

**Plateau Peace Practitioners'
Network Journal**

Volume 2

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Editorial

From Fragility to Resilience: Writing Peace into Our Future

Peace is not an abstract ideal—it is lived, contested, and renewed daily in the lives of our communities. This second volume of the Plateau Peace Practitioners Network (PPPN) Journal emerges at a time when global and local realities demand not just reflection but urgent, deliberate action. Across Plateau State, Nigeria, and indeed the world, the call to “Act Now for a Peaceful World” is both a plea and a responsibility.

The contributions in this volume illustrate the layered ways peace is nurtured: in the bustling streets of Jos where resilience competes with memory of conflict; in the grassroots leadership of women and youth who reimagine their roles from victims of violence to architects of coexistence; in correctional centers where even radio waves become tools of reintegration; and in community initiatives that transform scarcity into creativity and collaboration. These voices remind us that peace is never a finished product—it is always under construction.

What ties these diverse reflections together is a recognition that peace cannot be outsourced. It cannot be decreed from the top or imposed from the outside. Rather, it is a covenant of trust built from within families, neighborhoods, schools, places of worship, and civic spaces. When women mediate at water points, when youths innovate through arts and technology, when civil society organizations pool resources amid shrinking donor flows, they are each—quietly but insistently—drafting new blueprints for harmony.

Yet, this issue also challenges us to confront uncomfortable truths. Inequality, injustice, misinformation, and environmental stress continue to undermine the foundations of peace. The test before us is whether we can hold these tensions honestly, resist the pull of polarization, and chart collective pathways that privilege the common good over factional gain.

The PPPN Journal thus serves not merely as an archive of activities but as a compass. It captures lived experiences, interrogates policy frameworks, and amplifies the wisdom of communities who refuse to surrender to despair. By reading these pages, we are invited to join in a larger dialogue: What does it mean to secure peace in our time, and how shall we hand it forward to the next generation?

As we reflect, let us remember the words of an African proverb: “When spiders unite, they can tie down a lion.” Our collective strength lies not in uniformity but in unity—many threads woven into one resilient web. May this Journal inspire us all—practitioners, policymakers, scholars, and citizens—to see ourselves as custodians of that web, tasked with ensuring that peace is not an occasional aspiration but a daily inheritance.

In publishing this second volume, we reaffirm our belief that Plateau can be both a beacon of resilience and a laboratory of peace innovation. And we extend an open invitation: to continue writing, reflecting, and acting together—so that the fragile promise of peace becomes an enduring reality for generations to come.

The Tattaunawa Roundtable Initiative TRICentre

PREFACE

It is with deep gratitude and renewed purpose that I present Volume 2 of the Journal of the Plateau Peace Practitioners Network (PPPN). This edition builds on the vision of our maiden volume and stands as proof of the resilience, creativity, and commitment of peacebuilders in Plateau State, across Nigeria, and beyond—including partners like the Taraba Peace Building Bureau.

Peacebuilding is not a one-off event. It is a lifelong journey that demands character, competence, capacity, and compassion. In a world where conflict erodes trust and unity, platforms like this Journal are vital. They amplify voices, share knowledge, showcase breakthroughs, and confront challenges head-on.

Since the current Executive Committee came on board, the Plateau Peace Practitioners Network has remained steadfast: fostering dialogue, strengthening collaboration, and building bridges across divides. This Journal is a mirror of that work. It captures the courage of individuals and institutions who embody reconciliation through daily acts of service. Volume 2 goes further—bringing in perspectives from scholars, practitioners, policymakers, faith leaders, traditional rulers, youth, and women whose contributions remain indispensable.

Inside these pages, readers will find sharp analyses of conflict and peace, powerful accounts of grassroots initiatives, and reflections at the intersection of policy, practice, and lived reality—including the urgent links between climate, peace, and security. Each piece forms part of a larger mosaic of our shared pursuit of a just and peaceful Plateau, Nigeria, and Africa.

This Journal also honors the countless practitioners who labor quietly, often

without recognition, to heal wounds, mend relationships, and restore hope. Documenting their efforts is our way of saying: your work matters, and it inspires others to act.

I am grateful to the Editorial Team, contributors, reviewers, and partners whose discipline and dedication made this volume possible. You remind us that peace is both an art and a science—demanding innovation, empathy, and relentless collaboration.

As President of PPPN, I take courage from the progress we have made, while staying mindful of the road ahead. Our communities face emerging challenges, but unity, dialogue, and sustained effort remain our surest tools. My hope is that this Journal becomes more than a record—that it informs policy, inspires communities, and strengthens partnerships for peace.

To our readers: approach these pages with openness and courage. May you find insights that challenge, stories that uplift, and lessons that empower you to act. For peace is not abstract—it is possible, practical, and it begins with each of us.

Nanmak D. Bali

President, Plateau Peace Practitioners Network (PPPN)

Editorial

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Goodwill Message

On behalf of the Management, Staff, and Volunteers of the Plateau State Peace Building Agency (PSPBA), I am delighted to extend our heartfelt felicitations to the Plateau Peace Practitioners Network (PPPN) on the successful production of this special *Peace Month Journal*.

As the umbrella body that unites civil society organisations and NGOs committed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, the PPPN has continued to distinguish itself as a pillar of resilience, a trusted ally, and a rallying voice for communities across Plateau State. Through your tireless efforts, you have deepened collaboration, amplified marginalized voices, and sustained the momentum of dialogue at a time when peace must remain our collective priority.

At the PSPBA, we take immense pride in the enduring partnership we share with the Network. This Journal is more than a publication—it is a living testament to the power of knowledge, documentation, and experience-sharing in shaping a culture of peace. It reminds us that peace is never the duty of one institution alone; rather, it is a shared vision that demands the combined will of government, civil society, and communities working hand in hand.

As we commemorate Peace Month under the PSPBA-customised theme, “*Act Now for a Peaceful Plateau*”, may this initiative inspire renewed commitment from every Plateau citizen to embrace harmony, justice, and inclusion. Together, we can consolidate the gains already made and nurture a Plateau that is not only at peace with itself, but also a beacon of resilience and coexistence to the world.

We congratulate the Plateau Peace Practitioners Network for this laudable initiative and reaffirm our unwavering partnership. Through strategic collaboration, collective courage, and a shared vision, we will continue to build a Plateau where peace flourishes and hope endures.

Julie G. Sanda

Director General

Plateau State Peace Building Agency

Goodwill Message

On this International Day of Peace, we are reminded that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of justice, compassion, and mutual respect. It is the bridge that connects our shared humanity and the light that guides communities out of division and despair into hope and renewal.

Let us, therefore, unite in our commitment to build a world where harmony prevails over conflict, where dialogue triumphs over violence, and where inclusion overcomes exclusion. Together, we can embrace diversity not as a source of division but as a wellspring of strength, promoting understanding across cultures, faiths, and generations. When we celebrate what binds us rather than what separates us, we create the foundations for lasting peace.

Every action, no matter how small—a kind word, an act of forgiveness, the courage to speak against injustice—contributes to a brighter future. Peace is not the work of governments alone; it is a daily responsibility that belongs to all of us. By standing together for compassion, justice, and global cooperation, we create pathways to peace that our children and future generations can inherit with pride.

May today inspire us all to be peacemakers in our homes, our communities, and across the world. May it remind us that peace begins within each of us and radiates outward, touching lives, transforming societies, and healing nations. Let us act now, with courage and conviction, to ensure that peace is not only an aspiration but a lived reality for all.

Mujidang Sitdang

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Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria (SPRiNG) Programme

Jos: A Mountain City's Testament to Peace in Action

Prince Charles Dickson, Ph.D.

Abstract

The 2025 International Day of Peace, themed “*Actions for Peace: Our Ambition for the #GlobalGoals*”, offers a timely reflection for Jos, Plateau State—a city historically scarred by conflict yet persistently striving for reconciliation. This article interrogates the nexus between local peace practices and global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Using a cultural and contextual lens, it highlights how community-based initiatives in Jos—from women-led mediation to youth innovation hubs—translate global ambitions into localized actions for peace. By situating Jos as both fragile and resilient, the paper positions the city as an instructive laboratory for peacebuilding, offering lessons for Nigeria and beyond.

Keywords: Jos, Plateau State, International Day of Peace, Peacebuilding, SDGs, Community Mediation, Global Goals

Introduction

Each year, the world observes the International Day of Peace on September 21 as a reminder of the collective responsibility to nurture peace. The 2025 theme—*Actions for Peace: Our Ambition for the #GlobalGoals*—underscores the inseparability of peace and sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).

For Jos, a city perched on the cool granite plateau of north-central Nigeria and long celebrated as the “Home of Peace and Tourism,” this theme resonates with deep urgency. Jos' story is not one of linear progress but of paradox: a city known for its hospitality and beauty, yet also etched with painful episodes of

ethno-religious and communal conflict (Falola, 2021). This paradox makes Jos both a cautionary tale and a beacon of potential.

Jos: Between Fragility and Resilience

Jos is geographically elevated, culturally diverse, and symbolically central in Nigeria's peace narratives. Since the early 2000s, episodes of violence have fractured its urban and peri-urban spaces, leaving physical and emotional scars (Plateau Peace Building Agency [PPBA], 2023). Markets once bustling with interethnic commerce were burned down; neighborhoods hardened into enclaves divided by fear; and memories of loved ones lost still linger in communal consciousness.

Yet Jos has also demonstrated extraordinary resilience. New markets have reopened where old ones were destroyed. Social spaces—such as the Terminus market, Rukuba Road football pitches, and university campuses—continue to attract diverse groups who refuse to let division define them. Cultural festivals, interfaith choirs, and community theatre productions are today's quiet but firm declarations that coexistence is still possible.

This oscillation between fragility and resilience positions Jos as a living case study of how societies navigate the long road from conflict toward coexistence.

Actions for Peace in Practice

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remind us that peace is not a stand-alone ambition but an ecosystem of interlinked commitments: justice, inclusion, education, health, and economic growth (United Nations, 2015). In Jos, practical initiatives breathe life into these connections:

Women's Mediation and Everyday Diplomacy

In neighborhoods such as Angwan Rogo and Dutse Uku, women's associations have become informal yet powerful arbiters. Women step into disputes—whether over water points, youth clashes, or household disagreements—before these escalate into communal violence. Their actions echo SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), proving that peace can germinate in kitchens, compounds, and market stalls as much as in conference halls.

Youth Innovation as Prevention

Youth, historically drawn into cycles of violence, are now repositioned as peace agents through innovation. Tech hubs in Gangare, creative arts collectives in Gyel, and agri-entrepreneurship schemes around Bukuru offer pathways away from violence. These initiatives do more than create jobs; they create identities rooted in dignity, creativity, and contribution (Uwazie, 2011). They mirror SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure).

Institutional Collaboration and Hybrid Justice

The Plateau Multi-Door Courthouse (PMDC) has pioneered collaboration between statutory law and community dispute resolution mechanisms. By legitimizing traditional conciliation within a formal justice framework, the PMDC bridges the gap between state authority and grassroots legitimacy. This hybrid model strengthens trust in institutions, reduces case backlogs, and fosters a justice system citizens can actually access and respect (Boutros-Ghali, 1992; Uwazie, 2011).

Faith-Based Synergy

Interfaith platforms, such as the Jos Interfaith Dialogue Forum, regularly convene Muslim and Christian leaders to jointly condemn violence, celebrate religious festivals across divides, and preach tolerance. These initiatives demonstrate how faith, often a driver of division, can be repositioned as a driver of cohesion.

Together, these actions represent what “ambition for the #GlobalGoals” looks like when translated into everyday practice in a fragile but determined city.

The Plateau Cultural Lens

Peace in Jos cannot be understood outside its cultural fabric. The Berom, Afizere, Anaguta, Hausa, Fulani, Tarok, Mwaghavul, and other groups coexist in a dynamic interplay of faith and identity. Conflict has historically erupted when cultural differences were politicized or when socio-economic marginalization hardened identities into boundaries (Falola, 2021).

Yet Plateau cultures also carry within them resources for peace: proverb-laden storytelling that emphasizes reconciliation, communal festivals that cut across ethnic lines, and agricultural practices that necessitate cooperation in shared farmlands and water points.

The granite outcrops of Jos provide a metaphor: peace, like stone, is shaped slowly—through erosion, pressure, and patience. It is not fragile glass that shatters easily, but a formation that, once solidified, becomes

Reflections and Implications

The 2025 International Day of Peace calls Jos not only to commemorate but to model. To policymakers, it is a reminder that top-down decrees cannot replace bottom-up ownership of peace. To civil society, it is evidence that small, consistent acts accumulate into transformation. To faith leaders, it is an invitation to harness spirituality for solidarity, not separation.

For Nigeria and the wider West African region, Jos offers at least three lessons:

1. **Peace must be localized**—global frameworks gain traction only when translated into community idioms and practices.
2. **Resilience is cultural**—societies draw on indigenous values and metaphors to rebuild what conflict erodes.
3. **Institutions matter**—without responsive justice and inclusive governance, peace remains fragile.

Thus, Jos is not only a site of conflict memory but a laboratory of peace innovation.

Conclusion

Peace in Jos is not merely aspirational; it is actionable. By situating local practices within global frameworks, Jos demonstrates that the SDGs are not distant UN documents but living commitments enacted in compounds, schools, mosques, churches, and markets.

On this International Day of Peace, Jos must project itself as both a cautionary tale and a beacon of hope: a reminder that peace, though fragile, is fiercely possible when ambition becomes action.

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Act Now for a Peaceful World: An Urgent Call for Peacebuilding

Pastor Christopher Adekanmi, Ph.D.

Abstract

Peace remains one of humanity's most enduring ideals yet also one of its most fragile. The 2025 International Day of Peace, themed “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*,” calls for immediate and deliberate engagement at all levels of society. This article explores the multidimensional nature of peace—personal, community, national, and global—through biblical, theoretical, and practical lenses. It highlights key obstacles to peace, including conflict, inequality, environmental stress, and misinformation, while also identifying the roles of individuals, organizations, and governments in fostering sustainable harmony. Drawing on local and global case studies, the article offers actionable steps and issues a collective call to translate the aspiration for peace into lived reality.

Keywords: Peace, Conflict Resolution, Positive Peace, PPPN, International Day of Peace, Community Mediation

Introduction

Peace is one of humanity's most treasured ideals, yet it remains one of the most fragile. Across the globe, communities, nations, and even families experience conflict, misunderstanding, and division. The 2025 International Day of Peace, themed “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*,” is a call to immediate and deliberate action. It reminds us that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the active presence of justice, harmony, and reconciliation.

This distinction between “negative peace” and “positive peace” is foundational in peace studies, articulated by Johan Galtung (1996). This article, prepared for Volume 2 of the Plateau Peace Practitioners' Network (PPPN) journal, seeks to highlight ideas, strategies, and initiatives that contribute to a more peaceful

world. Through this contribution, we explore dimensions of peace, identify obstacles, and suggest actionable steps for individuals, organizations, and governments to foster lasting harmony.

Dimensions of Peace

Personal Peace

Personal peace involves inner calm, emotional stability, and reconciliation with oneself. Proverbs 14:30 teaches: *“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.”* True peace within shapes interactions, influencing patience, forgiveness, and understanding. The psychological literature on human flourishing underscores the importance of this spiritual and emotional dimension (Allport, 1950).

Community Peace

Community peace extends beyond the individual to families, neighborhoods, and institutions. Acts 4:32 describes the early Christian community: *“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.”* Initiatives such as mediation programs, neighborhood peace committees, and interfaith dialogues provide practical ways to build grassroots harmony.

National and Global Peace

At the societal and global level, peace encompasses governance and international relations. Isaiah 2:4 envisions a world without war: *“They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.”* Transparent governance, justice, diplomacy, and global cooperation are essential (Keohane & Nye, 2001). Global issues like climate change, pandemics, and humanitarian crises further emphasize peace as a shared human goal.

Challenges to Peace

Despite a universal desire for harmony, peace faces numerous challenges:

1. **Conflict and Violence.** Armed conflicts and intercommunal clashes persist. In Plateau State, Nigeria, violent clashes have historically disrupted lives and communities. Globally, conflicts in the Middle East and parts of Africa illustrate unresolved disputes (Collier, 2007).

2. **Inequality and Injustice.** Disparities and corruption foster resentment. James 2:1–9 warns against favoritism. When systems fail to ensure justice, marginalized groups may rebel. Rawls' (1971) *Theory of Justice* emphasizes fairness as a foundation for stability.
3. **Climate Change and Resource Scarcity.** Environmental stress, such as water scarcity and soil erosion, heightens conflict risks. Climate-induced displacement compounds instability (Homer-Dixon, 1999).
4. **Misinformation and Polarization.** Digital platforms can unite or divide. Hate speech and rumors inflame tensions. Promoting media literacy and responsible reporting is essential (Sunstein, 2007).

Roles and Responsibilities

Individuals

- **Inner Peace and Self-Reflection.** Personal growth, emotional intelligence, and forgiveness are foundational (Colossians 3:13).
- **Conflict Resolution and Dialogue.** Skills in negotiation and empathy, as emphasized by Rosenberg's (2015) nonviolent communication, foster constructive engagement.
- **Community Engagement.** Volunteering and civic participation inspire respect and strengthen communal bonds.

Organizations and Governments

- **Policy and Governance.** Governments must guarantee justice and rule of law; corruption undermines peace.
- **Conflict Prevention Programs.** NGOs and civil society play critical roles in mediation and education (Schirch, 2005).
- **International Cooperation.** Multilateralism and United Nations initiatives remain central (Keohane & Nye, 2001).
- **Education.** Peace education equips youth to mediate conflicts (Reardon, 1988).

Case Studies and Success Stories

Plateau State, Nigeria

Community peace committees and interfaith dialogues have reduced tensions between previously hostile groups. Youth projects and dialogue sessions model grassroots peacebuilding (Egwu, 2001).

Rwanda Post-Genocide Reconciliation

The Gacaca Courts and truth-telling initiatives underscore transitional justice as critical to recovery (Longman, 2017).

Grassroots Movements

Groups like *Seeds of Peace* empower youth to lead reconciliation efforts and rebuild trust.

Technology and Media

Digital campaigns such as *#ActNowForPeace* illustrate technology's potential to amplify tolerance and unity when responsibly managed.

Call to Action and Conclusion

Peace is not passive—it requires proactive engagement. Individuals, youth, organizations, and governments each hold responsibility. Practical actions include education, dialogue, volunteering, advocating for justice, leveraging technology positively, and supporting youth initiatives.

The benefits of peace are far-reaching: stability, prosperity, and resilient communities. As we reflect on the 2025 theme—“*Act Now for a Peaceful World*”—let us commit to immediate action. By forgiving, educating, and building bridges, we can transform peace from an aspiration into a living reality.

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P r e s s .

Nurturing Future Women Leaders: A Case from the Simji Girl-Child Empowerment Initiative and Orphanage in Plateau State, Nigeria

Simji Girl-Child Empowerment Initiative and Orphanage (SGEIO)

Abstract

The vulnerability of girls and women in many societies remains a pressing challenge rooted in entrenched cultural norms that perpetuate inequality, marginalization, and disempowerment. Practices such as male preference, unequal access to education, early marriage, and gender-based violence continue to undermine the rights and holistic development of girls, particularly in Nigeria. Within conflict-prone regions like Plateau State, these vulnerabilities are intensified by displacement, poverty, and insecurity. Against this backdrop, the Simji Girl-Child Empowerment Initiative and Orphanage (SGEIO), founded in 1999 and re-registered in 2008, has emerged as a critical grassroots actor. Through education, leadership development, economic empowerment, peacebuilding, child protection, and humanitarian services, SGEIO has impacted over 20,000 women and youths, established the Simji Integrated Academy, rescued trafficked children, and promoted orphan care across Plateau and parts of Kaduna State. Aligning interventions with Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SGEIO illustrates the transformative power of community-driven initiatives in breaking poverty cycles, nurturing future leaders, and fostering social cohesion. Investing in girls' education and empowerment is both a moral imperative and a strategic pathway for sustainable development.

Keywords: girl-child education; women's empowerment; gender inequality; cultural practices; sustainable development

Introduction

The vulnerability of girls and women is deeply orchestrated by cultural and

social factors that perpetuate inequality, disempowerment, and marginalization. These dynamics manifest in restricted opportunities, systemic discrimination, and gender-based violence (UNICEF, 2020, 2021). Male preference—rooted in patriarchal traditions—often skews household decisions on education, inheritance, and resource allocation, privileging boys over girls and reinforcing intergenerational dependency (United Nations, 2015; UNICEF, 2020). Unequal education remains central to this challenge: in many settings, cultural stereotypes confine girls to domestic roles, limiting future employment and economic autonomy despite global commitments under SDG 4 and SDG 5 (United Nations, 2015; UNESCO, 2015, 2020). Structural barriers—such as discriminatory property regimes and exclusion from finance—constrain women's agency, even as evidence shows economic empowerment yields household and national benefits (World Bank, 2018, 2019, 2020; Kabeer, 2019). Harmful practices—including child marriage, female genital mutilation, and pervasive gender-based violence—compound these vulnerabilities, truncating education and exposing girls to health and psychosocial risks (UNICEF, 2021). In Northern Nigeria, and particularly conflict-affected Plateau State, insecurity, displacement, and poverty intensify these risks (Okeke, 2021; UNHCR, 2020). Within this context, SGEIO operates as a grassroots platform translating EFA, MDGs, and SDGs into practical, community-anchored interventions.

Context: Plateau State and the Imperative for Inclusive Empowerment

Plateau State has experienced recurrent farmer–herder tensions and ethno-religious violence, producing cycles of displacement and social fragmentation (UNHCR, 2020; Okeke, 2021). Girls and young women are disproportionately affected through interrupted schooling, heightened exploitation risks, and reduced access to protective services. Addressing gender inequality in such fragile settings requires integrated approaches that combine access to quality education, economic opportunity, child protection, and peacebuilding (UNESCO, 2015, 2020; United Nations, 2015).

SGEIO: Programmatic Interventions

Education and Leadership Development

Consistent with EFA and SDG 4, SGEIO's back-to-school initiatives and the Simji Integrated Academy provide inclusive, quality education coupled with psychosocial support and life-skills training to cultivate leadership among girls

(UNESCO, 2015, 2020; UNICEF, 2021). Education serves as a catalytic intervention—reducing poverty, delaying early marriage, and strengthening community resilience (United Nations, 2015; World Bank, 2018).

Economic Empowerment and Vocational Training

Economic empowerment is pivotal to enhancing women's agency and household welfare (World Bank, 2019, 2020; Kabeer, 2019). Through vocational centers in Kuru, Riyom, Kanke, Hwolshe, and Dadin Kowa, SGEIO has equipped over 20,000 women and youths with entrepreneurship, tailoring, hairdressing, and artisanal skills—initiatives that cross religious and ethnic lines and contribute to social cohesion in conflict-prone communities (World Bank, 2020).

Teenage Mothers and Social Reintegration

Teenage pregnancy often precipitates school dropout and economic precarity. SGEIO's counseling, mentorship, and vocational pathways for adolescent mothers support reintegration and productive futures, advancing SDG 5 targets on eliminating harmful practices and ensuring equal opportunities (UNICEF, 2019, 2021).

Humanitarian Services and Support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

In line with inclusive humanitarian principles, SGEIO provides vocational training, psychosocial care, and medical outreaches to women and girls in IDP settings across Plateau, strengthening survival and resilience (UNHCR, 2020). The establishment of an orphanage for displaced girls underscores a rights-based commitment to dignity and protection (United Nations, 2015).

Combating Child Trafficking and Advancing Child Protection

Child trafficking persists as a national and global concern (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021). In collaboration with the Berom Progressive Movement, SGEIO has supported rescue and rehabilitation efforts, providing life-skills training and aligning with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and SDG targets to end abuse, exploitation, and trafficking (ILO, 2021; United Nations, 2015).

Community-Based Orphan Care

Reflecting best practices that prioritize family-based care, SGEIO promotes kinship placements for 168 orphans across seven local governments and communities in Kaduna State to safeguard attachment, identity, and cultural belonging (UNICEF, 2020, 2021).

Peacebuilding and Networking Collaborations

Sustained peace in fragile contexts requires multi-stakeholder partnerships (Akinwale, 2020). SGEIO advances interfaith and intercommunal cohesion through inclusive trainings and empowerment programs that bridge Muslim–Christian and farmer–herder divides. Membership in platforms such as the Plateau Peace Practitioners Network (PPPN), Association of Orphanages and Home Operators of Nigeria (ASOHON), and Women, Peace and Security Network (WPSN) facilitates coordination and scaling of evidence-informed approaches (Akinwale, 2020).

Discussion

SGEIO's integrated model demonstrates how community-driven interventions can convert international frameworks into local impact across education, livelihoods, protection, and peacebuilding. By embedding services in community structures and aligning with SDG 4 and SDG 5, SGEIO addresses drivers of inequality while strengthening social capital. The program's cross-cutting attention to displacement and protection is salient for conflict-affected contexts, where risks amplify for girls and young women (UNHCR, 2020; Okeke, 2021). Evidence cited by UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank reinforces the “smart economics” and intergenerational benefits of investing in girls' education and women's agency (UNESCO, 2020; World Bank, 2018, 2019, 2020; Kabeer, 2019).

Conclusion

The continued vulnerability of girls and women—particularly in conflict-affected and culturally conservative environments—undermines sustainable development. SGEIO's experience shows that transformative change is possible when interventions are community-rooted, inclusive, and aligned with global norms (EFA, SDGs, CRC). Through education, economic empowerment, child protection, and peacebuilding, investing in girls emerges

as both a moral imperative and a strategic lever for resilient, peaceful societies (United Nations, 2015; UNESCO, 2020; World Bank, 2018).

Recommendations

1. Guarantee access: Federal and state governments should enforce policies ensuring free, compulsory education for girls—prioritizing rural and conflict-affected areas (UNESCO, 2015).
2. Champion social norm change: Traditional and religious leaders should lead community campaigns to eliminate harmful practices, including child marriage and FGM (UNICEF, 2021).
3. Scale livelihoods: NGOs should expand vocational training and microcredit schemes that enhance women's economic agency and household resilience (World Bank, 2019, 2020; Kabeer, 2019).
4. Reintegrate adolescent mothers: The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development should design and implement pathways for schooling, skills, and childcare support (UNICEF, 2019).
5. Enforce protection: Judiciary and law-enforcement agencies must strengthen implementation of child-rights laws and protections against trafficking and GBV (ILO, 2021).
6. Partner to replicate: International partners, civil society, and local communities should collaborate to replicate and scale SGEIO-like models nationwide (Akinwale, 2020; United Nations, 2015).

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Use of Radio Listening Points in Custodial Centers: Implications for the Nigerian Correctional Service

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Abstract

This paper explores the impact of radio listening points on the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates in Nigerian custodial centers. Although the Nigerian Correctional Service Act (2019) emphasizes rehabilitation and reintegration, many inmates face barriers to educational and recreational programs. This study investigates the effectiveness of radio listening points in providing educational and informative content to inmates and examines implications for the Nigerian Correctional Service. Using a survey of inmates, correctional officers, and civil society actors ($N \approx 100$), findings suggest that radio access is associated with improved rehabilitation outcomes, including reduced stress and anxiety, enhanced perceived reintegration readiness, and better mental health and wellness. Results inform policy options for integrating radio within rehabilitative frameworks in correctional facilities.

Keywords: radio listening points; Nigerian Correctional Service; rehabilitation; reintegration; mental health; corrections policy

1. Introduction

The Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS), formerly the Nigerian Prisons Service, has undergone legal and policy reform emphasizing reformation and reintegration (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019). In resource-constrained environments marked by overcrowding and limited formal programming, radio listening points (RLPs)—designated spaces for curated radio—offer a scalable, low-cost complement to conventional rehabilitation (Eke & Alhassan, 2019; Musa & Ogwezzy, 2020). International experience with prison radio (e.g., United Kingdom, United States, South Africa) suggests measurable

benefits for literacy, mental health, and recidivism (Jewkes, 2002; Stern, 2014; Wikipedia, 2025a, 2025b).

Despite radio's ubiquity and accessibility in Nigeria, scholarly attention to radio within custodial centers is sparse. The core problem is the evidence gap regarding implementation models, engagement patterns, and outcomes of RLPs for inmate rehabilitation and reintegration. This study examines how RLPs operate (or could operate) in Nigerian custodial centers and the implications for NCoS policy and practice.

Research questions.

1. What content is disseminated through RLPs? 2) How are RLPs established, maintained, and supervised? 3) To what extent do inmates engage with RLPs, and with what perceived effects on behavior, knowledge, and well-being? 4) What institutional and infrastructural factors enable or hinder effective use? 5) What are the policy implications for rehabilitation and reintegration?

Objectives. The primary objective is to assess RLPs as tools for rehabilitation and reintegration. Secondary objectives include describing content types, access/engagement, operational challenges, and policy implications for scalable adoption in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Clarifications

Nigerian Correctional Service. The 2019 Act reframed prisons as correctional services with dual custodial and non-custodial mandates, emphasizing education, psychosocial support, and skills acquisition (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019; Akinwale, 2020; Okunade & Ojo, 2021).

Radio listening points. RLPs are supervised spaces for collective or individual radio access featuring news, faith-based content, civic education, health, and edutainment. Radio remains Africa's most accessible mass medium, effective even for non-literate audiences (Oyero & Salawu, 2018). In custodial settings, RLPs can support social learning, reduce isolation, and encourage prosocial behavior (Eke & Alhassan, 2019; Musa & Ogwezy, 2020).

Rehabilitation and reintegration. Rehabilitation addresses criminogenic needs via educational, psychological, and vocational interventions (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Reintegration concerns post-release adaptation and social acceptance (Adegboyega & Adebayo, 2022; Ugwuoke, 2015).

2.2. Theoretical Framework: Social Learning Theory

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory explains how observation and modeling foster behavior change via attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. RLPs present repeated, culturally resonant prosocial models (e.g., testimonies, civic messages), enabling vicarious learning in group listening contexts—often enhanced through facilitated discussion (Oyero & Salawu, 2018).

2.3. Empirical Insights and Gaps

While Nigerian studies document positive effects of literacy, vocational training, and counseling, reach and consistency remain limited by overcrowding and underfunding (PubMed, 2014; StudyLib, 2023; Oyewo, 2023; Ajayi, 2020). Internationally, prison radio has shown promise for edutainment, health messaging, and culture change (Jewkes, 2002; Stern, 2014; Wikipedia, 2025a, 2025b). In Nigeria, edutainment radio formats effectively support adult learning and behavior change (Sanusi et al., 2021). However, little empirical work addresses radio specifically in Nigerian custodial settings—creating a clear research and policy gap.

3. Method

A mixed-methods design was employed. **Participants.** The sample targeted $N \approx 100$ participants: inmates ($n \approx 75$), correctional officers ($n \approx 20$), and CSO representatives ($n \approx 15$), recruited via purposive sampling to ensure direct experience with radio access in custodial contexts.

Measures & procedure. A structured questionnaire (Likert scales and closed items) captured access, awareness, engagement, and perceived effects of RLPs. Open-ended items elicited qualitative themes regarding benefits and challenges. The survey was administered online, with anonymity assurances.

Analysis. Descriptive statistics summarized sample characteristics and RLP access. Pearson correlations and OLS regressions examined associations among access/awareness, frequency of listening, perceived mental health benefits, and perceived rehabilitation/reintegration effects. Thematic coding summarized qualitative responses.

Note on reporting: Where the provided dataset included clear typographical errors (e.g., “o.43”), values were standardized (e.g., “0.43”). A numerical inconsistency in Table 1 (counts vs. stated total N) is transparently noted in the table footnote.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1

Roles, age, and education (as reported)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Role	Inmate	75	75
	Correctional officer	20	20
	CSO practitioner	15	15
Age	Mean (SD)	35.6 (10.2)	—
Education	Secondary	45	45
	Tertiary	55	55

Note. Counts sum to 110 while the study text states N = 100; figures are shown **as reported**

Table 2*Awareness and access to radio listening points (RLPs)*

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Frequency of radio listening	3.2	3	3	1.1
Ease of accessing RLPs	3.5	4	4	1.2
Awareness of radio programs	3.8	4	5	1.0

Table 3*Perceived benefits*

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Benefits for mental health & wellness	4.1	4	5	0.9
Reduction of stress & anxiety	4.5	4	5	0.8
Importance of access to RLPs	4.2	4	5	0.9

Table 4*Impact on rehabilitation and reintegration*

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Connection to outside world	4.0	4	5	1.0
Effectiveness for rehab & reintegration	4.1	4	5	0.9
Priority of RLPs in centers	4.2	4	5	0.8

4.2. Correlations

Table 5
Bivariate correlations (as reported)

Variable 1	Variable 2	r	p
Frequency of radio listening	Mental health & wellness benefits	.65	< .001
Ease of accessing RLPs	Importance of access to RLPs	.58	< .10
Awareness of radio programs	Effectiveness for rehab & reintegration	.62	< .001

4.3. Regressions

Table 6
Ordinary least squares regressions (as reported)

Dependent variable	Independent variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Mental health & wellness benefits	Frequency of radio listening	0.35	0.08	0.43	4.21	< .001
Importance of access to RLPs	Ease of accessing RLPs	0.28	0.09	0.31	3.12	< .01
Effectiveness for rehab & reintegration	Awareness of radio programs	0.33	0.10	0.33	3.31	< .01

4.4. Qualitative Themes

1. Value of RLPs. RLPs provide entertainment, information, and emotional support; they break monotony and humanize daily routines.
2. Access barriers. Limited radios, restricted hours, and supervision constraints hinder consistent use.
3. Mental health. Listeners report reduced stress and anxiety, improved mood, and greater hopefulness.
4. Program relevance. Tailored content (legal literacy, health, faith, reentry) is perceived as more impactful than generic broadcasts.

5. Discussion

Findings indicate that greater radio listening and access are associated with stronger perceived mental-health benefits and greater perceived rehabilitation

and reintegration effectiveness. These results are consistent with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and align with evidence that mediated prosocial narratives and skills content can support behavior change and emotional regulation in custodial contexts (Eke & Alhassan, 2019; Jewkes, 2002; Stern, 2014). Qualitative data emphasize RLPs' role in connection to the outside world, stress reduction, and motivation, echoing international prison-radio practices (Wikipedia, 2025a, 2025b) and Nigerian edutainment successes (Sanusi et al., 2021).

Persistent access and infrastructure challenges—equipment scarcity, limited broadcast windows, and uneven administrative support—mirror broader system constraints documented in Nigerian correctional reform literature (Ajayi, 2020; Oyewo, 2023; StudyLib, 2023). Addressing these barriers is essential to realizing RLPs' potential.

6. Implications for Policy and Practice

1. Policy integration. Incorporate RLPs into NCoS rehabilitation policy with guidelines on curation, broadcast schedules, and safeguarding.
2. Broadcast partnerships. Co-produce prison-specific programming with public/community stations (legal literacy, reentry planning, conflict resolution, health, faith).
3. Infrastructure & equity. Provide secure, supervised communal listening hubs; ensure equitable access for women and juveniles.
4. Capacity building. Train facilitators/officers to moderate post-listening dialogues that reinforce prosocial lessons (SLT-consistent debriefs).
5. Monitoring & evaluation. Implement lightweight M&E (listener logs, pre/post mood checks, disciplinary incident trends) to calibrate content and demonstrate value.
6. Scale through pilots. Launch multi-site pilots across the six geopolitical zones to refine cost models and operational protocols before national roll-out.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The rehabilitative mandate of the NCoS (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019) requires low-cost, scalable modalities alongside formal programs. This study suggests that radio listening points can enhance perceived mental health,

connection, and readiness for reintegration—particularly in under-resourced facilities. To institutionalize impact:

- Enact national guidance integrating RLPs into correctional rehabilitation.
- Partner with broadcasters to co-create relevant, culturally resonant content.
- Invest in supervised infrastructure and facilitator training.
- Evaluate outcomes systematically to inform scale and sustainability.

With supportive policy and partnerships, RLPs can become a transformative tool within Nigeria's correctional rehabilitation ecosystem.

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[Notes on Data Integrity \(transparent\)](#)

- Sample size: The text states $N = 100$ overall, but Table 1 role counts sum to 110 (75 inmates, 20 officers, 15 CSOs). I preserved your figures and noted the discrepancy so you can reconcile before submission if needed.
- Reported coefficients: Minor typographical errors (e.g., “o.43”) were normalized (e.g., “0.43”) without altering values.

Building Resilience Amid Shrinking Aid: Rethinking Peacebuilding and Donor Support in Plateau State

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Abstract

On International Peace Day 2025, civil society actors confront a rapidly contracting aid ecosystem even as conflict drivers and humanitarian needs intensify. This article traces the moral legacy of global civil liberties movements and Nigeria's democracy struggles, then situates Plateau State's decade of violence and resilience within today's funding squeeze. Drawing on public reporting and sector analyses, it outlines practical, collaborative strategies for Plateau-based NGOs/CBOs: pooled back-office services, local grant intermediaries, consortium bids, social enterprise, diaspora giving, and digital campaigns. The core claim is that while aid is shrinking, community-grounded collaboration and innovation can convert scarcity into resilience and sustain peacebuilding outcomes in Plateau.

Keywords: Plateau State; peacebuilding; shrinking aid; civil society; collaboration; Nigeria

Introduction (Preamble)

International Peace Day 2025 invites both remembrance and re-design. The moral authority that once powered global civil liberties movements still matters, but donor flows and compliance regimes have shifted (The Guardian Nigeria; AllAfrica; TechCabal; Reuters). In Nigeria—and acutely in Plateau State—non-profits face hard constraints alongside durable strengths: interfaith dialogue, indigenous mediation traditions, and community stamina. This paper charts that arc and proposes adaptive pathways for Plateau's NGOs/CBOs to thrive amid constrained funding.

When Morality Moved Mountains

Post-World War II civil liberties organizations leveraged legitimacy, solidarity, and grassroots action to reshape public life. Amnesty International's global membership surges and recognition, and the American Civil Liberties Union's expansion, exemplify resource-light but legitimacy-rich advocacy (Wikipedia, n.d.-a; Wikipedia, n.d.-b). Their methods echo the proverb, “However long the night, the dawn will break”: repression gave way to resilience and reform.

Echoes at Home: Nigeria's Civil Society and Democratic Struggles

Nigeria's civil society drew on similar courage. The Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) challenged authoritarian rule through the 1980s–1990s, including the June 12, 1993 crisis period (Wikipedia, n.d.-c). Over time, agendas widened to governance, humanitarian response, and peacebuilding. Today's reality—declining donor flows, tighter compliance, and shifting priorities—demands strategic adaptation: “When the drumbeat changes, the dancers must also change their steps.”

Leaning on Fragile Wings: A Shrinking Donor Landscape

Donor allocations to Nigeria's health and family-planning portfolios have fallen sharply, and humanitarian pipelines have tightened (The Guardian Nigeria; AllAfrica; Reuters, 2025a, 2025b). UNICEF warns tens of thousands of Nigerian children risk losing access to life-saving foods; reports from Katsina indicate hundreds of child malnutrition deaths in early 2025 (Reuters, 2025b). Intent without means, as the proverb notes, leaves “the best cooking pot” empty. Civil society will need creativity, collaboration, and new financing models to remain impactful.

Plateau's Promise Amid Turmoil

From 2015–2025, Plateau endured recurrent mass attacks and reprisals—Barkin Ladi, Bokokos, Riyom, Jos North—with the 2018 massacres, 2021–2022 ambushes, and the 2023 Christmas Eve attacks among the darkest moments (Wikipedia, n.d.-g). Yet markets reopened, schools and worship centers resumed, and interfaith dialogues continued. Indigenous and faith-based peace platforms—and processes like the Jos inter-communal dialogues—sustained threads of coexistence (Wikipedia, n.d.-f; USIP). The

lived ethic: “When the roots are deep, there is no reason to fear the wind.”

From Crisis to Collaboration: Practical Pathways for Civil Society

1. Pool costs; raise credibility

Shared hubs for MEL/compliance/procurement lower overheads and improve audit readiness—helping smaller CBOs meet donor standards (TechCabal).

2. Work through local funding intermediaries

Nigeria's local grant-maker/intermediary models show that modest grants plus mentorship can multiply outcomes (Premium Times Nigeria, on dRPC-style models).

3. Build resilient revenue

Complement grants with fee-for-service peace education, social enterprise (e.g., agri-value chains tied to returnee livelihoods), and cause-aligned corporate CSR. Add diversified small-ticket channels: diaspora giving, recurring micro-donations, and time-bound digital campaigns.

4. Form consortia

“A single broomstick breaks; a bundle does not.” Consortium bids reduce duplication, expand geographic reach, and signal capacity to manage larger awards.

5. Protect the core: community legitimacy

Invest in interfaith councils, youth/women mediators, and farmer–herder grievance desks. Preserve data discipline (incident logging, referral follow-ups) to demonstrate value beyond budgets.

6. Align to shifting donor frames

Map peacebuilding to stabilization, climate adaptation, food security, protection, and mental health—meeting funders where priorities currently land (Reuters, 2025a; USIP).

Conclusion: Peace That Outlasts Aid

The history of rights and peace movements proves that resources matter—but vision, legitimacy, and solidarity move mountains (Wikipedia, n.d.-a; n.d.-b;

n.d.-c). Plateau's communities have shown resilience through rebuilding and dialogue (Wikipedia, n.d.-f; n.d.-g; USIP). As Kenyan wisdom reminds us, peace “is worth the expense,” while disunity costs far more. “When spiders unite, they can tie down a lion.” In this era of shrinking aid, Plateau's civil society can still win: collaborate, innovate, and stay rooted in communities—so peace endures as homegrown inheritance, not donor contingency.

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Editors' Note: Reference completeness note (APA): Several sources in your list are containers (e.g., “Reuters,” “The Guardian Nigeria,” “Wikipedia”) without article titles, dates, or URLs. I formatted what's available, but to satisfy strict APA 7, please insert each item's article title, exact date, and URL. If you'd like, I can finalize these entries once you share the links or filenames.

Collective Growth vs. Individual Perspectives: Defining Development in Nigerian Society

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Abstract

This article interrogates the persistent tension between collective growth and individual perspectives in shaping Nigerian society's developmental trajectory. While individual and group sentiments often dominate public discourse, true progress requires prioritizing collective well-being. Drawing on contemporary case studies—including Nigeria's Super Falcons' victory at the Women's Africa Cup of Nations, political predictions by religious leaders, internal struggles within the Labour Party, the advocacy roles of NGOs and CSOs, and the cultural impact of Big Brother Naija—the analysis highlights how personal or factional biases can conflict with societal needs. The paper concludes that inclusivity, equity, sustainability, and cultural sensitivity should guide decision-making to ensure Nigeria's development serves the common good.

Keywords: Nigeria; collective growth; individual perspectives; politics; culture; sustainable development

Introduction

The discourse on societal progress often reflects tension between collective growth and individual perspectives. Humans are social beings, yet the pursuit of personal desires or narrow group interests can overshadow broader communal goals. In Nigeria, deep ethnic, religious, and regional divisions amplify this struggle. As the Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (BTI, 2024) notes, stark socioeconomic inequalities between north and south shape political priorities, underscoring the need for unified approaches that transcend individual biases. This article explores what is truly beneficial for Nigeria as a whole versus what individuals may perceive as right based on emotion, culture, or factionalism.

Collective Growth vs. Individual Sentiments

Collective growth emphasizes equitable access to resources, opportunities, and justice, while individualistic perspectives often serve personal or group gain. Policies supported by vocal minorities may appear misaligned with wider societal needs. To advance meaningfully, Nigerians must shift from asking, “What do I think is right?” to “What serves the greater good of society?”

Case Study: Women's Africa Cup of Nations

Nigeria's Super Falcons' 2025 Women's Africa Cup of Nations victory illustrates this tension. The Presidency awarded \$100,000 to players and \$50,000 to the technical team, sparking criticism amid widespread poverty. Critics labeled the gesture misplaced, yet such recognition aligns with collective development goals. Women's football in Nigeria has long been underfunded, with female athletes often forced into early retirement due to marriage or limited opportunities.

By rewarding the Falcons, government action supports gender equity in sports and signals commitment to dismantling patriarchal barriers. This aligns with the World Bank's (2021) Country Partnership Framework, which emphasizes human capital investment and harnessing Nigeria's demographic dividend. Investments in women's sports inspire girls, challenge cultural stereotypes, and build national pride—outcomes that outweigh short-term criticisms rooted in individualistic bias.

The Role of Religious Leaders in Shaping Political Narratives

Religious leaders wield vast influence in Nigeria but sometimes use it to endorse candidates or predict electoral outcomes, fueling division. The 2015 elections, for instance, highlighted the extent to which ethnicity and religion shaped voting behavior (BTI, 2024). Rather than perpetuating polarization, religious leaders could prioritize advocacy for collective goals such as employment creation, peace, and social integration. By doing so, they can redirect public trust toward unity and sustainable development.

The Labour Party and Leadership Challenges

The Labour Party, born out of the Nigeria Labour Congress, was envisioned as a defender of collective welfare. However, internal leadership struggles have weakened its capacity to champion workers' rights and economic justice. Instead of presenting coherent alternatives amid Nigeria's 38.9% poverty rate (World Bank, 2023), the party has mirrored broader societal tendencies toward individualism and factionalism. Transparent leadership processes, strong policy agendas, and a recommitment to collective priorities remain essential for the party's survival.

NGOs and CSOs: A Call for Political Engagement

Civil society organizations have long promoted governance reforms and peacebuilding. However, fragmentation across ethnic and religious lines undermines impact. Calls for NGOs and CSOs to form political parties raise concerns over independence and focus. Instead, they should strengthen their watchdog roles, collaborate across divides, and advocate systemic reforms addressing poverty, gender inequality, and insecurity. The #EndSARS protests of 2020 demonstrated the potency of collective action but also underscored the risks of state backlash. By focusing on inclusive advocacy, CSOs can advance sustainable change without partisan entanglement.

The Cultural Impact of Big Brother Naija

Big Brother Naija (BBNaija) has ignited debates about cultural erosion. Critics argue the show promotes nudity and individualism, clashing with African values of modesty and community. Yet BBNaija has also fueled Nigeria's creative economy, created jobs, and provided youth expression platforms. Rather than outright rejection, stakeholders should advocate content reforms to reflect cultural sensitivity and emphasize entrepreneurship, heritage, and collective progress. Constructive engagement can balance entertainment value with Nigeria's cultural integrity.

Defining What Is Right for Society

Nigeria's path to progress requires principles that transcend narrow perspectives:

1. **Inclusivity:** Actions must serve all Nigerians regardless of ethnicity, religion, or region.

2. Equity: Address historic inequalities, particularly gender and marginalized groups.
3. Sustainability: Prioritize long-term benefits such as education, job creation, and infrastructure.
4. Cultural Sensitivity: Preserve cultural heritage while adapting to modernity.

Conclusion

Nigeria's sustainable development lies in prioritizing collective well-being over individual sentiment. The Super Falcons' victory illustrates the value of investing in marginalized groups, while leadership failures in the Labour Party and political interventions by religious leaders highlight the dangers of individualism. NGOs and CSOs can remain catalysts for reform, and cultural platforms like BBNaija can be reshaped to support collective aspirations. Guided by inclusivity, equity, sustainability, and cultural integrity, Nigeria can build a society that serves the common good.

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Promoting Peace: A Path to a Harmonious World

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Abstract

The 2025 International Day of Peace, themed “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*,” provides an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of peace and the actions needed to cultivate it. Peace is more than the absence of conflict; it represents wholeness, mutual respect, and harmonious coexistence. This article discusses strategies for building peaceful communities, including non-violence, fair hearing, dialogue, respect for boundaries, and appropriate responses to violence. By grounding these practices in everyday life, individuals and communities can strengthen collective well-being. The paper concludes that peace requires intentional action at personal, communal, and institutional levels, affirming that small but consistent acts of kindness and dialogue can ripple outward to transform societies.

Keywords: International Day of Peace; peacebuilding; non-violence; dialogue; Nigeria

Introduction

The International Day of Peace, observed annually on September 21, is a reminder of the shared global responsibility to nurture harmony (United Nations, 1981/2025). The 2025 theme, “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*,” underscores that peace must be pursued actively rather than passively awaited. In Nigeria and beyond, conflict has often disrupted communities, but peace remains possible through deliberate actions that honor human dignity, dialogue, and coexistence.

Peace is not only the absence of war but also the presence of fairness, trust, and mutual respect (Galtung, 1996). In this sense, peace embodies security and

belonging, enabling people to thrive collectively. This paper explores what peace entails and identifies strategies for cultivating it within communities.

Understanding Peace

Peace is a multidimensional concept that transcends the absence of violence. It involves the presence of justice, equality, and environments where individuals feel valued (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). In peaceful societies, disputes are resolved through constructive engagement rather than coercion, and diversity is celebrated rather than suppressed.

Strategies for Building a Peaceful Community

Abstaining from Violence

Violence is often a destructive response to disputes, leading to loss of lives and deepened divisions. Prioritizing peaceful methods such as negotiation and mediation aligns with the United Nations' call for non-violence in conflict resolution (United Nations, 2015). By abstaining from violence, communities create space for constructive solutions that promote unity.

Ensuring Fair Hearing

Fair hearing requires listening to all voices without prejudice. When individuals feel acknowledged, disputes are less likely to escalate. Inclusivity fosters social cohesion and strengthens a sense of belonging, reflecting democratic ideals of participation and justice (Rawls, 1971).

Embracing Dialogue

Dialogue is central to conflict transformation. Open communication enables grievances to be aired and solutions collaboratively developed. Galtung's (1996) concept of “positive peace” highlights dialogue as essential for addressing structural causes of conflict and preventing escalation.

Respecting Boundaries

Respect for personal, cultural, and communal boundaries reinforces trust and reduces tensions. Disregard for such boundaries often provokes conflict. Demonstrating empathy by honoring others' limits fosters peaceful coexistence (Schirch, 2005).

Responding Appropriately to Violence

Retaliation perpetuates cycles of hostility. Instead, de-escalation through mediation, lawful intervention, or restorative dialogue can break cycles of violence. Choosing restraint exemplifies constructive peacebuilding (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000).

The Call to Action: Act Now for a Peaceful World

The 2025 International Day of Peace emphasizes that peace is an active pursuit requiring commitment from all levels of society. Homes, schools, workplaces, and communities are critical spaces where peace must be cultivated through fairness, respect, and dialogue. Small acts of kindness, forgiveness, and understanding have transformative potential. As the African proverb suggests, “When spiders unite, they can tie down a lion”—collective action for peace multiplies impact.

Conclusion

Peace is both aspiration and action. To build a harmonious world, individuals and communities must intentionally abstain from violence, ensure inclusivity, embrace dialogue, respect boundaries, and respond constructively to conflict. These strategies align with global peace frameworks and provide practical pathways for Nigerians and others to act on this year's call: “*Act Now for a Peaceful World.*”

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International Day of Peace: Doing Unusual Things for Peace

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Abstract

The International Day of Peace, commemorated annually on September 21, highlights the urgency of global reflection and action to achieve sustainable peace. This article emphasizes the importance of self-peace as the foundation for societal and global harmony. While governments, NGOs, and faith leaders invest significant resources in peacebuilding, enduring peace remains elusive. The authors argue that inner transformation, forgiveness, and personal responsibility are critical yet underemphasized dimensions of peace advocacy. Framed around the 2025 theme “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*” and its link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the article proposes that building cultures of peace begins with individuals and extends outward to families, communities, and nations.

Keywords: International Day of Peace; self-peace; forgiveness; Sustainable Development Goals; peacebuilding

Introduction

The International Day of Peace, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981, is observed annually on September 21 to promote ideals of global ceasefire and non-violence (United Nations, 1981/2025). It provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations, and nations to recommit to building cultures of peace.

In a world marked by conflict and division, peace must be treated not merely as a vision but as a call to action that requires deliberate effort (Galtung, 1996). The 2025 theme, “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*,” emphasizes the urgency of

addressing inequality, injustice, and environmental threats as foundations for lasting peace.

Peace as a Call to Action

Peace transcends rhetoric; it is a lived experience requiring collaboration, empathy, and justice. Religious traditions enjoin their adherents to seek harmony with neighbors, while philosophical traditions emphasize self-mastery. As Buddha taught, “Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without” (Rahula, 1974).

The absence of peace in societies often reflects a lack of inner peace among individuals. True transformation begins with cultivating self-peace, which then radiates outward to families, communities, and nations.

The Role of Self-Peace

Peace advocacy has long focused on diplomacy, governance, and institutional reforms. However, these approaches have not yielded sufficient global stability. Encouraging self-peace offers a complementary dimension to peacebuilding.

Self-peace involves creating safe spaces for reflection, forgiveness, and personal healing. Inner peace enables individuals to respond to conflict with empathy rather than hostility, fostering healthier social dynamics (Worthington, 2005).

Forgiveness as a Pathway to Peace

Forgiveness plays a central role in personal and collective peace. By releasing grudges, individuals free themselves from cycles of resentment and retaliation. Forgiveness reduces hostility and builds pathways toward reconciliation. This aligns with the principles of restorative justice, which emphasize healing over retribution (Zehr, 2002).

Forgiveness does not condone harm but rather empowers individuals to transform pain into reconciliation. Families and societies shaped by forgiveness are more resilient against cycles of violence and retaliation.

Global and Local Responsibilities

The International Day of Peace emphasizes collective responsibility. While governments and frontline peacekeepers play critical roles, sustainable peace depends on the participation of every individual. Peace begins with “small acts of forgiveness, love, and hope” that ripple outward into communities and nations.

Civil society and faith-based organizations must reinforce these values by building structures that promote understanding, support reconciliation, and foster diversity. Grassroots initiatives, such as those led by youth and community organizations, are essential for embedding peace cultures within local contexts (Schirch, 2005).

Conclusion

The International Day of Peace calls humanity to do “unusual things” for peace: to look inward, forgive, and embody the values we seek in the world. Inner peace serves as the foundation for peaceful families, cohesive societies, and stable nations. By embracing self-peace, forgiveness, and collective responsibility, individuals can respond to the 2025 call to “*Act Now for a Peaceful World.*”

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Cultivating Peace through Community Development: A Nigerian Perspective

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Abstract

This article explores the pivotal role of community development in fostering peace in Nigeria, highlighting the experiences and strategies of the Integrated Community Development Initiatives of Nigeria (ICIN). By empowering communities to identify and address their needs, ICIN's initiatives promote education, economic empowerment, and social inclusion, thereby building trust, fostering social cohesion, and promoting understanding. This article underscores the significance of community-led peace initiatives and highlights key strategies, including community engagement, capacity building, and collaboration with stakeholders. The article concludes with actionable recommendations for governments, donors, policymakers, and stakeholders to support community development initiatives that promote peace, ultimately contributing to a more peaceful and prosperous society.

Keywords: community development, peace, Nigeria, peacebuilding, social inclusion

Introduction

The International Day of Peace, celebrated annually on September 21, serves as a global reminder of the importance of peace and the need for collective action. In 2025, the theme “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*” underscores the urgency of fostering cultures of peace at individual, communal, and national levels (United Nations, 2025).

The Integrated Community Development Initiatives of Nigeria (ICIN) has worked for decades to advance peace and sustainable development in conflict-prone areas. ICIN emphasizes that peace is both a goal and a process requiring deliberate strategies such as empowerment, education, and social inclusion.

Community Development as a Pathway to Peace

Community development offers a practical route to peacebuilding by empowering people to address their needs and challenges collaboratively. As Ikelegbe (2019) argues, development that promotes equity, inclusion, and participation enhances social stability. ICIN's programs integrate education, vocational training, and community engagement, fostering trust and resilience.

Peacebuilding in Nigeria

Peacebuilding in Nigeria is complex and multifaceted, requiring both grassroots and policy-level interventions. Adebayo (2020) stresses the importance of local actors who understand the cultural and political nuances of their communities. Civil society organizations (CSOs) have bridged gaps between citizens and the state, creating space for mediation and conflict prevention (Olufemi, 2020).

Role of Civil Society Organizations

CSOs have consistently supported dialogue and resilience in communities challenged by political and ethno-religious tensions. They mediate disputes, advocate for justice, and build social networks that reinforce peace (Albert, 2020). Partnerships between CSOs and international organizations have also advanced local peacebuilding capacities.

Community-Led Peacebuilding

Community-led approaches create ownership and sustainability. Ibrahim and Adedoyin (2023) highlight the value of locally driven projects that address structural causes of conflict such as poverty and inequality. ICIN's participatory engagement models demonstrate that empowering community voices strengthens peace processes.

Challenges and Limitations

Despite successes, challenges remain. Peacebuilding initiatives often face security threats, political interference, and inconsistent funding (Ogunyemi, 2019). Election-related violence and recurrent sectarian clashes disrupt progress. Additionally, Nigeria's diversity means peacebuilding approaches must be context-specific and locally adaptable (Emelonye & Buergenthal, 2011).

Theoretical Frameworks

Social Capital Theory

Social Capital Theory emphasizes networks, trust, and cooperation as resources for collective action (Putnam, 2000). Applied to peacebuilding, this theory highlights how ICIN's initiatives build bonds that enhance resilience and reduce conflict.

Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict Transformation Theory, advanced by Lederach (1997), stresses addressing the root causes of conflict and transforming relationships. ICIN's focus on dialogue, inclusion, and capacity building exemplifies this approach.

Human Security Theory

Human Security Theory prioritizes safeguarding individuals from violence and deprivation (UNDP, 1994). ICIN's work with vulnerable groups in Nigeria reflects this framework by centering human dignity and protection.

Additional Theories

- Restorative Justice Theory: Seeks healing and reconciliation after harm (Zehr, 2002).
- Empowerment Theory: Emphasizes enabling local communities to own peacebuilding initiatives (Kabeer, 2019).

Methodology

This article employs a qualitative case study approach based on ICIN's programs. Data sources included participatory research with staff and communities, document reviews of program reports, and thematic analysis of

lessons learned. While limited to ICIN's experiences, the findings offer generalizable insights into grassroots peacebuilding.

Key Findings

1. Community engagement builds trust and ensures interventions reflect local needs.
2. Capacity building strengthens conflict management and fosters sustainability.
3. Collaboration with stakeholders amplifies peacebuilding outcomes.

Conclusion

ICIN's experience demonstrates that community development is central to peacebuilding in Nigeria. Empowering communities through education, social inclusion, and economic opportunity addresses root causes of conflict and builds resilience. Achieving peace requires joint responsibility among governments, donors, CSOs, and citizens.

Recommendations

1. Governments and donors should increase funding for grassroots peacebuilding initiatives.
2. Policies should support community-led approaches to conflict prevention.
3. Stakeholders should collaborate to pool resources and expertise.

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Being a Voice for Peace: Justice, Diversity, and Advocacy in Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This article examines the role of Stefanos Relief Foundation in promoting peace, justice, and human rights in Nigeria, with a specific focus on Plateau State. Against a backdrop of recurring violence, ethnic diversity, and systemic injustice, the organization's two decades of peacebuilding and advocacy are analyzed. Drawing on organizational records spanning 1994–2024, the article highlights patterns of violence and underscores the importance of justice as a deterrent to recurring conflict. It argues that peacebuilding must extend beyond dialogue to include accountability, protection of the persecuted, and structural reforms that foster trust among Nigeria's diverse peoples. The discussion concludes with a call to action in line with the 2025 International Day of Peace theme, “*Act Now for a Peaceful World.*”

Keywords: peacebuilding, justice, Nigeria, Plateau State, advocacy, human rights

Introduction

Martin Luther King Jr. once observed that, “*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.*” This statement remains profoundly relevant to Nigeria and Plateau State today, where peace and justice are under constant threat. Amid persistent conflict, there is an urgent need for individuals and organizations to amplify the voices of the marginalized and advocate for justice as a pathway to sustainable peace.

Stefanos Relief Foundation (RC-20365), headquartered in Jos, Plateau State, is one such organization. Established over two decades ago, Stefanos Relief Foundation has consistently engaged in peacebuilding, human rights advocacy, relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction targeting victims of

violence and persecution in Nigeria. Its mission emphasizes speaking for the voiceless and encouraging the traumatized to embrace forgiveness and reconciliation.

Diversity and the Challenge of Peace in Nigeria

Nigeria's rich diversity presents both opportunities and challenges for peacebuilding. Research by Stefanos Relief Foundation reveals that the country comprises nearly 800 ethnic groups, with the 19 northern states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) alone home to more than 600 ethnic groups and 400 dialects. While diversity can enrich society, it often becomes a fault line for conflict when justice and equity are absent (Adebayo, 2020).

Plateau State exemplifies these challenges. The state's ethnic and religious pluralism has made it a flashpoint for violent conflict over the past three decades. Without robust structures of justice and accountability, grievances have often escalated into cycles of reprisal, undermining peacebuilding efforts.

Historical Patterns of Violence

Stefanos Relief Foundation has documented incidents of violence in Plateau State from 1994 to 2024, spanning religious riots, Boko Haram insurgency, and militia attacks. Table 1 summarizes these incidents.

Table 1
Incidents of Violence in Plateau State, Nigeria (1994–2024)

Year Incidents Kidnapped Injured Killed

1994	1	-	-	16
2001	1	-	-	1000
2002	1	-	-	-
2008	1	-	-	100
2010	23	-	75	1205
2011	43	-	14	103
2012	91	-	27	210
2013	111	-	16	276
2014	20	-	-	122
2015	73	-	23	377
2016	9	-	11	5
2017	30	-	25	79
2018	85	-	214	587
2019	71	6	9	164
2020	32	2	-	495
2021	28	9	67	920
2022	44	157	56	262
2023	39	14	216	650
2024	48	7	20	225

Total: 752 incidents; 195 kidnapped; 773 injured; 6,796 killed.

The statistics illustrate the grave human toll of violence in Plateau State. While peace dialogues and reconciliation meetings have occurred, their impact has often been undermined by a failure to ensure justice and accountability.

Justice as the Pathway to Peace

Peacebuilding efforts that focus solely on dialogue without addressing perpetrators' accountability are insufficient. As Lederach (1997) explains in his *Conflict Transformation Theory*, reconciliation must include mechanisms for justice to prevent recurrence. Stefanos Relief Foundation's records show that aggressors often return to violence when they are not punished, even as peace talks

Therefore, justice must be at the center of peacebuilding. When justice is upheld, it serves as a deterrent and reinforces community trust in institutions (Albert, 2020). True peace is unattainable without justice, as echoed by King's call to confront, not ignore, matters of injustice.

Advocacy and the Role of Civil Society

Civil society organizations like Stefanos Relief Foundation are essential in contexts where state capacity is weak or compromised. Their roles include:

- **Human rights advocacy:** Speaking for persecuted groups.
- **Relief and rehabilitation:** Supporting survivors of violence.
- **Peace education:** Encouraging forgiveness and reconciliation.
- **Policy influence:** Pressuring governments to uphold justice.

Such advocacy aligns with Social Capital Theory, which emphasizes building trust and networks of solidarity to strengthen resilience (Putnam,

The 2025 International Day of Peace: A Call to Action

The 2025 International Day of Peace theme, “*Act Now for a Peaceful World*”, calls on individuals, organizations, and governments to move beyond rhetoric toward decisive action. Stefanos Relief Foundation joins this call, emphasizing that peace requires both forgiveness and justice. Dialogue must be matched with accountability to create environments where violence is no longer normalized.

Conclusion

Nigeria's diversity and history of violence demand deliberate, justice-centered peacebuilding efforts. Stefanos Relief Foundation's work over two decades demonstrates the necessity of speaking for the voiceless and prioritizing justice in conflict resolution. To *act now for a peaceful world* means ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable, victims are supported, and communities are empowered to coexist peacefully.

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Climate Change and Its Effects on Peace in Plateau State

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Abstract

Climate change has emerged as one of the greatest non-traditional security threats of the 21st century. Its effects are particularly pronounced in fragile contexts where resource scarcity intersects with socio-political vulnerabilities. In Plateau State, Nigeria, changing rainfall patterns, prolonged dry spells, deforestation, and increasing erosion threaten both livelihoods and social cohesion. This article explores the relationship between climate change and peace in Plateau State, situating local experiences within global climate-security debates. Drawing on existing literature, policy documents, and local realities, it argues that sustainable peace in Plateau must integrate climate resilience, resource justice, and community-driven adaptation strategies.

Keywords: climate change, peacebuilding, resource conflict, Plateau State, farmer-herder relations, environmental security

Introduction

Peace is often understood as the absence of armed conflict; however, contemporary scholarship emphasizes that genuine peace requires justice, equity, and sustainable development (Galtung, 1996; Lederach, 1997). In many African contexts, these foundations are threatened not only by political or ethnic disputes but also by environmental crises exacerbated by climate change.

In Plateau State, Nigeria, climate stressors are reshaping traditional livelihoods and altering inter-communal relations. The International Day of Peace 2025 offers a timely opportunity to reflect on how environmental sustainability is indispensable to peace and security in the region.

Literature Review

Global climate-security scholarship suggests that environmental stress can act as a “threat multiplier,” intensifying pre-existing social tensions (Barnett & Adger, 2007; Buhaug et al., 2010). In sub-Saharan Africa, this often manifests through disputes over land, water, and grazing resources (Ide, 2021).

Nigeria has been central to this debate, particularly regarding farmer-herder conflicts in the Middle Belt (International Crisis Group, 2018). Reduced rainfall, desertification in northern Nigeria, and population growth converge to fuel migration, land competition, and violence (Okpara, Stringer, Dougill, & Bila, 2015).

Local perspectives, however, emphasize that these conflicts are not solely caused by climate change. Weak governance, inequality, and erosion of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms shape whether environmental stress escalates into violence (Mustapha, 2019). This framing is critical for understanding Plateau State's vulnerabilities and opportunities.

Conceptual Framing

This article adopts an environmental security lens, positing that peace and climate resilience are mutually reinforcing. The analysis is based on a synthesis of secondary literature, government policy commitments, and observed local dynamics in Plateau State.

Climate Change Dynamics in Plateau State

Plateau State is experiencing multiple ecological stressors:

1. Shifting rainfall and dry spells: Irregular precipitation undermines crop productivity and water security.
2. Rising temperatures: Accelerates land degradation and pasture scarcity.
3. Deforestation and soil erosion: Forest loss in Shere Hills and farmland ecosystems reduces ecological stability.
4. Floods and gully erosion: Increasingly frequent, displacing families and eroding infrastructure.

These environmental dynamics intersect with Plateau's livelihood systems and ethnic diversity, producing vulnerabilities that threaten social cohesion.

Climate Change and Peace: The Nexus

- Farmer-herder relations: Resource scarcity increases disputes over grazing routes and farmland.
- Inter-communal trust: Climate stress strains cooperative ties between neighboring communities.
- Displacement and fragility: Climate-induced migration intensifies pressure on host communities, raising risks of violent clashes.

These dynamics illustrate how climate change functions as a conflict driver when coupled with governance deficits (Barnett & Adger, 2007; Ide, 2021).

Pathways to Climate-Resilient Peace in Plateau

1. Agroecology and climate-smart agriculture: Promotes food security while preserving ecosystems.
2. Forest conservation: Reforestation and reserve protection serve as buffers against erosion.
3. Renewable energy: Reduces dependence on fuelwood, curbing deforestation.
4. Integrated early warning systems: Linking climate forecasts with peacebuilding monitoring.
5. Inclusive governance: Empowering traditional leaders, civil society, and the private sector in co-creating adaptation policies.

Policy and Practice Implications

The Plateau State Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Mineral Development has articulated policies for adaptation and mitigation. Yet, effective implementation requires multi-stakeholder collaboration, sustained funding, and community ownership. Civil society groups and local peace practitioners remain vital in bridging policy and grassroots realities.

Conclusion

In Plateau State, peace and climate resilience are inseparable. Environmental degradation threatens livelihoods and fuels tensions that undermine social harmony. Conversely, climate action—through adaptation, conservation, and inclusive governance—offers a pathway to peace. The challenge is urgent, but

with political will and citizen participation, Plateau can pass on a legacy of peace rooted in environmental sustainability.

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Positive Peace: Beyond Quiet Streets in Plateau State

Ambassador Vivien E. Abara

Abstract

Silence is not peace. Positive Peace, as articulated by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), refers to “the attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.” This article applies the Positive Peace framework to Plateau State, Nigeria—a region marked by mass violence, displacement, child labour, and human trafficking—to examine the fragility of its eight pillars: governance, corruption, business environment, equitable resource distribution, rights, neighbourly relations, information flows, and human capital. Using recent data and lived experiences, the article argues that rebuilding peace requires embedding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as cross-cutting principles. It concludes with concrete policy, civil society, and citizen-level recommendations for transforming Plateau from fragile silence to lasting peace.

Keywords: Positive Peace, Plateau State, Diversity Equity & Inclusion, farmer-herder conflict, child labour, human trafficking, Nigeria

Introduction

“True peace bleeds through our institutions and cultures: it is the justice we build, the rights we respect, the futures we invest in—not merely the calm when guns are silent.” —Ambassador Vivien E. Abara

Peace in Plateau State cannot be reduced to moments when gunfire ceases. While ceasefires and military interventions have at times restored temporary calm, sustainable peace demands more. The Institute for Economics & Peace (2024) defines Positive Peace as the “attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.” These are operationalized through eight

pillars which explain why countries such as Iceland, New Zealand, Ireland, and Finland consistently lead the Global Peace Index (IEP, 2024).

In Plateau, these pillars have cracked. This article examines how environmental, socio-political, and economic fractures undermine peace and highlights pathways for rebuilding institutions and communities through a Positive Peace framework.

Context: Plateau's Fragile Reality

Between December 2023 and May 2025, more than 2,630 people were killed in Plateau, contributing to over 10,000 conflict-related deaths nationwide (Amnesty International, 2025). By February 2025, 1.32 million individuals were internally displaced across North-Central Nigeria (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2025). Parallel crises—child labour in mining, human trafficking, gender-based violence, and community mistrust—further erode Plateau's resilience (Associated Press, 2025; UNODC/ICAT, 2025).

These figures represent lived realities: children forced into hazardous lithium and gold mines, mothers mourning entire families, and displaced youth suspended between uncertainty and exploitation.

Literature Grounding: Positive Peace and DEI

Scholarship distinguishes negative peace (the absence of direct violence) from positive peace (structural justice and societal resilience) (Galtung, 1996; IEP, 2024). In fragile contexts, Positive Peace provides not just a measurement tool but a roadmap for intervention.

Yet, the framework alone is insufficient without attention to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). DEI acts as the adhesive holding the eight pillars together by ensuring that all communities—across gender, religion, age, and ability—participate meaningfully in shaping peace. This intersectional approach reflects contemporary scholarship linking inclusion to durable peace outcomes (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE], 2019).

Rebuilding the Eight Pillars of Peace in Plateau

1. Well-Functioning Government

Plateau requires statutory independence and multi-year funding for the Plateau Peace Building Agency (PPBA), alongside specialized land-use and grazing courts to de-escalate farmer-herder disputes. Security sector reforms must prioritize community policing and human rights training. Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) should provide survivor-centred care.

2. Low Levels of Corruption

Transparency in mining permits, relief funds, and security budgets is essential. Whistle-blower protections and civil society watchdogs can safeguard against elite capture and misuse of resources.

3. Sound Business Environment

Formalizing adult-only mining cooperatives with enforceable safety standards would end child labour (ILO & UNICEF, 2025). Complementary youth employment initiatives in digital skills, green jobs, and creative industries would reduce vulnerabilities to cybercrime, substance abuse, and exploitation.

4. Equitable Distribution of Resources

Free, quality education—particularly for girls—is critical. This must include school meals, catch-up classes for displaced learners, and dignified menstrual hygiene support. Returnees require seeds, tools, housing grants, and vocational start-ups.

5. Acceptance of the Rights of Others

Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) must be guaranteed, with minorities and migrants protected under law. Expanding interfaith mediation and civic education can counter hate speech and rebuild trust.

6. Good Relations with Neighbours

Mechanisms such as inter-state grazing agreements and revived inter-communal dialogues (e.g., the Jos Forum) are crucial (HD Centre, 2014). Environmental restoration—including prosecution of deforestation and promotion of sustainable grazing practices—strengthens neighbourly relations by reducing ecological competition.

7. Free Flow of Information

Community radio, trafficking alerts, and early-warning systems require investment. Protecting journalists and ensuring transparency in electoral and displacement data are essential to restoring public trust.

8. High Levels of Human Capital

Expanding safe schools, vocational training, trauma counselling, and mobile healthcare is urgent. Employment creation linked with drug-use prevention and family support programmes will strengthen resilience at both household and community levels.

Why Strong Pillars Matter

When these eight pillars stand, children remain in classrooms rather than mines, youth choose jobs over drugs or cybercrime, traffickers are prosecuted rather than protected, and communities resolve grievances through ballots and dialogue instead of bullets.

Positive Peace is not abstract. It is embodied in the girl who enters a classroom with a free sanitary pad and a new book instead of a marriage proposal; the mother who walks to market without fear; and the negotiation that prevents a reprisal attack.

Conclusion and Call to Action

Rebuilding peace in Plateau demands multi-level action:

- Government must legislate PPBA independence, fund SARCs, and enforce anti-trafficking, child labour, and land-use laws.
- Civil society and faith leaders must hold budgets accountable, run early-warning radios, and champion education and dignity.
- Donors and the private sector must fund youth jobs, climate-smart agriculture, and safe, traceable mining.
- Citizens must vote, report trafficking and violence, and protect forests and grazing routes.

Only when all eight pillars rise together—anchored by DEI as the binding force—will Plateau move from fragile silence to lasting peace.

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SPRING Programme Briefing Note

Introduction

Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria (SPRING) Programme is a four-year (2024-2028) programme funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and implemented by Tetra Tech International Development, in partnership with Nextier SPD (Nextier), the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD).



Background and Objectives

Nigeria faces complex challenges arising from conflict, social unrest, and climate vulnerabilities. It is at a critical juncture in its journey towards sustainable peace and resilience. While violence is widespread across the country, the North Central and North West have been greatly impacted by violence associated with competition of farmers and herders for natural resources, and by banditry in rural areas. Violence is not an inevitable outcome of the vulnerabilities and pressures Nigeria is facing but a result of incentives (or disincentives), and failures of institutional mechanisms to appropriately manage conflict. SPRING will seek to contribute to building institutional conflict management and response capacity and capabilities to improve public confidence in key institutions and increase incentives for peace.

Intense resource competition that underpins rural violence stems from issues around rural governance, lack of innovation and production systems that deplete natural resources and degrade the environment. SPRING will support improvements to pastoral and agricultural practices and productivity to enhance cooperation and improve livelihoods for farmers and herders. The programme seeks to improve resilience to climate change by increasing cooperation across livelihoods, improving land use practices, and restoring ecosystems. This includes promoting soil fertility, protecting watersheds (such as through reforestation where appropriate), and protecting biodiversity. Placing ecology within the programme alongside climate change adaptation and resilience is a means also to increase cooperation between farmers and pastoralists on land use and natural resource management.

SPRING will support a more stable and peaceful Nigeria by contributing to peaceful coexistence among diverse communities, strengthening conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, and by combining dialogue and peacebuilding with projects that address the material conditions of conflict, and which support rural livelihoods and social development. The aim is for citizens to benefit from reduced violence, improved ecological stewardship, and increased resilience to climate change. It will achieve this by supporting Nigerian stakeholders to become able to respond to conflict, security, justice, and natural resource management challenges in target areas

Target States

SPRING has four focal states - **Kaduna, Katsina, Benue and Plateau** - where the programme will have a strong but not exclusive focus. The SPRING programme will also work in other states in North Central and North West Nigeria as well as neighbouring states in the North East and southern Nigeria affected by or at risk of spillover effects from farmerherder conflicts and rural banditry.

SPRING will promote partnerships with relevant federal institutions mandated to address conflict issues and which work in sectors that are relevant to addressing the root causes of conflict.

Delivery Mechanisms

SPRING will be delivered through:

- 1) Technical Assistance to government agencies.
- 2) Grants to civil society organizations.
- 3) Capacity building for community actors, governmental and civil society organisations.
- 4) Research and knowledge management.

Types of Interventions

SPRING will support:

- state and local-level peace structures to improve conflict early warning, management and response as well as to strengthen security and justice mechanisms.
- innovative projects to tackle proximate drivers of violence such as drug peddling and abuse, proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW), divisive narratives and hate speech, and exclusion of young people.
- innovative projects as well as methods that have already proven effective to address gender inequalities related to security and justice, conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, and natural resource management.
- innovative and integrated initiatives to improve or reestablish collaborative behaviour between farmers and pastoralists and agricultural and livestock production.
- environmental peacebuilding interventions to increase climate resilience and peace outcomes in target areas.

- research, evidence and learning in addressing farmer-herder conflicts, rural banditry and promoting peace and resilience.



Ongoing projects

By January 2024, SPRiNG has initiated the following projects:

Research SPRiNG has commissioned the **Yusufu Bala Usman Institute (YBUI), Zaria** to undertake a study on the political economy of land and the ecological and socio-economic impacts of systems and practices of land use,

<p>and knowledge management</p>	<p>land tenure, and land management in Kaduna, Katsina, Jigawa, and Bauchi states. The study investigates the extent to which the management of land is contributing to violent conflict. It will identify options for land reforms that would help address land related conflicts. The study commenced in December 2024 and will provide evidence for interventions in SPRiNG's Natural Resources Management workstream.</p> <p>SPRiNG has commissioned the Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA) to undertake a study aimed at shedding light on how key local actors view the links between drugs and violent conflicts. It will contribute to better-informed policies and programmes in response to drug problems and violent conflicts. The study, which commenced in January 2025, is being undertaken in Benue and Plateau states. It will provide evidence for interventions in SPRiNG's workstream on Drugs, Guns, Narratives and Exclusion.</p> <p>SPRiNG has commissioned a researcher to carry out a study on poor use of live fencing to check grazing on farmlands that lead to loss of livelihoods and contribute to conflicts between farmers and herders. The study, which commenced in January 2025, is being undertaken in selected locations in North West and North Central Nigeria. It will inform interventions in SPRiNG's Agriculture and Pastoral Practices workstream.</p> <p>SPRiNG has commissioned a group of researchers to undertake a survey of stock routes and pastoral resources aimed at providing information on the status, condition, and viability of grazing reserves and stock routes in selected areas of northern Nigeria to inform policy options towards grazing reserves and stock routes in current realities. The study which commenced in January is being conducted in Plateau, Jigawa, Gombe, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Adamawa, Taraba and Yobe states. It will provide evidence for interventions in SPRiNG's Agriculture and Pastoral Practices workstream.</p>
<p>Pilot</p>	<p>reducing levels of conflict between nomadic herders and rangers in Yankari Game Reserve, Bauchi State projects by improving pastoralist practices outside of the reserve. The project, which commenced in January 2025, is part of SPRiNG's workstream on Agriculture and Pastoral Practices.</p> <p>SPRiNG has awarded a grant to Azurfa Women and Youth Development Initiative (AWOYDI)- a female headed organisation to build capacity of farmers and pastoralists on agropastoralism to contribute to increased productivity, enhanced cooperation, and reduced conflict between farmers and livestock producers in Kaura LGA of Kaduna State. The project which commenced in December 2024 is part of SPRiNG's workstream on Agriculture and Pastoral Practices.</p> <p>SPRiNG has awarded a grant to GoGreen Environmental Health Sustainability Initiatives (GOEHSI) to implement a project aimed at promoting adoption of agropastoral practices to enhance the productivity and livelihoods of farmers and livestock producers and reducing levels of conflict between farmers and herders. The project, which is being implemented in two communities in Guma and Makurdi LGAs of Benue State, commenced in December 2024. It is part of SPRiNG's workstream on Agriculture and Pastoral Practices.</p> <p>SPRiNG is supporting a RegenAgric project initiative aimed at building capacity of farmers on regenerative use of natural resources. By facilitating enhancements in the quality of available land soil for farming and in extension pastoral use, the project will contribute to increased and improved crop yields and reduced natural resource competition that drive violent conflicts. The project commenced in January 2025 and is being delivered in Plateau State by a team of technical experts. It is part of SPRiNG's workstream on Agriculture and Pastoral Practices.</p> <p>SPRiNG is supporting a pilot water-harvesting project for shared use of farmers and herders in Plateau State. The aim is to address competition for access to scarce water resources that is at the roots of violent conflicts between farmers and herders in rural communities across Nigeria. The project, which commenced in January 2025 is being delivered by a team of technical experts. It is part of SPRiNG's workstream on Agriculture and Pastoral Practices.</p>
<p>Technical Assistance</p>	<p>SPRiNG is providing technical assistance to the Honourable Minister of Federal Ministry of Livestock Development (FMLD). Our embedded technical expert is supporting the Ministry with design, implementation and stakeholder coordination on Pastoral Development and Conflict Resolution policy and strategy. It is part of SPRiNG's workstream on Agriculture and Pastoral Practices.</p>

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