga, Ussa, Wukari, Lau, Sardauna, Gassol, Ibi, Bali, and Ardo-Kola LGAs worst hit.

132 Herbert, S. & Husaini, S. (2018). Conflict, instability, and resilience in Nigeria. *Rapid Literature Review* 1427. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. <https://gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Conflict-instability-and-resilience-in-Nigeria.pdf>

133 Abdulrazak Yuguda Madu and Goni Ibrahim, "Ethno-religious conflict in Taraba States and its implications on socio-economic, political and educational development of youths" *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review* Vol.4 No.3 August, 2013, pp.149-155 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284139557_ETHNORELIGIOUS_CONFLICT_IN_TARABA_STATE_AND_ITS_IMPLICATIONS_ON_SOCIO-ECONOMIC_POLITICAL_AND_EDUCATIONAL_DEVELOPMENT_OF_YOUTHS

134 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/08/nigeria-government-failings-leave-rural-communities-at-the-mercy-of-gunmen/>

135 SUBERU, Rotimi T. *Ethnic Minority Problems and Governance in Nigeria: Retrospect and Prospect* In: *Ethnic Minority Conflicts and Governance in Nigeria* [online]. Ibadan: IFRA-Nigeria, 1996 (generated 03 juin 2021). Available on the Internet: <<http://books.openedition.org/ifra/762>>. ISBN: 9791092312157. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.ifra.762>.

136 DT, Rukwe & YM, Abdullahi & Faruk, Abdulmunaf & U, Nwaeze. (2019). The Effects of Farmers-Herders Conflict on Farming Households in Southern Taraba State, Nigeria. *South Asian Research Journal of Agriculture and Fisheries*. 01. 106-111. 10.36346/sarjaf.2019.v01i03.006 https://sarpublication.com/media/articles/SARJAF_13_106-111_c.pdf

137 Bamidele, S. (2020). A tale of two communities: Who owns the land? community safety, peace process and land ownership in tiv/jukun communities of Taraba State, Nigeria. *GeoJournal*, 1-17.; Igbashangev, P. A., Ogunyemi, R. F. V. M., & Ogunyemi, R. F. V. M. (2021). The Evaluation of the Role of Communication as a Management Tool for Crisis Resolution between Tiv-Jukun Crises in Wukari, Taraba State. *Victor Makinwa, The Evaluation of the Role of Communication as a Management Tool for Crisis Resolution between Tiv-Jukun Crises in Wukari, Taraba State. (January 22, 2021).*

138 Ibid.

The conflict is usually triggered by crop destruction by cattle, killing of a herder or farmer, or a reprisal for a past attack. A study reported that the perceived causes of conflict include uncontrolled grazing and damage to crops by cattle, burning of range land, herders claiming the land as common property, and contamination of stream by cattle.¹³⁹ Another study claims that cultural biases promote the conflict.¹⁴⁰ Whatever triggers or promotes it, the effect is same, death and destruction. In this connection, several villages deserted and burnt down, with farmers absent from their farms, following attacks by suspected armed men.¹⁴¹ One of such villages is Tse-Ajaver in Wukari LGA which was attacked by armed suspected Fulani men on 28th April 2018. In communities on the Mambilla-Plateau in Sardauna LGA, Taraba state, however, the problem between farmers and Fulani herders was mainly about land ownership, rather than cattle grazing on farmlands.¹⁴² Most of the Fulani herders on the Mambilla Plateau are ranchers, and open cattle grazing from place to place is rare. The deadliest inter-communal violence on the Mambilla-Plateau was the attacks on Fulani communities by the armed men from the Mambilla ethnic group between 17 and 20 June 2017, during which at least 141 persons were killed.¹⁴³

This spiraling herder-farmer conflict is a result of dispute over access to resources (land, water and pasture) in the face of failure of the government to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to protect lives and properties, which inaction fuels impunity, breeding attacks and reprisals.¹⁴⁴ To fill the gap of security laxity, community leaders now advocate self-help defensive efforts as well as retaliatory attacks against those responsible or perceived to be responsible for violent attacks. ¹⁴⁵

Taraba state is affected by cases of violent conflict even though the state is not far from the Boko Haram ravaged north-eastern part of Nigeria. The southern part of the state, which is predominantly Christian, is the worst hit, with mass internal displacement due to attacks by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen on Christian communities, particularly, those located in areas close to Benue state. These areas include Wukari, Donga, Isha-gogo, Tseke, Gidin-Dorowa, Nyamhina, Gborbegha, Borkono, Takum, Jinuwa-Nyife, Ibi and Gbogudo. Many have argued that the insecurity in Taraba state is due to internal policies of the state and defined by religions and ethnic narratives.¹⁴⁶

DT, Rukwe & YM, Abdullahi & Faruk, Abdulmunaf & U, Nwaeze. (2019). The Effects of Farmers-Herders Conflict on Farming Households in Southern Taraba State, Nigeria. South Asian Research Journal of Agriculture and Fisheries. 01. 106-111. 10.36346/sarjaf.2019.v01i03.006 https://sarpublication.com/media/articles/SARJAF_13_106-111_c.pdf

Hamid Mahmood Chia I Azuaga and Perceptions of the Relationship between Cultural Biases and Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Taraba State, Nigeria <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jae.v24i2.11>

Amnesty International "Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria" p.6 2018 <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Human Rights Watch <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/06/28/nigeria-rising-toll-middle-belt-violence>

Adamu, A. & Ben, A. (2015) Violent conflict in divided societies: the case study of violent conflict in Taraba state (2013-2015). Nigeria Conflict and Security Analysis Network Working Paper No. 2, Abuja, Nigeria.

Another driver of insecurity in Taraba State is the emerging phenomenon of kidnapping for ransom. This, unlike ethno-religious crisis or farmer-herder conflict, is basically a commercial enterprise by criminal elements who take advantage of the poor security framework of the state to make money through terror.

Furthermore, the limited presence of security personnel in Taraba like other states in the federation, has contributed to the situation. Security personnel such as the police are not in adequate supply in LGAs in order to combat the numerous criminal activities carried out by criminals and other miscreants. While the population has increased progressively over the years, police empowerment has not necessarily improved in such a way that enables it to effectively curtail the insecurity situation in the state.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ Okereke, C. N. (2012) "Nigerian state and management of communal conflict in the middle-belt" In Akinrinwa, B. A. (ed.) *Nigeria and the World: A Bolaji Akinyemi Revisited*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs

Part 4: Trusted Brooms: Existing Mechanisms for Sustained Youth Contribution to Peace and Social Cohesion



In this Chapter, we use a developmental lens to identify some of the existing mechanisms for sustained youth contribution to peace and social cohesion in the seven states. This is premised on two frameworks. The first is the theory of “developmental peacebuilding” initiated by similar work in Uganda.¹⁴⁸ The second is “governance activism for inclusive security development”¹⁴⁹ The concept of developmental peacebuilding is to acknowledge the importance of development to either contribute or undermine the cultivation of cultures of peace.¹⁵⁰ Here, not many Nigerian youths self-define as peacebuilders but they engage in peacebuilding and social cohesion as a result of immediacy or urgency or borne out of their experiences in response to their struggle for survival including for themselves as individuals and for their families and communities too.¹⁵¹ The transition towards peace and social cohesion is sometimes fraught with tension and the risk of a return to conflict and disorder. With so much at stake in these seven states, it is crucial that the international community and local stakeholders make sense of the complex mosaic of challenges, to support a lasting, inclusive, and prosperous peace in the region. Despite the widely recognized importance of the link between security and development, there is still need for a systematic analysis of the contributions of youths as development-actors to post-conflict and post-insecurity reconstructions. This approach of sustainable peacebuilding with social cohesion provides a framework for assessing the contributions of youths as development actors to peacebuilding efforts in Northern Nigeria and across Nigeria generally.

148 Chitando, A. (Ed.). (2020). *Women and Peacebuilding in Africa*. Routledge.

149 Brian Levy, *Working with the Grain: Integrating Governance and Growth in Development Strategies* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

150 Ball, J. (2018). *Women, Development and Peacebuilding in Africa: Stories from Uganda*. Springer.

151 Ibid.

Security is different from longer-term social cohesion. Cohesion results from a citizen-oriented system of governance and engagement, and an adherence to agreed rules. This process allows power to be reconfigured from a repressive force; it allows for open communication, social participation, and peaceful means of resolving conflict. Social cohesion involves the realisation of citizenship rights, social justice, and human welfare.

On the second framework: governance activism for inclusive security development. This is an approach and framing for youth contribution to peace and social cohesion that reflects – and reflects on – the collective participatory action of citizens and/or non-governmental activist forces pushing for governance reforms aimed at promoting peace, constructive dialogue and social cohesion. This framework including openness, transparency and delivery of key public services that will foster youth contribution to peace and security. It is an invitation to youths to work to shape their own lives and participate peacefully in the shaping of their societies, according to their distinctive visions of SDG 16.¹⁵² Using this framework, according to Levy, is one of the benefits of democracy over authoritarian alternatives. In order to integrate peace and social cohesion in development strategies, the starting point is to “work with the grain” by looking for entry points that can unleash an ongoing, virtuous circle of cumulative change.¹⁵³ This study also adopts a collective participatory and “stakeholder” view on social cohesion. Rather than mere reactors whose voices are only heard when things go wrong, youths can stimulate responsibility because they are governed. The mechanisms for sustained youth contribution to peace and social cohesion is more communicative (two-way) than reactive (one-way), more collaborative (two-way) than expressive or advocative (one-way). It requires dialogue between stakeholders and a form of accountability that is not postponed till periodic elections or provocative events. Unlike political activism, which is expressive, youth governance activism is both expressive and receptive. Political activism demands change in action or inaction, but governance activism goes a step further to also demand continuing communication and accountability in the entire and continuing process from which the action or inaction arose. It is a continuing process rather than an occasional activity that is triggered by the occurrence of an event or non-occurrence of a desired event. It is therefore a more effective tool for contributing to peace and social cohesion than mere political activism in holding the government accountable for its responsibilities including the responsibility to provide security.

152 Brian Levy, “Reframing Democratic Development – Vision, Strategy and Process” (April 6, 2015)

<<https://workingwiththegrain.com/2015/04/07/reframing-democratic-development-vision-strategy-and-process/>> accessed on 19 August 2016.

153 See Brian Levy, *Working with the Grain: Integrating Governance and Growth in Development Strategies* (Oxford University Press, 2014) p 32.

Within an SDG 16 lens, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development will require mechanisms that considers inclusive development. One that aims at ensuring benefits for all, including minority, emasculated and marginalised groups. This work proposes a pro-poor approach that equally values and incorporates the contributions of all youths – including marginalised groups – in addressing security and development issues.¹⁵⁴ It is growth coupled with equal opportunities¹⁵⁵ to provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. It is an approach to security that seeks to “carry everybody along.” It ensures that a person or group is not excluded merely because of cultural, gender, social, economic, religious, or other differences.

The paragraphs below will now consider some of the “trusted brooms”, which are existing mechanisms that has worked for sustaining youth contribution to peace and social cohesion in these seven states.

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154 “Inclusive Development: Ensuring Benefits for All” (Oxfam)

<https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/inclusive_development.pdf> accessed on 30 July 2016.

155 Ganesh Rauniyar and Ravi Kanbur, “Inclusive Growth and Inclusive Development: A Review and Synthesis of Asian Development Bank Literature” (2009) Asian Development Bank, Occasional Paper No 8, p. 3. < <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/35885/files/op8-inclusive-growth-development.pdf>> accessed on 330 July 2016.

■ 4.1. Adamawa State: minority activism for disability inclusion

In Adamawa state, peacebuilding efforts have been carried out by the Justice Peace and Reconciliation Movement (JPRM). JPRM¹⁵⁶ worked in partnership with disabled persons' organizations and considered the perspectives of women and people living with disabilities to contribute to the strengthening and capacity-building of CSOs and government authorities on how to achieve the inclusive development of security in the state. A disability-inclusive social cohesion intervention in Gombi community of Adamawa state produced a space for post-conflict rehabilitation. Through this, the JPRM engaged with humanitarian actors, government and youth communities to mainstream people living with disability in the drive for peace and social cohesion in the state. Young women who had lived through horrific situations including sexual violence and human trafficking were supported to enhance resilience and maximize aid effectiveness. In setting up health, water and sanitation facilities, this contributed to the resilience within the disability movement. More so, this indicated that when aid provision includes women with disabilities, it has often benefitted other vulnerable groups such as the aged, the poor and children. This mechanism of focusing the representation on persons living with disabilities had proven that they can act as interlocutors to development in peacebuilding as well as the realization of SDG16 because they proactively contribute to ensure the development of humanitarian interventions reach other targeted vulnerable groups and marginalized populations.

"As a woman living with a disability, and with no husband, I still have to feed my children and protect them from suffering. The fact that I am not like other women is not an excuse. Nobody is going to do this for me." – Female respondent, 30's, Mubi, Adamawa

"When the Boko Haram insurgents invaded my community in 2015, it was terrible for me. People all run away and left me with my child in the village at the mercy of God. There were also a few other women with disabilities and the elderly in the same situation who were not able to flee for their lives. I could not run because of the lame situation with my legs. God was so kind that I managed to survive the various attacks in my community named Dzangula, in Gombi, until we were rescued. On that fateful day, two of the elderly people were shot to death in front of my very own eyes. The trauma we went through cannot be overemphasized."¹⁵⁷

Inclusion was transcended the numbers game and transition into more active participation that takes seriously the resources of women rather than merely the gift of gender. Women with disabilities should not only be thought of as victims of insecurity but as stakeholders in development and peace building.

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157 Chitando, A. (Ed.). (2020). *Women and Peacebuilding in Africa* (Cap 9 Women with disabilities, peacebuilding and development in Adamawa State, Nigeria by Jessie Fubura-Manuel and Justina Mike Ngwobia) Routledge, p 131.

■ 4.2. Benue State: resolving the farmer-herder conflicts

Benue state presents cases of peace-building mechanisms on farmer-herder conflicts and their effect on social cohesion. Since farmer-herder conflicts are an issue in almost all seven states, this section applies beyond Benue state and extends to the others. The peace-building and social cohesion measures include the following:

Disarmament of both farmers and herders: The instances of immediate disarmament of herdsmen and other militias have limited their capacity in violent attacks and reprisals and criminal activities such as banditry, cattle rustling, robbery and rapes.

Negotiation and implementation of ceasefire agreement as an interim peace-building measure: Negotiating a ceasefire agreement has proven effective in reducing the spate of attacks, in collaboration with other measures taken by stakeholders which will produce the net effect of lowering tension and the feeling of insecurity, to enable displaced persons to gradually return to their homes just as herders go about grazing their cattle while avoiding farms.

The resettlement of internally displaced persons: This is premised on the view that displaced farmers have lost lives, properties, farms and farm produce and need to reassemble their lives and restore dignity. This is a developmental intervention as there might be need to make provision of food, clean water, housing, health and education, financial and material assistance to ameliorate their suffering and above all security to help rebuild their confidence to continue with their socio-economic activities.

Strengthening of Traditional Institution: In line with SDG 16, this is anchored on the need to reposition and empower the traditional institutions to brace up to the challenges of insecurity in their domains hence they are the first point of call in their communities.

Setting up a Judicial Commission of Inquiry: This is also in line with SDG 16 as there is the need to investigate the crises and those found guilty of committing heinous crimes like murder and arson be made accountable hence there can be no sustainable peace without justice. This is especially that the Judicial Commission of Inquiry will identify the causes, culprits and apportion responsibility.

Vanger Emmanuel Terngu, “Conflicts, Peace-Building and the Sustainability of Farmer-Herder Practices in Tivland of Benue State, Nigeria (Cap 6 “Peace-Building and Sustainability of Farmer-Herder Practices in Tivland”) 164.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ Vanger Emmanuel Terngu, “Conflicts, Peace-Building and the Sustainability of Farmer-Herder Practices in Tivland of Benue State, Nigeria (Cap 6 “Peace-Building and Sustainability of Farmer-Herder Practices in Tivland”) 164.

■ 4.3. Kaduna State: peace declaration for justice, tolerance and ethno-religious cohesion

On March 24, 2016, twenty-nine communities in Kaduna State, signed the Kafanchan Peace Declaration. This happened after some violent and protracted ethno-religious conflicts.¹⁵⁹ The peace declaration formed a unique model for continued progress toward peacebuilding by establishing that justice forms the basis for peace. The government would therefore act to promote fairness by promoting economic equality across local communities, social integration, and continuous dialogue across ethno-religious lines. Hate speech and ethno-religious violence, which threaten justice, dialogue, and, ultimately peace, are criminal acts subject to prosecution.

Peace agreements are effected through dialogical processes of various types. Three approaches to dialogue upon which peaceful and potentially conflictual relationships are built: theological, political, and peacebuilding. Of these three, the theological and peacebuilding approaches were formative in reaching peace agreements in Kaduna State.¹⁶⁰ A peace agreement is an essential instrument for restoring peace where there have been incessant conflicts, however, a peace agreement is not sufficient to support sustainable social cohesion. There is need for youths (as the most active population) to play the functioning role of meeting the terms of the agreement. A genuine dialogue that is inclusive of women, children, people living with disabilities and other minority groups is essential for reinforcing the social cohesion process.

Several youths have expressed their skepticism and distrust for peacemaking measures taken by the government. In an interview session with John Isaac who is the National youth Leader Southern Kaduna Peoples Union (SOKAPU) he noted that “we have always advised government ... to be very proactive, but we realized that [they are] not.... In fact, some people feel that [they are] comfortable with what is happening.”¹⁶¹ “We try as much as we can to enlighten our people on the need to be vigilant...” even though youths who usually come out to defend themselves and their communities sometimes get arrested by security operative who are supposed to protect them. “[T]he major problem is that the governor doesn’t like taking advise”.¹⁶² “I expect a state free from insecurity, a state for all, where justice, fairness and equity will reign... a state where leaders will take full responsibility and unite her citizens irrespective of tribe or religion”.¹⁶³

159 The Christians and Muslims in Kaduna state also signed a peace agreement known as the Kaduna Peace Declaration in 2002. This agreement, which was facilitated by youth groups and nongovernmental organizations and then endorsed by the government, emphasized the need for peaceful coexistence and cooperation between Christians and Muslims.

160 Musa, G. M. (2016). Negotiating mutuality through peace accords: Kaduna State as a case study. *Peace & Change*, 41(4), 452-474.

161 Wuyo, I. H. (2020). Southern Kaduna crises: 700 killed, 100,000 displaced, group claims. *Vanguard* (Nigeria). 6 September (10TH May 2021)

162 Christopher, R. (2020) Southern Kaduna crises has claimed 700 lives, rendered 100,000 homeless-SOKAPU. *The Authority*, 7 September

163 Isaac, J. (2020) Southern Kaduna Peoples’ Union (SOKAPU-youth wing) press statement. 8 October

As ethno-religious conflicts in Kaduna State have deep sociopolitical roots, no genuine interreligious or reconciliatory dialogue in the state can exclude political negotiation. Dialogue must be led and engaging of young people. What is happening in Kaduna State is not in isolation from the wider national insecurity conundrum, so clearly, the success of any solutions will depend upon the extent to which they include those who are marginalised from political and socioeconomic economic power. As an effective strategy, youths in Kaduna have emphasized to the state government that no group should be viewed as being more important than the other. There has been calls to identify effective strategies and processes to transform youth previously involved in violent behaviour and resolve to always dialogue as the most effective means of conflict resolution.

“There is danger in the use of derogatory language and so, we constantly tell our young folks that names such as Agwoi (unenlightened person), Bako Mara Gari (stranger who has no abode/town/land), Arne (atheist) and Kaffir (unbelievers) do not help us in achieving peace or social cohesion, so we must avoid them everywhere, even online.” – Male participant, 20’s, Karji, Kaduna.

24 youths surveyed in Kaduna who work in/with various civil society organizations and NGOs have highlighted one or more of the following as mechanisms that have been progressive in sustaining youth contribution to peace and social cohesion in the state.

Creating a conflict prevention plan that will include all stakeholders including traditional and faith-based leaders, women, and youth: one that puts in place a tension management mechanism and creates a linkage between early warning and early response and ensures continuous monitoring of violent conflict situations. This conflict prevention plan should intervene in conflict situations and pursue such measures as are necessary to arrest and redress the situation and make appropriate recommendations for action by law enforcement agencies. Youth groups have provided broad civic education on rights and obligations. NGOs have taught conflict prevention and conflict transformation skills to young people.

Youths in Kaduna see a need to undertake bilateral consultations and advocacy with political leaders - to reinforce messages, identify areas of mutual concern and agreement.

Assisting to establish a permanent conflict prevention and peace building mechanisms at the community level.

Sustaining tracks of dialogues on peacebuilding and social cohesion among key non-political stakeholders such as business leaders, women’s organizations and civil society organizations to influence and facilitate discussions between political actors. Inclusion of women and youths, persons with disability in decision-making and peace processes (on many occasions, reconciliation and dialogue efforts in Kaduna have excluded meaningful participation of women and youth. This exclusion causes disenchantment and negative perception of the outcomes of reconciliation efforts).

Revive rehabilitation centers in Kaduna with requisite provision of skills and allowances for persons with disabilities. And creating employment for out-of-school youth and reviving industries such as ginger processing, fruit processing, flour mills, chalk, oil processing, and the Gurara dam to provide electricity and water to communities.

Institutionalizing peace and reconciliation amongst communities using the SDG 16 framework, especially to bring perpetrators to justice, inclusive of both indigenes and settlers. And to use truth and justice reconciliation to resolve tension and provide restorative means that will consider the compensation of all victims of insecurity. An SDG 16 framework towards peace and social cohesion will address past wrongs drawing on the wisdom and expertise of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. This will also ensure the inclusion and active participation of women, youths and persons with disability in all peace processes. Embrace the language of a clear and profound approach to change in dealing with peace and conflict. Communication is key to changing attitudes. Clear and unequivocal language that prioritizes reconciliation needs to be articulated in all communication by all government agencies.

Prioritize economic and social regeneration and investment and enhance opportunities for sharing across ethnic and religious communities. Communities have raised concerns over disparities in the delivery of social and public utility services particularly in areas of high polarization. Youths recommend a critical change in culture by the State Government of Kaduna within its departments, agencies and public bodies to serve every community equally and pass the message across that equal treatment directly translates into building blocks for ethnic and religious co-existence. Diversity, equity and inclusion are required pillars to sustain every state institution.

“We need to explore opportunities for ethnic and religious communities to live in the same residential areas in Kaduna. The current levels of residential segregation make it possible for communities to declare “no-go-areas” for those considered not their “own” that has resulted in deaths, disappearances or injuries to those from other ethnic or religious communities. This othering: the “us versus them” mentality has been very divisive for us.”
– Female participant, 30's, Igabi, Kaduna

There is the need to reduce inter-communal suspicions and prevent conflict and build a shared future by investing in education through the demonstration of active political support for integrated and shared education facilities; investment in teacher-training on peacebuilding; and encouraging collaborative working arrangements between schools on, for instance, sharing playgrounds, school buses or taking joint lessons. There is a need to include the teaching of peace and conflict resolution skills in school curriculum from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

The negative use of social media and the dissemination of hate speech and disinformation needs to be checked. There needs to be enabling laws to discourage incitement and hate speech and train media on conflict sensitive reporting. Also, religious preachers should operate within a code of conduct that discourages provocative preaching and inciting statements at the pulpit and religious gatherings.

In conclusion, it can be said that the youth in Kaduna continue to contribute towards the peace process by lending their voice to the issues of dialogue. Even though they may sometimes feel incapacitated. Promoting a structure that enhances the participation of youth in peace building process will actively contribute to young people's engagement with decision and activities that affect their wellbeing in Kaduna state.

■ 4.4. Katsina State: free speech versus hate speech – between a right and a risk

In 2017, youths across the state assembled under the name of Democracy Stability Media Advocacy Programme (DESMAP) organized by the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy Democracy and Development to sensitize and dialogue with the youth on the harm that hate speech poses to national survival with lessons from the Rwanda experience re-emphasized.

“Hate Speech” is the incitement and encouragement of hate, discrimination, or enmity towards an individual, biased against a particular characteristic, such as their religion or sexual orientation.

Partly due to low level of literacy level as well as poor means of financing in Katsina state, there have been a shortage of collective participation amongst the youth in peace and security. Lately, however youths in the state are leveraging social media to network and rally support for peace related advocacy. In June 2020, a youth led Coalition of Northern Group (CNG) and Citizens Participation Against Corruption Initiative convened by Jamilu Charanci, held a peaceful demonstration in the state capital protesting persistent insecurity in Katsina and as a call for the removal of the then service chiefs.

The Nigerian constitution guarantees freedom of speech and expression, and the freedom of association.¹⁶⁵ The public perception of what freedom of speech entails, and the widespread use of the social media within the context of the rights holds both threats and opportunities which translate into risks to the adherence of security interests and the objectives to have a free, disciplined and socially cohesive Nigerian society. Fake news, deliberate disinformation, hate speech, misinformation and sensationalism often find their ways into the mainstream media as well as social media with very little or no deterrence. The negative effect of this situation hinders the achievement of peacebuilding and social cohesion.

On November 6, a senator submitted the Protection from Internet Falsehoods and Manipulation and Other Related Matters Bill 2019 (Bill) for consideration before the National Assembly. The Bill prohibits the transmission of false statements and declarations of fact, and imposes various sanctions, including requiring the issuance of correction statements, blocking access to online statements deemed false, and fines and imprisonment, among others. As a general matter, anti-false content laws are incompatible with the promotion and protection of the freedom of expression under international law as well as contravening the Nigerian constitution.¹⁶⁶

Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) enshrines the right to freedom of expression, which encompasses the right to hold opinions without interference, and the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds through any medium regardless of frontiers.¹⁶⁷ States are obligated to guarantee the right to freedom of expression. The Human Rights Committee has stated that “any restrictions on the operation of websites, blogs, or any other internet-based electronic or other such information dissemination systems” must comply with Article 19.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Nigeria acceded to the ICCPR in 1993.

¹⁶⁸ Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 34: Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression*, UN Doc . CCPR/C/GC/34 (2011), para. 43.

Online social networking lets young Nigerians find like-minded people, enlarging free speech and human creativity. But it also amplifies hate speech, contributes to ethnic and political polarization, and facilitates terrorist recruitment. Internet users in Northern Nigeria require twenty-first century skills like digital literacy to decipher fact from fiction and not fall prey to fake news and hate speech.

Section 39 (1) of the Nigerian constitution provides that “Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.”

■ 4.5. Nasarawa State: governance activism – rallies and protests

Like other states ravaged by insecurity, the Nasarawa state government has not been able to implement an existing mechanism for youths’ contributions in peace building.¹⁶⁹ However, the youths in Nasarawa State on November 4, 2020 in Lafia, called on the state government to establish a Youth Development Commission and a special fund as part of steps towards youth engagement in governance.¹⁷⁰ Youth groups under the aegis of Coalition of Nasarawa State Youths made the call during a peaceful rally in Lafia. ¹⁷¹

A peaceful rally is an act of governance activism for inclusive democratic development. It can be a successful approach to call for a collective participatory action of citizens and non-governmental activist forces to push for government reforms aimed at pressing for accountability, including openness, transparency and the delivery of key public services. Driving a public call for reconstruction for peace and social cohesion in Nasarawa is an essential component to improving the security situation of the state.

Affecting one, affecting all: If people think differently, they may feel isolated, marginalised, and powerless. But public demonstrations and peaceful marches empower young people by showing them that there are other youths who are also passionate about the same issues.

Demonstrate and debate: One way to get the attention of those in power may be by peaceful rallies and demonstrations. Sometimes if there are enough demonstrators, then those in authority may feel the need to come up with a response or reaction. This could be when the debate on insecurity begins, and constructive dialogue becomes possible.

In an electoral democracy like Nigeria, protest provides an essential voice for minority groups. The classic theorists of representational government recognised that universal suffrage and majority voting threaten to impose the ‘tyranny of the majority’ and override the rights of minorities. Protests are a vital corrective to majority rule.

Young for a reason and only for a time: rallies and peaceful demonstrations are mostly carried out by agile youths. Governance activism can involve a new generation who may engage on an issue, unencumbered by past thinking.

169 Khan, A. & Ishaku, H. (2015) Boko haram and turmoil in northern Nigeria. *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 19(1): 22-42

170 Nyamtu, C. (2020) Youths in Nasarawa stage peaceful rally to present their demands. *Radio Nigeria*, 4 November.

171 Foga, A. (2020) Youths call for establishment of commission in Nasarawa. *The Voice*, 8 November.

■ 4.6. Plateau State: NGOs organizing projects for peace

Although the government is doing what it can on matters related to peace building in the state, some youth participants in Plateau state posit that peacebuilding activities have not been engaging the youths. However, for peace to reign there is a need for youths to be fully involved. The youth have continued to however make their contributions through non-profit organizations. In Plateau state, the Intermediate Centre for Peace, Charities and Human Development (INTERCEP) had coordinated a Nigeria Stability Reconciliation Program (NSRP) project. With active youthful participants, it began implementation of a two-year project strengthening children and young people's protection in Plateau.¹⁷² The Plateau State Peace Practitioners Network (PPPN) is a larger body of young peacebuilders promoting peace by intervening and responding to cases of violence, capacity building, early warning and strategic advocacy.

PPPN is a network in Plateau state which aims at promoting peace by intervening and responding to cases of violence, trauma healing, drugs/substance abuse, mentoring, early warning mechanism. INTERCEP has worked with them in the areas of promoting peace in plateau through capacity building and advocacy visit to various key stake holders for peaceful coexistence. INTERCEP has been in partnership with the network for the part 3 (three) years.¹⁷³ The promotion and protection of Human Rights of citizens is the focus of all civilized societies. This enhances the core values of freedoms, liberties, and Human dignity. Basic rights of individuals cannot be guaranteed in an atmosphere of violent and destructive conflicts. Consequently, NGOs can help build the capacity of stakeholders to acquire skills in conflict management and peacebuilding. Poverty is also a dehumaniser and violator that debases human dignity through want, lack, exclusion, and marginalization. NGOS can play a role in skill acquisition, education, and counselling. However, a good environment must exist before all the above will be attained.

■ 4.7. Taraba State: symbiosis: where culture could meet the law

It was recently reported on March 20, 2021, that the Jukun Youths expressed worry over renewed insecurity in Southern Taraba.¹⁷⁴ The youth organization under the aegis of Jukun Youth Cultural Development Association appealed to the state and other concern bodies. Through its president, they made it known that "we as youth leaders and other law-abiding citizens of this area are deeply worried and concerned about these ugly and unfortunate developments".¹⁷⁵ They appealed to the Taraba State Government to immediately bring the situation under total control to halt the threat to lives and property to enable law-abiding citizens and the majority of the people who are mostly farmers to start early preparation for farming activities.

¹⁷² Intermediate Centre for Peace, Charities and Human Development (INTERCEP), "Projects/Programmes Executed" <https://intercepideas.org.ng/portfolios/>

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Bolaji, F. (2021) Jukun youths express worry over renewed insecurity in southern Taraba. Vanguard (Nigeria), 20 March.

¹⁷⁵ Ajiboye, K. (2021) Taraba: Jukun youths raise the alarm over renewed insecurity. Independent, 20 March.

They proposed the use of creativity, cultural values and norms to appeal to the people, particularly the youth, to rely on cultural values and institutions as a support system to remain calm and law-abiding.¹⁷⁶ The youths have continued to demonstrate a respect for culture and the application of local traditional instruments to support the peace process in the state. Even where the government has failed to adequately include the voices of the youths in peace building and to address the issues of armed conflicts and hostilities, the existing cultural mechanisms to facilitate youth's contribution to peace building is sustained creatively.

At Accountability Lab, we have gained shared experience on best practices and cultural innovations on how to improve access to justice, accountability, and the rule of law. We have (through our SDG16 Youth Hangout for example) established that it is not possible to hope for a sustainable development without peace, stability, human rights and accountable governance, based on the rule of law. Accordingly, SDG16 promotes creative and culturally sensitive access to justice for all that intends to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. CISLAC and Accountability Lab have tailored engagement based SDG16 generally, when thinking of utilising the knowledge gained in everyday life.

¹⁷⁶ Nicholas, D. (2021) Youth group expresses worries over renewed insecurity in southern Taraba. New Nigerian Newspapers, 21 March.

■ 4.8. Resounding Drums: Case study on the Amana Initiative

A sustained youth contribution to peace and social cohesion in northern Nigeria. To tackle the issues of distrust and lack of confidence, a governance advocacy scheme titled: *Amana Initiative*,¹⁷⁷ which is a confidence building project between civil society youth and government security agencies in response to the consequence of Boko Haram insurgencies, created confidence-building projects which all stemmed from local community ideas (involving stakeholders such as local youth groups, security personnel, individuals, and civil society). The introduction of this scheme, *Amana Initiative*, supplemented government efforts towards ensuring security for good governance in the region. Through this activism, the *Amana Initiative* demonstrated improvement in the trust and confidence exhibited between the stakeholders to tackle insecurity in the region. This successful adaptation and demonstration of governance activism for the inclusive development of security in the region could also serve as a model for intervention in other areas.

An independent group of young activists implemented and managed a total of 22 confidence-building projects in 11 states of Nigeria. The projects were implemented within 2 years by initiating 47 local activist forces and civil society groups in the various communities and states where project activities were carried out. This project, and the first of its kind, engaged a minimum of 28,000 youth and 2,050 security officials in confidence-building activities ranging from, but not limited to anti-terrorism campaigns, athletic competitions, town hall meetings, truth and reconciliation panels, media engagements, essay competitions, rallies, security trainings, policy dialogues, musical performances, and even theatre and art production.

The initiative created an opportunity for youth groups in Northern Nigeria to develop initiatives to better understand their role in improving security and in engaging with security forces and other public service officials that are responsible for protecting them. It also created an inter-sectorial platform for youth in Northern Nigeria to engage with government officials at state and local levels; as well as an opportunity for the implementers, funders, and the Nigerian government to gain insights into socio-cultural dynamics at play in northern regions affected by insurgency. Although the Amana Initiative recorded major wins, some of the projects encountered some setbacks. Some of the projects were stifled due to insufficient funds or improper planning; there was also the difficulty or delay in getting some stakeholders to engage with one another. For example, in one of the projects in the North East, it took three failed attempts (before a fourth successful one) to get youths to familiarise and engage with security forces in a football match and a community cooking “show.”

Other setbacks included the difficulty in commuting to local communities in non-motorable routes; as well as some scepticism exhibited by a few victims from the insurgency at the time. Generally, however, the Initiative provided ample facilitation, direct consultation and collaboration between youth, security forces, and policy makers to improve security and trust between all stakeholders.

¹⁷⁷ *Amana* is a Hausa word for Trust. (Hausa is the predominant local language in Northern Nigeria)

The impact of Amana Initiative in realizing the inclusive development of peace and social cohesion in Northern Nigeria: The introduction of the Amana Initiative came at a much-needed time when the trust between civil society and youths on the one side and security forces on the other side had broken down significantly. Stakeholders, grantees and the participants all concurred to the relevance of the initiative. The projects executed under the initiative enhanced understanding of the youth perspective on security issues, what works in maintaining public order, and relations between security forces and youth in northern Nigeria. The programme also considered several reports of human right abuses in the region.

The projects demonstrated relevance by identifying key challenges to security in the region. One apparent problem the region faces is the lack of infrastructure and basic facilities. Because of such lack, there is a disconnection between governance and the people. This leads to the apathetic tendency of regarding government as “the government” instead of the stakeholder outlook of regarding government as “our government.” As a result, there is an exclusion of the customary system of governance. Even the roles of traditional rulers in community policing are disregarded. Another key challenge identified by the initiative is the lack of proper upbringing of children by their parents and guardians. With such low or absent levels of education, poverty and unemployment (especially amongst women and youths) make the region prone to crime and constitutes targets for terrorism recruitment. Other drivers of insecurity in the region, discovered by the initiative, include the incendiary and hate speeches by religious leaders and zealots; the negative perception of the Nigerian police by society due to police corruption and bad publicity; and then, sectionalism and tribalism which leads to nepotism and corruption.

The projects however identified some solutions to help overcome the aforementioned challenges to security and safety in the region. They include:

Increased community involvement in ensuring security and safety of their neighbourhood through awareness campaigns.

Community partnership and fostering of a synergic relationship between the community and security enforcement agencies in the fight against terrorism and insecurity.

Public-private partnership to provide basic facilities and rehabilitate dilapidating infrastructure.

Inclusion of traditional rulers and leaders in community security and safety planning, as they are the closest the people and have better knowledge of the geographical and social intricacies of their communities.

A reorientation of the community regarding their role in governance, security and safety, as well as the need for them to take ownership of governance as stakeholders.

Government policy, implemented through conventional and social media, emphasizing work ethics, family values and the need for parents/guardians to give their children/wards proper care and discipline.

Establishment and maintenance of women centers, youth centers, skills acquisition centers and other relevant school programs to engage youths productively towards national development.

Encouragement of youth and women self-reliance through entrepreneurship to make them less prone to recruitment by extremists, or to use by politicians for criminal activities.

Awareness campaigns and youth education on security and safety tips, self-defense, and the defense of the community against security threats.

Training of religious leaders on their role as peace agents and the need to avoid inciting their followers to violence, as well as the need to encourage their followers to ensure the security and safety of the community.

Dissemination of information on the value of Nigeria's diversity of culture, religion and language, and focus on harnessing them as uniting factors.

Reorientation of the public on their perception of the Nigerian Police Force and internal training and retraining of police personnel to execute their duties in a manner that will improve the public image of the Force; and

Recruitment of more police personnel.

The projects evidenced viability by demonstrating adequate demand and realistic projections especially through its demonstrated youth and community prospects for future activities beyond the catalytic funding provided. Due to the culture and religion of some of the participants, women and men tended to be secluded as they scarcely participated together in the confidence building activities. In town hall meetings for instance, there was an obvious demarcation between where the males sat from where the females sat. This cultural limitation was a hindrance, but it did not disapprovingly prevent contribution or participation from both genders. These, notwithstanding, the improved level of trust between the youth and security agencies, there however still exists a large vacuum for similar projects in the region and an insatiable hunger for professional development and training projects for personnel in the administration of criminal justice sector in Northern Nigeria.

■ Conclusion

Discussions on peacebuilding often identify youths as perpetrators of violence or sometimes as victims, neglecting the constructive role that youths play in many peacebuilding as well as conflict prevention and mitigation processes. Indeed, it is not true that youths are always peace-spoilers. Youths are also peace builders. Accordingly, this work identifies and highlights some of the mechanisms through which youths can and do contribute to peace in Nigeria. Not many Nigerian youths self-define as peacebuilders, but they engage in peacebuilding and social cohesion because of immediacy or urgency or borne out of their experiences in response to their struggle for survival including for themselves as individuals and for their families and communities too. The transition towards peace and social cohesion is sometimes fraught with tension and the risk of a return to conflict and disorder.

■ Recommendations towards a Peace and Social Cohesion Innovation Challenge Roll Out:

This model of governance activism for the inclusive development of peace and social cohesion in the region can be scaled up by creating more opportunities for youth groups to develop innovative approaches under SDG16 that will help them better understand and engage with security forces and officials that are responsible for protecting them.

A responsible and effective set of policy measures must be deployed with proper care to protect citizens from the abuses of insurgency. Such measures must now tackle the distrust that emanates because of insurgency, ensuring that there are avenues for grievances to be addressed between youth, local leaders, and government to find means for confidence building (and even to peacefully engage and listen to each other on how to end the terroristic acts against citizens).

State-ordered or state-sponsored counter-insurgency tactics can exacerbate local grievances and push youths to join armed groups, therefore community-ordered and community-initiated counter-insurgency intervention must be prioritized for social cohesion to thrive. Creativity and customization of security development should also be embraced using the SDG 16 framework for promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions.

Boko Haram can and should be fought within an activist framework. There is a need to not only rely on counterterrorism measures, but on four other processes viz: diplomacy, dialogue, effective intelligence gathering and the rule of law. These processes must involve the youth and must take into cognizance marginalized populations.

There is ample room for the inclusive development of security to be directed towards building inclusive institutions that will help in achieving the ten outcome targets of SDG 16.

They are: Reduce violence; protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence; promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice; combat organized crime and illicit financial and arms flows, substantially reduce corruption and bribery; develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions; ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making; strengthen the participation in global governance; provide universal legal identity; ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms.¹⁷⁸

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Accountability Lab Nigeria



OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is a *world* in which resources are used wisely, decisions benefit everyone fairly, and people lead secure lives. Our mission is therefore to *make governance work for people through supporting active citizens, responsible leaders, and accountable institutions.*

OUR STRUCTURE

Accountability Lab Nigeria is a registered non-profit based in Abuja with 10 staff and 10 volunteers. We are part of a global trans-local network of Labs including Accountability Lab Global (registered as a 501c3 in the US), Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, and South Africa, all of which are locally registered. We now have 100+ staff across this network, supported by hundreds of volunteers.

OUR WORK

AL Nigeria aims to make governance work for people by supporting active citizens, responsible leaders, and accountable institutions. We work to connect these efforts meaningfully to one another in specific contexts through actions which we now classify under AL Campaigns, AL Knowledge and AL Communities. We will therefore focus on shifting norms within institutions; building/ supporting coalitions (or unlikely networks as we call them) to collectively push for change; and finally, support young people to implement sustainable integrity, fiscal transparency, and anti-corruption tools in their communities. We have built a network of young people through these programmes who understand the need for open governance and inclusion. The Lab has deep experience supporting youth, innovation, and peacebuilding across Nigeria and in running Sustainable Development Goals 16 (SDG 16) Innovation Challenges with the private sector, government, civil society, and media networks.

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DISCLAIMER

The research analysis and policy recommendations in this publication are made solely by Accountability Lab Nigeria and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or United Nations Member States.

