



2023 Annual Report

THE
KUKAH
CENTRE
FAITH • LEADERSHIP • PUBLIC POLICY

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20 23 Annual Report



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Content

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PART 1

Message of Appreciation from the Founder
Introduction
Mission and Vision
About The Kukah Centre
About the Founder
Board Members

Part 2

Partnerships in 2023
Programme Areas of the Kukah Centre
Our Results for 2023

Good Governance
Leadership Development
Memory Preservation, Advocacy & Knowledge Promotion
Interfaith Dialogue

PART 3

The Kukah Centre National Engagements
The Kukah Centre International Engagements
The Kukah Centre National and International Recognition
Support for Kukah Centre School of Government Project
Financial Inflow Summery
Appreciation from the Executive Director

Design, Layout + Print in Nigeria by
www.virtualinsignia.com.ng
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Message of Appreciation from the Founder



Welcome to the 2023 Annual Report of the Kukah Centre. I am pleased that in the last few years, the Report has been produced consistently. The Report tries to achieve five different but interrelated things that are relevant to our work: First, it provides a panoply of the work undertaken in the previous year for the reader to see at a glance. Second, it provides thematic sequence to the activities undertaken based on the key policy thrust of our work. Three, it provides a pictorial snapshot of activities on the fields across the country. Finally, it gives the reader a slow-motion view of the evolution of the work of the Centre as we ascend the ladder of our Dreams, Vision and Mission. Fifth, it provides and accounts for the financial inflows and expenditures in keeping with our stated goals of transparency and judicious use of funds.

The Centre, under the able leadership of Rev. Fr. Athanasius Barkindo has steadily picked up speed without losing its focus on our thematic areas of concerns to our work, namely, Public Policy, Good Governance, Interfaith Dialogue, Memory Preservation, Leadership, Ethics in Public Life among others. The widening network of collaborators and partners in our work suggests that nationally and internationally, our work is catching public attention. I am thankful that we have remained faithful to the work and vision of the National Peace Committee which I was called upon to convene ahead of the 2015 elections. The NPC, under the leadership of one of our nation's most passionate and visionary leaders, General Abdusalam Abubakar, GCFR, has continued to grow in influence and stature beyond our shores. We thank him and the Members for the confidence reposed in the Centre.

I am happy to note that the work of the Centre is being undertaken by a young, talented and energetic group of young men and women who continue to display amazing passion and commitment to learning about their country and its challenges. Over 70% of our Staff are Female and a majority are below thirty. This is deliberate investment strategy to enable us take advantage and provide a playground for

the passionate energy and ideas of our Youth. We want them to both learn, make and correct their mistakes but gradually mature and take up their places in public life.

The Centre is evolving into a School of Government. This will enable us to step up both the volume, quality and target of our engagement with the Government at all levels, Civil Society groups, and the Academia. We want to deliberately serve as a rallying ground for public intellectuals to become major players in shaping and articulating public policy processes. We aspire to serve as the leading Think Tank, helping to shape and provide Policy options for the delivery of public goods. We are determined and passionately committed to repositioning and helping Nigeria turn the corner in a deliberately planned manner. Nigeria must be driven by fresh ideas from our intellectuals at home and abroad.

Finally, let me once again thank Fr. Barkindo and the entire Staff of the Centre, all our friends, funders, and partners. I also want to thank all the Members of our Board. We are eternally grateful to Ichie Ifeanyi Obiakor, the Vice President of the American Hospital, a most valuable Board Member of the Centre whose graciousness has provided us the facilities that we have continued to use over the years. God bless you. Please do not just read and file this Report away. We appreciate your feedback, ideas, suggestions and proposals. Please pass the Report to others. Be an emotional as well as a financial supporter of the work we do. We are convinced that Nigeria will ride the storm and that the days of uncertainty and ambiguity about policy processes are gradually behind us. I wish you a very happy new year ahead and may the God continue to inspire us to His will.

Most Rev. Matthew Hassan KUKAH

Founder, The Kukah Centre and Convener, National Peace Committee

Introduction

The year 2023 marked the beginning of another era in Nigeria's political history. It was the year the country witnessed another general election and the subsequent transition of power from former President Mohamadu Buhari to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. These important events took place amidst the underlying challenges of insecurity, human-rights violations, social disharmony, trust deficit in public institutions, and the weaponisation of ethnicity, religion, poverty, and the dwindling quality of public education.

Aware of these challenges, The Kukah Centre (TKC) embarked on several interventions at the national and subnational levels and partnered with other initiatives to augment government efforts, and to provide solutions to these social challenges. For instance, the public launch of the ethical and religious policy framework for preventing, combatting, and mitigating gender-based violence through religious leaders and institutions in Nigeria, was the culmination of three years of community-based consultations, research, and collaboration with religious leaders, and GBV advocates. Recognising the role of political parties in democratic governance, the Centre worked closely with political parties under the European Union Support to Democratic Governance Programme to support political parties in Nigeria. This initiative is anchored in the pursuit of enhanced pluralism, internal democracy, and equity - a trifecta essential for the evolution of Nigeria's political landscape.

Aware of the fact that democracy thrives in a peaceful democratic setting, the Centre worked assiduously to support the National Peace Committee (NPC) in its peace-led initiatives such as the signing of Peace Accords and the capacity building of Independent State-based Peace Architectures in fifteen states across the six geopolitical zones of the country. This initiative exemplifies our vision of empowering communities to champion conflict management, through mediation, dialogue, and advocacy within their localities, as the means for lasting resolution. The Kaduna Office of the Kukah Centre equally conducted the TKC Series; an initiative that provided monthly platforms for citizens' opinions in policy formulation regarding different social and political issues that affect different communities across the country.

As we weave the threads of these projects into our 2023 Annual Report, it becomes clear that our vision extends beyond individual initiatives. It is about creating a collective narrative of change, resilience, and progress; a narrative that resonates with the aspirations of a nation forging its path toward a more just, equitable, and harmonious future.



Mission

Believing that the pursuit of the Common Good of all citizens should be the basis for the existence of government, and that citizen participation in their own affairs should be at the heart of governance, we shall, through this Centre, aspire to set up a mediating institution for achieving this.

We shall seek to conceptualise, identify, design, clarify and articulate proactive mechanisms that will increase policy proficiency, effectiveness and efficiency, and public participation and input for the attainment of the Common Good and the pursuit of the ideals of good governance.



Vision

To aspire towards the attainment of a more humane, democratic, and free society where citizens can live in real and true freedom, unencumbered by any structures of exclusion on the basis of ethnic, religious, social status, economic or gender differences.

About The Kukah Centre

The Kukah Centre for Faith, Leadership and Public Policy Research (also known as The Kukah Centre) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, and public policy organisation in Nigeria. The Kukah Centre was founded by Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah and commenced operations in 2008 in Kaduna, North-West Nigeria. In December 2012, it was incorporated, and a new office was opened in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city while operations continue in Kaduna. The Centre is a leading mediation institution conceived as a platform for offering alternative approaches to the challenges of leadership and the impact of conflict on national development. At the heart of the Kukah Centre's work is interfaith dialogue which involves, actively promoting conversations among Nigeria's faith communities, as well as faith and public policy. The mission of the Kukah Centre is to "aspire towards the attainment of a more humane, democratic, and free society where citizens can live in real and true freedom, unencumbered by any structure of exclusion based on ethnic, religious, social status, economic or gender differences".

The Kukah Centre has a staff strength of 35, and 65% are women. 26 members of staff in Abuja and 9 in Kaduna. It operates through partner offices in the six geopolitical zones of the country. At the international level, it gets support and funding from Ford Foundation, McArthur Foundation, The Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, European Union, Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, Hungarian Government, Knights of Columbus, Caritas Germany, MasterCard Foundation, and the Swiss Embassy. Nationally,

the Centre also has a strong partnership with the Centre for Democracy and Development, YIAGA Africa, Caritas Nigeria, Justice, Peace and Development Commissions of all the Catholic Dioceses in Nigeria, Inter-Faith Mediation Centre (IMC), Women Inter-Faith Council (WIC), Lux Terra, Islamic Development Initiative for West Africa, DIWA and the Muslim Council for Islamic Affairs.

Unique to the Kukah Centre is its convening power to engage stakeholders and policy makers at the highest level of government in providing strategies for ending conflict in the short term. Over the years, the Kukah Centre has provided interventions that border on community dialogue, citizenship engagement, resettlement of IDPs, countering violent extremism in local communities, mitigating gender-based violence, the promotion of good governance and accountability among others. In 2014, the Kukah Centre successfully facilitated the establishment of the National Peace Committee, NPC, with General Abdulsalami A. Abubakar, GCFR, as the Chairman. Since 2014, the Committee has facilitated and supported peaceful elections and transition. This has been achieved through signing of Peace Agreements between candidates from different parties, and mediation and back-channel negotiations. Being the Secretariat of the National Peace Committee, The Kukah Centre has mobilised and established Independent State-based Peace Architectures, made up of prominent and influential Nigerians at the sub-national level in 15 out of the 36 states of the federation. Currently, it is working to ensure that these initiatives are expanded to all 36 states in the country.



About the Founder

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah is one of Nigeria's foremost public intellectuals who has delivered numerous lectures and written over seven books and scores of articles on various aspects of governance, faith, and public policy in Nigeria. He is well-regarded across the country and has been called "the conscience of the nation" and "Nigeria's spiritual guide," amongst other praises.

Born in Kaduna State in 1952, Bishop Kukah's background and experience have motivated his work to promote stronger Nigerian national unity through interfaith dialogue and the promotion of economic and social justice for all citizens. He is very keen in designing a comprehensive political and economic strategy for managing diversity and promoting common values. Bishop Kukah has deep experience in mediation and conflict resolution and has been a long-standing champion of peace and nation-building in Nigeria. These are the values that lie at the core of the work of The Kukah Centre. Throughout 2023, Bishop Kukah has been engaged in public speaking, policy debates and engagements as well as travels to engage with a local and international audience on the social and political condition of Nigeria.

BOARD MEMBERS



**BISHOP MATTHEW
HASSAN KUKAH**
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**DR. AISHA MUHAMMED
- OYEBODE**
MEMBER



**FR. ATTA
BARKINDO Ph.D**
SECRETARY

Partnerships in 2023

The Kukah Centre has identified the impact of collaboration as a critical thread that interweaves various activities and engagements of The Kukah Centre, it is the adoption and deployment of a collaborative approach in project implementation which ensures an inclusive engagement with multiple stakeholders across board - public engagement partners, advocacy partners, faith-based partners, programmatic partners, and funding partners. In 2023, the Centre partnered with international, regional, national, and sub-national institutions and organisations:

Donors

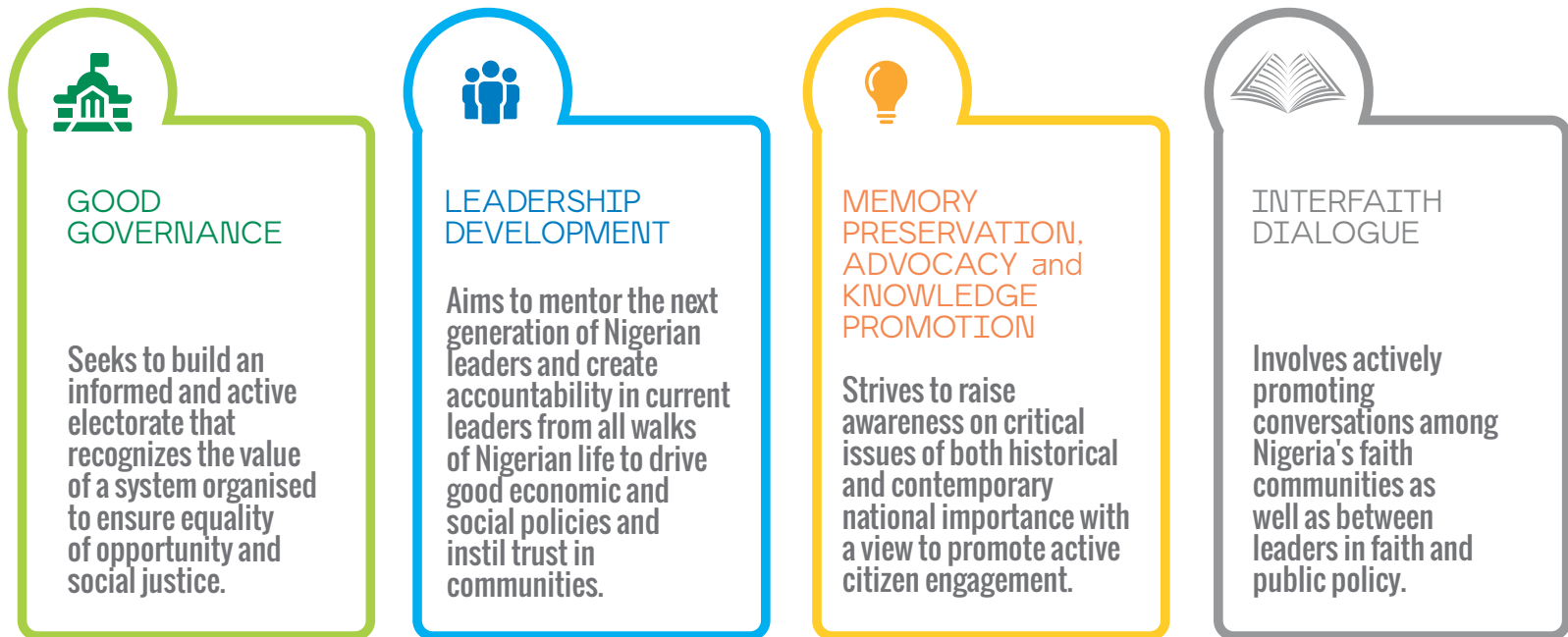
- *European Union Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS*
- *Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs*
- *Ford Foundation*
- *Fountain of Life Church*
- *ProFuturo*
- *Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO)*
- *MacArthur Foundation*
- *Open Society Africa (OSF)*
- *United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS)*
- *King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID)*
- *Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD)*

Partners

- *Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room*
- *YIAGA Africa*
- *Policy and Legislative Advocacy Centre (PLAC)*
- *Institute for Peace Studies and Conflict Management, Taraba State University*
- *Coventry University, United Kingdom*
- *TAF Africa*
- *Religious Freedom Institute (RFI)*
- *Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)*
- *International Republican Institute (IRI)*
- *National Democratic Institute (NDI)*
- *The Kofi Annan Foundation*
- *Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI)*
- *International Press Centre (IPC)*
- *Centre for Media and Society (CEMESO)*
- *The Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTF)*
- *ElectHER*
- *Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD)*
- *Global Rights*
- *Mercy Corp*
- *Justice, Development and Peace Makers' Centre (JDPMC), Osogbo*
- *Justice, Development and Peace Commission, Yola*
- *Justice, Development and Peace Commission, Jalingo*
- *Justice, Development and Peace Commission, Calabar*
- *Justice, Development and Peace Commission, Kaduna*
- *Justice, Development and Peace Commission, Owerri*
- *The Bakhita Initiative*
- *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)*
- *National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS)*
- *Lux Terra Leadership Foundation*
- *DIWA*
- *National Human Rights Commission*
- *Independent State-based Peace Architectures – Adamawa, Gombe, Taraba, Kano, Benue, Oyo, Kogi, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Enugu, Bauchi, Nasarawa, Imo, Katsina and Kwara states.*

Program Areas of The Kukah Centre

Throughout 2023, the Centre treated political leadership as a collaborative exercise with the aim to promote governance structures which incorporate multiple levels of engagement, including individuals, households, small businesses, the private sector, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and government. These activities were implemented against the backdrop of the Centre's four core program areas:



The Centre has succeeded in positioning itself as a global Research and Policy Think Tank. It intends to increase visibility in the areas of research, policy recommendation and engagement.

Our Results for 2023

Throughout 2023, the Centre treated political leadership as a collaborative exercise with the aim to promote governance structures which incorporate multiple levels of engagement, including individuals, households, small businesses, the private sector, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and government. These activities were implemented against the backdrop of the Centre's four core program areas:

Deploying Strategies for Increasing Access to Justice and Promoting Credible, Peaceful, Democratic Process in North-West Nigeria: working in collaboration with Global Rights Nigeria, the project aims to achieve better inclusion for women in peacebuilding efforts within the civic space, and to build community resilience against insecurity and violent extremism. The interventions in the project have been carefully designed with local contextual considerations considered.

“
Every Religion has the seeds of its own redemption or destruction. It is a choice between Caesar and God. We cannot borrow the crown of Caesar without consequences. The boundaries between faith and reason are delicate but they are fundamental to how a society builds a moral code. Faith without reason breeds the fanatic, the demagogue who genuinely but wrongly believes that he has heard the voice of a god ordering him to kill another.

Most Rev. Matthew Hassan KUKAH

Excerpts from the Homily at the Funeral Mass of Seminarian Michael Nnadi, on 11th February 2020 at Good Shepherd Seminary, Kaduna

Profuturo Digital Classroom Project: implemented in partnership with the Catholic Bishops Conference, the Northern Governors Forum and ProFuturo, a Spanish Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), provides access to a digital form of teaching to children in vulnerable communities. The project is designed to refocus the attention of school children on the acquisition of skills through technology, which in turn helps keep them off the streets. The digital classroom project kick started in June 2017 and is currently being implemented in 12 Northern states - Kebbi, Benue, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, Kano, Kaduna, Niger, Nasarawa, Bauchi, Borno, and Adamawa states.

Scholarship for Orphans in Northern Nigeria: provides academic scholarships to forty (40) orphans in the northern part of Nigeria. The fund for this scheme is provided by The Fountain of Life Church under the Vineyard project. The fully funded scholarship covers tuition fees of beneficiaries, from junior to senior secondary school. The scheme officially commenced at the start of the 2023/2024 academic year.

Strengthening Social Cohesion in Lagos, Nigeria: This project, funded by McArthur Foundation is intended to provide the platform, as a post-election engagement, for key stakeholders to discuss the issues that the 2023 general elections have thrown up in Lagos. It is intended to promote social cohesion and tolerance in Lagos state among stakeholders, particularly the youths, and the society must see the strength of the youths as a tool to create a smooth developmental atmosphere for national growth and development than seeing them as a tool of violence in the hands of politicians. To renew the hope of the youth in their Lagos dream as a springboard of realities. To eschew identity politics and focus on promoting inclusivity in nation-building agendas that brings all Nigerians together regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds. To also serve as a platform where the long overdue conversations and questions on citizenship and nationality will be ignited.

The Kukah Centre Series on Catholic Social Teachings and National Issues: The Centre designed this project to re-engineer the place of the Church's teaching in the social and political life of the community. Most importantly, the project is intended to underscore how the Church's teaching will be the basis for promoting common good in society. The project was a series of physical and virtual conversations that brought together participants from all walks of life to deliberate on national issues to promote the common good and how Catholic Social teaching can be the basis for such conversations.

Support the Development of a National Ethical Religious Policy Framework for Preventing and Combating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Nigeria: With support from the Ford Foundation, The Kukah Centre in partnership

with The Bakhita Initiative implemented thirty months (30) months project that utilises religion leaders and institutions as a vehicle for in combating GBV and violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Nigeria. The outcomes from the research and engagements conducted on the drivers and causes of GBV along with the series of workshops held across the six geopolitical zones with key religious leaders informed the creation of an Ethical framework for preventing GBV through religious leaders and institutions - in Nigeria.

Mechanism to Monitor the Freedom of Religion and Belief in Nigeria: the project is supported by the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) and implemented by the Kukah Centre in partnership with Nasrul-Lahi-il Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT) and the Nigerian Human Rights Commission. The project monitors and documents the violations of the Freedom of Religion and Belief, with the goal of promoting social cohesion and strengthening the respect of freedom of religion and/or belief in Nigeria. It collects data on the freedom of religion in targeted regions and communities, designs policy recommendations and presents to the government and critical stakeholders for evaluation, validation, and implementation.

Support to Political Parties: The Kukah Centre (TKC) through the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria Programme (EU-SDGN) continued its implementation of the Support to Political Parties project. The overall objective of the action is that the operations and administration of political parties support the growth of democracy in Nigeria that is largely acceptable to political party members, Nigerian citizens, and the international community. This will be necessitated by enhanced pluralism,

internal democracy, and equity among political parties and the political party system in Nigeria.

Support to the National Peace Committee: The Kukah Centre, which is the Secretariat of the National Peace Committee, facilitated all the activities of the Committee in 2023. Through the EU-SDGN programme, the centre facilitated the signing of two National peace accords ahead of the 2023 presidential and national assembly elections, as well as the off-cycle governorship elections in Kogi, Imo and Bayelsa States. The Centre also organised a series of regional engagements with Women, Youths and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), which highlighted their roles as critical stakeholders who contribute to the nation's democratic processes and social cohesion, particularly as agents of peace and dialogue.

Support to the National Peace Committee (through The Kukah Centre) on Strengthening the NPC's role in facilitating non-violent elections and peace generally in Nigeria: With funding from the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Secretariat of the NPC established a situation room which monitored the actions of political parties and other signatories to the peace accords. This provided members of the committee evidence-based analysis, which informed their strategies for intervening where required. This support also enabled the Secretariat to mobilise subnational peace initiatives in fifteen (15) states of the six geopolitical zones. These Independent State-based Peace Architectures (ISPAs) serves a reputable network of knowledgeable individuals with the ability to engage with various state-level stakeholders, to initiate peace focused interventions, mediating and facilitating dialogue as the required.

Support to the National Peace Committee (through) The Kukah Centre to facilitate overall peace in Nigeria: The support by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) provided capacity building on peace and conflict management to Independent State Based Peace Architectures (ISPAs) in Oyo, Kano, Katsina, Kogi, Benue, Nasarawa, Kwara, Taraba, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gombe, Enugu, Imo, Cross River, and Akwa Ibom. The train of trainers (ToT) approach was deployed for ISPAs to cascade the knowledge and skills gained to community focused peace initiatives. These community-based advocates provide a network of peace mediators, identifying the triggers of conflict, dialoguing, and promoting peaceful resolutions to local issues.

KAIIICIID PROJECT: With the support of The King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, The Kukah Centre, in partnership with the National Human Rights Commission (NHCR) and the Nasrul-Lahi-il Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT), is implementing a one-year project. This project aims to conduct a survey and collect evidence and testimonies from both Christians and Muslims whose rights of Freedom of Religion and Belief have been violated. The survey has been conducted in the six states of Ebonyi, Edo, Plateau, Osun, Kano, and Sokoto. Analyses of the findings are ongoing, and the results will serve as the basis for producing a policy framework, which will be shared with policymakers. The recommendations from this framework will contribute significantly to mitigating the violation of Freedom of Religion and Belief in Nigeria.

EU-SDGN Programme: Support to Political Parties



Political parties play a crucial role in the growth of democracy in Nigeria. Their general conduct before, during and after the 2023 general elections has generally been to test the boundaries of accountability to the rule of law. Despite the signing of the Peace Accord by all 18 political parties committing to peace in the lead up to the polls, campaigns were frequently marred by violence between party supporters and the use of inflammatory language. This rhetoric evoked Nigeria's religious, regional, and ethnic fault lines and discourse rarely focused on policy. The constitution and Electoral Act 2022 provide INEC with the authority to regulate and oversee political parties, and the police responsibility to investigate and arrest alleged perpetrators where

offences have been committed. However, these mechanisms were not seen to hold parties and their supporters accountable, leaving the rules and transparency largely inoperative. Election technology which was presented as a means of enhancing the integrity of the electoral process was implemented under serious deficiencies and continues to raise concerns amongst political parties (particularly those in opposition) about INEC's independence. The project is specifically designed to strengthen the legal frameworks and internal mechanism of political parties in Nigeria to make them more democratic. The activities implemented are:

Needs Assessment of Political Parties in Nigeria: Political parties play a vital role in shaping public policy and mobilising resources for national development. Consequently, the Centre embarked on a needs assessment of political parties to identify these gaps and barriers. The scope of the analysis includes a consideration of the legal and institutional frameworks that regulate parties, as well as the economic and social circumstances within which they function. The result of the interviews conducted, and the questionnaires shared which evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of political parties led to the Validation workshop held on the 8th of September 2023. The workshop was attended by



political parties, the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), development partners, political experts, and a representative from the European Union Delegation. Following the detailed presentation of the findings by Prof. Jake Dan-Azumi, the lead researcher, which covered party ideology, membership and legislative profile, internal leadership processes, communication, and funding. However, some concerns were raised by the participants on the state of political parties, the absence of educational system that promotes the culture of democracy, and the lack of political will to create an election offences commission to aid in the investigation of electoral offences.

Public Presentation of Needs Assessment of Political Parties in Nigeria: When all observations and concerns provided during the validation were addressed, the Kukah Centre publicly presented, on December 5th, 2023, the Report of the Needs Assessment of Political Parties in Nigeria. The content of the report dwelt extensively on party management and administration, party funding and communication to membership profiles, internal processes, and ideology. The report highlights:

- The level of awareness of the regulatory and institutional frameworks governing political parties in Nigeria differed considerably between interviewees at the national and sub-national levels. Overall, 80.6% of the interviewees indicated knowledge of the major frameworks.
- The multiplicity of non-viable political parties indicates the weakness of the existing framework, while other interviewees faulted what they described as the faulty implementation of the existing regulatory regimes.
- On the adequacy of constitutions, interviewees generally consider the various constitutions of the



parties as sufficient and robust enough for regulating political parties. National Rescue Movement (NRM), All Progressives Congress (APC) and Allied People's Movement (APM) report one or more internal reviews of their constitutions by the party and its experts.

This was followed by a panel discussion that focused on “Developing and Sustaining a Political Culture of Accountability and Integrity.”

Development of Political Party Management Toolkit (PPMT): Nigeria's political parties have been largely described as lacking in the structural formations which highlight the ideological perspectives which govern their establishment and operations. A well-defined framework for managing political parties, can help to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and ensure effective decision-making mechanisms. The development of the

PPMT provides an agreeable standard based on international best practices which introduce a culture of corporate governance required for the effective management of political parties. 18 persons from CSOs participated in a technical expert meeting in June 2023 to revise the draft framework of the PPMT. The framework covers the constitutional and other legal provisions, party administration and resource management, party structure, transparency and accountability, best practices, inclusivity, coalitions and mergers, campaign management and visibility actions, fundraising and finance, electoral outcomes, and Evaluation and adaptation. While it is envisaged that every political party have their unique needs and structures, this general framework has been designed to serve as a guide for enhancing





the operations of existing political parties as well as a resource management toolkit.

Enhanced capacities of political parties to constructively engage with the electoral process and key stakeholders including INEC, Judiciary, Executive, and CSO's among others: In January 2023, there was a roundtable discussion with the national Chairmen of political parties, their presidential candidates, and the NPC. It focused on the conduct of the campaigns by political parties ahead of the 2023 general elections, particularly violations to the first accord signed in September 2022. All political parties except the Labour Party were represented by their national Chairmen and presidential candidates. Ninety-six (96) incidents of violations of the Peace Accord were recorded between the 30th of September 2022 and 13th of January 2023, with 66% of the violations recorded in January alone.

These findings were presented to the seventeen (17) political parties present, which set the foundation for the

conversation on the need to focus on issue-based campaigns to ensure free, fair, safe, and peaceful general elections. The roundtable underpinned how political parties can be responsive towards participating in constructive conversations with other election stakeholders to identify the challenges of practising democracy. Moreso, issues of personal attacks during campaigns, the role of technology in the voting process, and the need to create a safe civic space before, during and after the elections were discussed. At the end of the meeting, political parties agreed to commit themselves to a second peace accord to accept the outcome of the general elections and to challenge election results through legal means. III. A town hall meeting was held in June 2023 between political parties and various stakeholders.

A town hall meeting was held in June 2023 between political parties and various stakeholder groups ahead of the off-cycle gubernatorial election in Imo State. The townhall provided an understanding of the local context of elections in the state and the role political parties play in influencing the

democratic processes, especially ahead of the November 2023 Off-cycle elections. It explored opportunities needed to address election violence and to allay the fears of the electorate from participating in the voting process. The event contributed significantly to the discourse around the role of political parties in ensuring nonviolent and inclusive elections are.

Bilateral meetings to Strengthen the internal Mechanisms of Political parties to Promote Affirmative Actions: Four meetings have been held towards achieving this indicator. Bilateral meetings were held with the NWTF, ElectHer, TAF Africa and Yiaga Africa that explored the challenges and opportunities of mainstreaming the inclusion of marginalised groups in political parties, and which culminated in joint approach for advocacy. A review of the constitutions and manifestos of political parties which identified the structures and instruments currently deployed to address the inclusion of women, youths, and PWDs,



including leadership opportunities and scope of decision-making power. Another workshop developed inclusivity indicators to evaluate the existing affirmative actions for these marginalised groups was held in August and each political party was assessed based on the provisions in their party constitutions and manifestoes. Seven (7) indicators related to the following topics: attribution to each group, leadership opportunities, scope of decision-making powers and lexicon, to create four categories (inclusive, fairly inclusive, poorly inclusive, and not inclusive). With the NWTF, ElectHer, TAF Africa and Yiaga Africa, five (5) organisations will facilitate engagements with the political parties on the basis of the outputs from the methodology workshop which will highlight areas where there are good practises and gaps.



Training for political parties on the importance of elections and technology, electronic voting, and the use of social media to foster peaceful elections Ahead of the general elections: One training was conducted in February 2023 focused on increasing knowledge of political parties on the technologies deployed during the elections and its importance for facilitating efficient and transparent polls. 12 political parties were represented in the workshop. There are ongoing bilateral meetings being facilitated by Project Short Term Experts (STEs) with the communication administrators of political parties to assess their current communications plans to provide recommendations based on their required needs, as well as training where necessary.

IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

- Through these activities, a unique opportunity was provided for fostering robust, bipartisan discussions. By delving into topics such as the impact of identity politics on governance and the role of political parties in fostering a pluralistic society, the project became a platform for transcending political divides. This lesson underscored the importance of creating spaces for open dialogue, where diverse perspectives can converge to address overarching national issues.
- The project shed light on the inherent differences in expectations between political parties, especially those with representation in government and those without. This divergence significantly influenced their commitment levels to project engagements. Understanding and navigating these varying expectations emerged as a crucial aspect of effective project management, allowing for tailored approaches that resonate with the unique dynamics of each political entity.
- An insightful revelation from the project implementation was the impact of timing on the quality of responses received. Commencing work plan implementation during the campaign season highlighted the challenge of aligning project goals with the immediate priorities of political parties—canvassing for votes. This lesson emphasised the need for strategic planning that considers the broader political calendar, ensuring optimal engagement periods for meaningful collaboration.
- Recognizing the distinct differences in influence and expectations among political parties, the project underscored the importance of tailoring mobilisation strategies. Acknowledging and respecting these variations proved instrumental in gaining the commitment and active participation of political entities. This lesson emphasised the nuanced approach required for effective engagement, acknowledging the diversity within the political landscape.
- Perhaps one of the most significant lessons was the power of collaboration for achieving a wider impact. The project showcased that when political parties collaborate, transcending individual affiliations, the potential for positive change expands exponentially. This lesson reinforced the idea that collaborative efforts, built on shared goals and mutual understanding, can amplify the influence of projects, creating a more substantial and lasting impact on societal and political dynamics. This is so among the EU–SDGN implementing partners.

EU-SDGN Programme: Support to the National Peace Committee



The NPC is known for its traditional role in facilitating peaceful elections. As seen in 2015 and the 2019 general elections, NPC members were called upon to provide leadership and intervene to make the 2023 general elections peaceful, transparent, and fair. To undertake this mission in an impactful and measurable manner, the NPC developed a collaborative and an evidence-based approach. On the collaborative level, it partnered with different

organisations and observation missions, and on the evidence-based level, it mandated its secretariat to provide evidence base research and data collection across different states in Nigeria. The findings were instrumental to the strategy the NPC adopted for intervention. Some of the activities undertaken include:

Engagements with Critical Stakeholders: This involved a series of strategic engagements with key and critical stakeholders before, during, and after the elections. The Plenary sessions of the National Peace Committee (NPC) serve as a forum for the committee to review ongoing trends related to its mandate, develop strategies for its interventions, and make recommendations for future considerations. NPC Plenary Meeting: The NPC held a plenary meeting in September 2022, followed by the signing of the 1st Peace Accord to support political parties in conducting issue-based campaigns. Other stakeholder meetings were held with African Union Election Observation

Mission, The West African Elders Forum, the European Union Election Observation Mission, and the ECOWAS Election Observation Mission. Additionally, the NPC held meetings with security agencies, and also received briefing from INEC and other critical stakeholders. The findings from these meetings were presented to the former President, His Excellency, General Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR for further action.

Following the attendant insults and personal attacks made the Committee call for an urgent stakeholder engagement to douse the tension. Consequently, on 20th January 2023, the NPC convened a meeting with critical stakeholders to review the compliance with the 1st peace accord signed by Presidential Candidates and Party Chairmen. The highlight of the meeting was a presentation of findings from the NPC Situation Room on the monitoring of compliance with the signing of the first (1st) National Peace Accord. The Committee informed all key stakeholders that after the signing of the first (1st) Peace Accord by 15 political parties, mass-mediated campaigns by the supporters of political parties – especially the top three contending parties namely, APC, LP, and PDP had – incidents of violent clashes at their campaigns and cases of inciting violence using social media, traditional media, and identity politics.

The Committee reminded the stakeholders about their obligation to conduct their campaigns in a peaceful manner devoid of ethnic, religious, and hateful rhetoric to incite or cause violence, aggravating the growing tensions and insecurity in the nation. The participants were Presidential Candidates and Chairmen of Political Parties, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), and the Inspector General of Police (IGP). The observers include Security Agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the Media. The NPC members and other critical stakeholders





also raised concerns about the growing levels of insecurity in the southeast; slow or non-collection of Permanent Voters Cards, PVCs; Fake News; attack on security and INEC personnel; the deliberate purchase of voters' cards by party agents; increasing levels of campaigns devoid of issues and lack of level playing field for some parties in certain states. The NPC used its convening power to call on the stakeholders to play the game by the rules. The Committee also presented some of their concerns to INEC and the Federal Government at that time.

Signing of Peace Accords for 2023 Presidential Elections: Another important intervention provided by the National Peace Committee is the signing of the peace accords to call for peaceful campaigns and to accept the outcome of the votes as long as it is adjudged to be free, fair, and credible. The Peace Accord has become central to the interventions of the National Peace Committee (NPC). The NPC facilitated two Peace Accords. The first one, as earlier mentioned, was on 29th September 2022. This was to promote issue-based campaigns by all political parties. The second signing (2nd) of Peace Accord was held on the 18th of February 2023, a few days to the polls. The event was attended by Political Parties, Government Functionaries, Diplomatic Communities, and a host of many others, including the security agencies designated to ensure safety and security.

In preparation for the signing of the National Peace Accords, the NPC Secretariat held a series of meetings with key stakeholders (at the National and State Levels). They included - Political parties, INEC, IG Police, Traditional leaders, Youths, Women, Religious Leaders, and some CSOs, particularly the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD). These engagements reiterated the different roles and responsibilities each stakeholder had to play to ensure the peaceful conduct of the electoral process. It also underscored the demonstration of inclusivity and dexterity displayed by the NPC and for the Committee to work collaboratively with each one of the stakeholders before, during, and after elections.





The engagements were complemented by the recording of peace advocacy messages from each stakeholder group; facilitated by the NPC secretariat. The stakeholders committed themselves to the rule of law, to maintain the integrity of the electoral process, and called on the electorate to do the same. These messages were disseminated on state and national media, as well as via the Secretariat's social media handles. In addition, the Head of the NPC Secretariat also engaged in a series of media interviews before and after both events, highlighting the impact of the NPC's interventions on the 2023 general elections. This further called the attention of the general public to the importance of peace in the electoral process.

The 2nd signing of the peace accord committed all the eighteen (18) political parties and their presidential candidates to accept the outcome of the vote as long as it is adjudged to be free, fair, and credible, and to seek legitimate and peaceful means of addressing any concern that may arise thereafter.

All eighteen [18] political parties signed the peace accord. Significantly, the main contenders from the APC, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, PDP, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, Peter Obi of the Labour Party (LP), and Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) were present, to commit adherence to the accord. The accord committed all party members, key stakeholders, and Nigerians, in general, to support a peaceful transition, and promote the ideals of peace, social cohesion, and a violent free post-election period. The importance of early engagements with stakeholders, particularly the political parties cannot be overemphasised. It created the platform for dousing tension and provided the needed publicity for the citizens to assess the candidates and obtain the necessary moral responsibility to hold them to account.

2023 Off-Cycle Elections: The NPC, in line with its mandate to support and facilitate free, fair, peaceful, safe, and credible elections organized the State Peace Accord for the 2023 Off-Cycle Election in Bayelsa, Imo, and Kogi States for all the political parties and their gubernatorial candidates; the Peace Agreements were signed in three states (Bayelsa, Imo and Kogi) simultaneously. Members of the National Peace Committee were present to witness this event and to show solidarity with the people of Bayelsa state, calling them to conduct themselves peacefully. Impressively, key members of the NPC have physically travelled to the states to support a state-level peace accord signing ceremony. The impact of their presence was huge, with large turnout in both Bayelsa, Imo, and Kogi states. More than 95% of key stakeholders and 100% of all the relevant stakeholders were present. There was a genuine appreciation of the NPC intervention. General opinion indicates that the intervention helped achieve peaceful process in Bayelsa, Imo and Kogi states.

Furthermore, the signing of the Accord committed all the 17 political parties and their gubernatorial candidates to accept the outcome of the vote as long as it is adjudged to be free, fair, and credible, and to seek legitimate and peaceful means of addressing any concern that may arise thereafter. It was also meant to commit all party members, key stakeholders, and Nigerians, in general, to support a peaceful transition, and promote the ideals of peace and social cohesion. The accord encouraged political parties to avoid statements that will incite violence after the results of the presidential elections have been announced. The signing of the accord complemented ongoing peace initiatives of the Federal Government, NGOs, and peace-loving Nigerians, and it is aimed at ensuring a peaceful transition and a violent free post-election period. The overall objective of the action is to ensure a peaceful outcome of the 2023 General Elections that is largely acceptable to Nigerians and the international community. To facilitate before and beyond the 2023 General Elections interventions in other non-electoral matters which will foster reconciliation and the overall socio-economic development of the country.



IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

- The growing expectations of NPC as a national mediator to respond to the increasing number of conflicts across the country, both electoral and non-electoral, is shifting the burden of primary responsibility and accountability away from the democratically constituted authorities. The National Peace Committee essentially complements existing government interventions by leveraging its immense moral capital to convene stakeholders at the dialogue table to facilitate peaceful resolutions. This role has to be supported by international development partners.
- The moral interventions without adequate and effective accountability mechanisms is increasingly creating a sense of powerlessness to reign in various misbehaving political actors. This is particularly reflected in the toxic and violent pattern of campaigns that have emerged following the signing of the 1st National Peace Accord in September 2022 and the outcome of the 2023 General Elections. With the expansion of its network of collaborative partnerships, particularly across the geopolitical regions, there is a corresponding increase in the financial cost to facilitate these interventions. These include the huge logistical task of organizing engagements across different stakeholders particularly with the current cost of living crisis.
- Aside from the issue of insecurity, the experiences from these off-cycle elections also highlighted the significant trend of vote trading perpetuated by political parties in undermining the credibility of the process. While it is relatively straightforward to deploy resources during these elections, doing so for the entire country poses an even greater challenge particularly, within the context of our security problems. The current optics further suggest that voter inducements would be one of several strategies deployed by political actors during the elections to secure victory. The NPC will continue to work with relevant stakeholders to finetune strategies for addressing this.
- The different forms of violent conflict across the country are widespread, and the NPC does not have the resources and the mandate to intervene in all of them. Secondly, finding partners willing to volunteer like members of the NPC to facilitate peace initiatives at the local and national levels is also difficult. It is vital to note that while the losing candidates have disputed the credibility of these elections, the fear of widespread incidents of post-electoral violence, challenging the polls has been non-existent. The legal channels for complaints and redress are being pursued by aggrieved parties. This break from self-help highlights the significance of facilitating dialogue through the peace accords. While the 1st National Peace Accord signed on 29th September 2022 called for issue-based campaigns, the online and offline conduct of political actors within a month of the ceremony has not demonstrated a commitment to comply with the accord.

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs: Support to the National Peace Committee (NPC)



The Swiss project was undertaken to strengthen the role of the NPC in Facilitating Non-Violent Elections and Peace Generally in Nigeria. It was also intended to complement other initiatives and activities being undertaken by the NPC in its interventions. So far, the project assisted the NPC to be more proactive in identifying major potential conflicts in various parts of the country that could impede general peace, and the successful conduct of the by-elections. It created the platform for the NPC to design effective interventions mechanisms that it deployed during the general and off-cycle elections. It also created the opportunity for the NPC to think through some of its strategies of engagements, and design innovative ways for impactful

interventions. Most importantly, created the opportunity for the NPC to be more critical in identifying and selecting areas of interventions ahead of the off-cycle elections in Kogi, Bayelsa and Imo states. Some of the activities implemented include:

NPC Situation Room on Monitoring Compliance with the Peace Accords: During the 2023 general elections, the NPC Situation Room was established to monitor compliance with the spirit and letter of the peace accords both at the national and state level. One of the critical roles of the Situation Room was that it collected and analysed data on violations of the Accord by candidates, party members, supporters, and the parties themselves, either through interviews, paper presentations, opinion pieces in Newspapers, social media platforms and other forms of media communication. The situation room also monitored flashpoints and potential areas of violence before, during and after the elections. Reports generated in the situation room were shared with the NPC, and members were alerted about various forms of violations which equally supported their interventions [See Appendix B].



The NPC Situation Room developed an effective methodology for information collection and policy design. Throughout this period, the NPC Situation Room collected its primary data from over 200 field observers made up of over 150 members of the Independent State-Based Peace Architectures (ISPAs) in 14 states. There were 15 local mobilizers, and 22 Volunteer Election observers present in 22 states, including the FCT. It partnered with the Civil Society Situation Room and leveraged on existing networks of CSOs and other local partners to gather, verify and augment its findings with relevant information. NPC Situation Room had Data Clerks and Social Media analysts who provided timely, credible, and verifiable reports to the National Peace Committee (through the Head of the Secretariat) for a response-driven and informed intervention. Although the collation of results across the states was relatively peaceful, some political parties in states like Lagos and Rivers have raised concerns about the falsification of results.



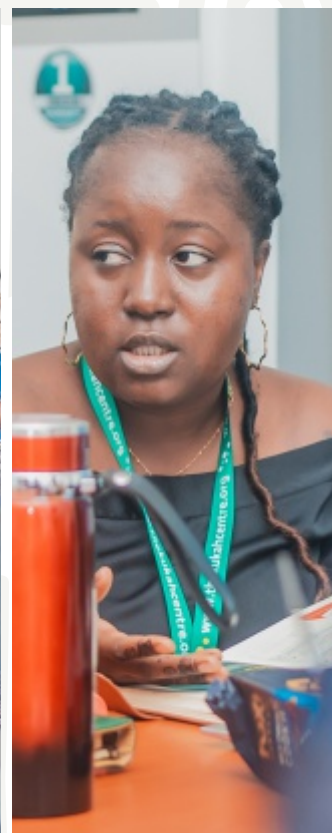


Consolidating the Independent State-based Peace Architectures at the sub-national Level: In 2023, the NPC Secretariat embarked on a Follow-Up visit to the Independent State-Based Peace Architectures (ISPA) in the 9 states. During these visits, modalities for partnership with the NPC were strengthened. Conversations also centred on the nature of interventions, mediation, early warning, and data collection to be facilitated by the state-based peace architectures [See Appendix A]. Participants consisted of traditional and religious leaders, academics, CSO leaders, and other respected and credible persons whose voices and moral authority herald the message of peace in their respective states. These follow-up visits were 96% successful as members recommitted themselves to the cause of peacebuilding in their respective States. Committees consisting of local stakeholders in the respective States were engaged by the NPC Secretariat during the general elections to facilitate sub-national stakeholder discourse on the issues which are often utilised to perpetuate conflicts during elections. These discussions explored the localised dynamics of the 2023 general elections, to educate the politicians (especially at the subnational level) and other stakeholders who are not conversant with the new electoral act, its offences, and punishments, especially with the start of the campaigns. These state-based committees also served as a subnational information network,

providing the NPC with real-time information about the localised issues relating to the peaceful conduct of elections, the triggers which facilitate violence, key actors involved and their impact, helping to develop appropriate interventions.

Training and Capacity Building for NPC Secretariat Staff: In 2023, training was organised for NPC Secretariat staff. This improved their capacities to effectively support the

committee while carrying out its mandate. The curriculum for the capacity building of the NPC staff was developed to address the identified skills gap in the areas of Research, Project Management, Procurement, Public Speaking, and overall productivity improvement. A post-training evaluation is scheduled (90 days after) to measure the effectiveness of the training, and the participants' capacity to apply their newly acquired skills to their everyday work was also done. The NPC Secretariat staff were provided with adequate skills

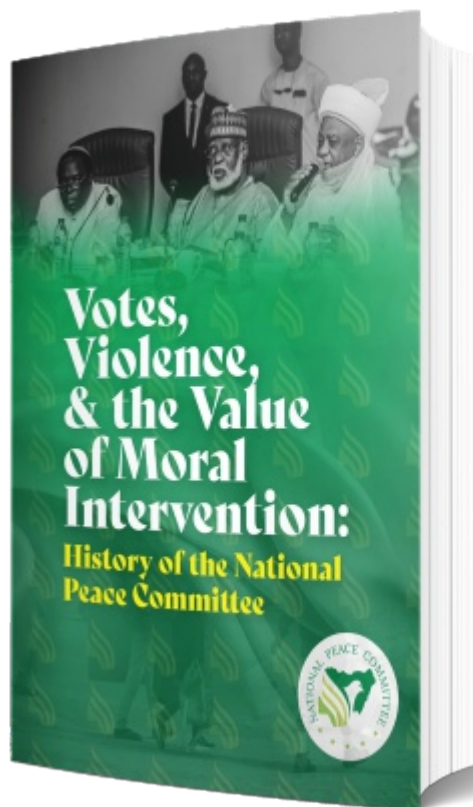


in mediation, report writing, and representation of the NPC at different events and engagements. This was very helpful in the support the staff members provided to the NPC.

Visibility Actions and NPC Peace Advocacy Campaigns: The NPC, aware that the explosion of social media, fake news and propaganda could negatively impact on its interventions and the expected outcomes, it developed a strong media strategy to engage the public on both traditional media (Newspapers, Radio, and Television) as well as on social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat etc.). Throughout 2023, it undertook a media campaign that highlighted the Committee's various outreaches as a way of building trust and reassuring the populace. This also included specially produced peace messaging that amplified the voices of highly regarded Nigerians (e.g., traditional, religious, and business leaders, key members of the Peace Committee, Celebrities). On this project, the messaging targeted both the general elections and the off-cycle elections prone to electoral and other types of conflicts. The peace advocacy campaigns were done various languages relative to need as well as in standard of the states where elections are held. The primary focus of these messaging were the youths who are most likely to be used by politicians to foster violence. From the evidence collected, peace, unity and security of Nigeria was greatly enhanced during the

general elections and the off-cycle elections, reducing substantially any potential widespread violence. Additionally, states and communities agreed to support peaceful electoral process as the voices of NPC members are deployed through the media, something that was not done before.

NPC Book – Votes, Violence, and the Value of Moral Intervention: History of the National Peace Committee: The first draft of the book has been completed and is currently under review by a copy editor. The draft provides a detailed analysis of the history, formation, and interventions of the NPC from the 2014 to 2023 elections. It highlights the role played by International Development partners such as the Swiss Federal Department for Foreign



Affairs, European Union, and the Kofi Anan Foundation in the formation of the NPC. The second activity is the writing and publication of the NPC 2023 General Election Report. This will, among other things, offer insight into both the public and private engagements of the committee in the 2023 elections cycle; what it accomplished concerning its core objective(s); lessons learned and implications for future elections, and more broadly, peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Nigeria. While the NPC election report will be ready after the Off-cycle elections, the book will be presented ahead of the 2027 election cycle.

IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

- One of the key lessons is that following the increasing impact of the NPC and the growing need for moral interventions in the face of public trust deficit, it has become necessary for the National Peace Committee (NPC) to shift attention from the national level to the state level where there seem to be emerging concerns. The NPC's regional and state local networks can be supported to intervene in peacebuilding activities in the respective States. This is also expected to cover non-electoral matters following the increasing levels of violent conflict across the country.

- Training and funding to improve the capacities of the Independent State-based Peace architectures to respond to emerging issues at the subnational levels, as well as the NPC Secretariat to expand their capacities and capabilities to effectively identify, develop and implement interventions.

- Sustained advocacy with relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies. It is critical that the NPC continues to maintain the platforms and improves the quality of engagements with stakeholders to ensure divisive politicking is curtailed to drastically diffuse tensions and acts of violence. However, this should be done with greater collaborative scrutiny on the institutions of government saddled with the

constitutional responsibility of enforcing the laws which ensure responsible actions and accountability. This would also include the early signing of peace accords during off-cycle elections.

- Increasing the level of collaboration (particularly at the Secretariat) with organizations to technical support which improve the capacities of the NPC Secretariat to continually provide support to state institutions with the aim to enhance the capacities for effective delivery. This is most important in the area of research and data collection for designing effective strategy for interventions.

FCDO: Support to the National Peace Committee (Through The Kukah Centre)



Violence is a recurrent feature of Nigeria's electoral history and democratic journey since independence in 1960. Tension associated with electioneering campaign often manifest in pre, during and post elections. Indicators of tensions and the potential for violence necessitated the intervention of the NPC and the support of the UK government. Consequently, the project objective was linked to the need to deploy the influence of The Kukah Centre in galvanising the voices of key stakeholders, including members of the National Peace Committee to provide advocacy in support of peace and



stability, before, during, and after the elections. The key activities implemented include:

Training Project Team Members: Project implementation team members were selected, engaged, and trained on peace and conflict management, mediations, and advocacy as well as improved Project Management skills to effectively deliver on project goals. A project team of 7 people (led by a project coordinator) and 15 local mobilizers (15 states) will be identified, selected, trained, and deployed for the implementation of the project by 3 expert trainers. 1 local mobilizer per state is engaged for their knowledge of the terrain and the ability to seamlessly relate and interact with the indigenous people.

The Engagement of Key Stakeholders at the National and State Levels: Throughout the project, and in addition to the NPC members, the project engaged over 150 key stakeholders (10 from each of the 15 mobilized state-based peace architectures) at the national level to train them on the promotion of peace advocacy by the expert trainers. These engagements included training sessions, capacity building, sharing of lessons and policy recommendations to increase collaborations and partnerships at inter-state levels. The state-based peace architectures were trained and engaged at

the regional levels, while there was one engagement at the national level. After the regional training sessions/workshops, each of the state-based peace architectures stepped down the training to 40 participants in each state engaging women, youths, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in promoting peace and stability. Their engagements were amplified through media advocacy. Also, their impact in the region was measured after the training and the number of independent projects they are able to undertake without the involvement of the project team.

Media Engagement and Advocacy Campaigns for Peace and Stability: The media strategy for the project was in two folds: the first component involved providing visibility for the activities of the NPC and state-based peace architecture members, religious leaders, and other key stakeholders working with the project in promoting peace. This is because the voices of key stakeholders are critical to providing the right narratives for peace and stability. The second is that jingles and public service announcements (PSAs) were created and disseminated on various media platforms – TV, Radio, Print, and social media - to promote peace and stability before, during, and after the 2023 elections. This had huge impact during both the general elections and the off-cycle elections.

Support to the NPC Situation Room for Off-Cycle Elections in Kogi, Bayelsa and Imo States: Facts and evidence are needed to support the interventions of the NPC and also add content to the media interventions to be carried out through the period of the off-cycle elections. For this reason, the project supported NPC Situation Room which was embedded in the general situation room created for all the CSOs, of which the Kukah Centre is already a partner. The Kukah Centre recruited field officers from across all the LGAs of the three states of Imo, Bayelsa and Kogi. These field workers collected information before, during, and after the elections. This was verified with data collected through other key partners. The evidence was deployed for NPC interventions and media content. Thus, 4 situation room consultants were engaged. 1 field officer per LGA. There are 56 LGAs spread across the 3 states (21 LGAs in Kogi, 27 LGAs in Imo and 8 LGAs in Bayelsa), therefore, 56 field officers were deployed to support the consultants in getting on-ground verifiable information for the NPC situation room.

Project Assessment and Public Presentation of the Implementation Outcomes: Assessing the impact of any intervention is critical for sustainability. This activity designed survey strategies and assessed the extent to which the objectives, goals and expected outcomes of the FCDO support to the NPC through the Kukah Centre were achieved. The survey identified progress made, challenges encountered, risks



IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

mitigated, lessons learned, and the impact achieved through the entire project intervention and in line with proposed outcomes. Public presentation of the report promoted knowledge sharing of key project findings with relevant stakeholders. It demonstrated the need for collaboration and dialogue between election stakeholders to mitigate and/or prevent election violence, and reconciliation.

National Conference on Peace and Reconciliation: The level of regional grievances and the lack of a national platform for agitators to ventilate these grievances to the government and other key stakeholders has become a threat of existential proportion. These grievances have been exacerbated by the conduct of the 2023 general elections and the outcomes of ongoing elections petitions in the courts. The Kukah Centre organised the national conference on Peace and Reconciliation to draw attention of citizens on the need to put the nation first. The conference also gave voice to agitators. It doused tension, lessened anxiety and created hope after the conduct of the 2023 elections.

- The concerns and policy initiatives of Nigerians were brought to the attention of the government, especially institutions responsible for conducting free, fair and credible elections. The state-based Peace Architectures and groups consisting of women, youth and PLWD are equipped with cognate skills to identify and mediate on potential conflict areas.
- The creation of synergy and strategic collaboration between different groups working for peace was greatly enhanced and achieved. There was increased public awareness on peace and conflict management during election and active involvement in politics.
- Another huge lesson is the lack of research and documentation. Most of the decisions taken at the local level are either informed by group interest and ethnic identity politics. This necessitated the development of the training manual that can serve as a valuable resource for peacebuilding and conflict management in Nigeria, providing practical approaches to information regarding conflict resolution. For future training, documenting new experiences can contribute to knowledge sharing and serve as a reference for similar initiatives. The training manuals could also be in braille form to ensure that people with visual impairment can read the materials as well.

FCDO: The Kukah Centre and Global Rights – Deploying Strategies for Increasing Access to Justice and Promoting Credible, Peaceful, Democratic Process in North-West Nigeria



The North-West region of Nigeria, previously considered to be relatively safe, is now the battleground for a mutated offspring of festering insecurity issues in the region, in the form of bandit-terrorists. This new breed of non-state violent actors currently operates with reckless abandon in the region. Their activities threaten the security of lives and infrastructure, as well as gains made in the struggle for the advancement of women's rights, peacebuilding efforts by development actors, civic participation, and the fundamental rights of citizens in the region. Unfortunately, the inability of the government and security agencies to effectively deal with these security concerns, and the capitulation of state actors to the financial demands of

these groups is a significant push-factor for the radicalisation of young people into violent extremism. The project was designed to promote better inclusion for women in governance and peacebuilding efforts. So far, the activities implemented include:



The Establishment of Community Dialogue Committees in Kaduna and Sokoto States: This created the platforms for empowering women within the community to take up leadership roles and actively participate in decision-making processes in their communities. These platforms also provided opportunities for women to build capacity, share experiences, and contribute ideas on peace resolutions, thereby promoting greater inclusivity at the grassroots level. The platforms included persons with disability and marginalised groups as part of decision-making processes, where they contributed their valued inputs to shape the project strategies. These measures demonstrated a more inclusive and sustainable outcome of the project. Again, familiarisation visits to key stakeholders and security agencies were carried out. These visits were avenues for the project team members to meet with stakeholders. Through these visits, the key stakeholders were intimated on the project goal and objectives. The plan of implementation was explained and the role to be played by the communities highlighted as well as security agencies. The result was that project buy-in was obtained, and there is enthusiasm and interest by community leaders, and security agencies to take ownership of the project. It also helped build partnerships and commitment to work collaboratively. Most importantly, the communities accepted specific steps to enhance women's participation in decision-making processes, while the security agencies are willing to allocate resources for gender-responsive programs and strengthen institutional mechanisms to address women's security concerns.

Post-election Town Hall Meetings in Kaduna and Sokoto States: This created an opportunity for different stakeholders from across the two states to discuss the challenges and opportunities openly, freely, and publicly for women's participation in decision-making processes. It also raised awareness about the importance of participatory

governance and women's involvement in promoting peace and security. Furthermore, the Post-election Town Hall Meeting fostered dialogue and deliberations, collaboration, and networking amongst various stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, civil society organisations, female politicians, and women activists leading to potential partnerships and joint initiatives in promoting participatory governance and women's empowerment. Among others, some of the policy strategies were centered on the need for peace accords at the state level during



elections; the need for regional action plan on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which recognizes the disproportionate impact of armed conflicts on women and the pivotal role of women in peacebuilding.

Courtesy visits to Stakeholders in Sokoto and Kaduna States: The project team visited the following stakeholders: the Kaduna State Commissioner of Police, the NSCDC Commandant, the Executive Vice Secretary and the Permanent Commissioner of Kaduna State Peace Commission. Similarly, in Sokoto State, the project team met with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Office of the Director for Human Rights, NGOs, and donor agencies under the executive office of the Governor. These visits aimed to foster partnerships and secure commitments for collaborative efforts towards achieving the common goal of peacebuilding in the Northwest region.

High-level Townhall Meetings in Sokoto and Kaduna States: These meetings were aimed at promoting peace and security in the Northwest region. To raise awareness and increase community members'

understanding of the impact of insecurity and explore opportunities for peacebuilding and women's inclusion in dialogue and decision-making processes. These platforms served as an open and constructive platform for dialogue among community members, religious leaders, traditional rulers, government officials, and security agencies to discuss the root causes of insecurity and identify community-led solutions. It strengthened collaboration and cooperation among various stakeholders, including government (MDAs), civil society organizations, community-based organizations, international partners community members, security agencies, and government institutions to develop effective strategies for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. It also encouraged the active participation of women and youths in decision-making processes, recognizing their important roles in building community resilience. Among others, some of the policy strategies recommended were the evaluation of some laws, and the revision of the National Peace Policy to

incorporate 1325 and 2250 (Youth Peace and Security). Also, governments and Policymakers should develop comprehensive, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder methods to address the Increasing complexity of the factors responsible for insecurity and the techniques by which security is being undermined. This could be adopted and utilized to stem threats to political stability, economic development, and national solidarity.

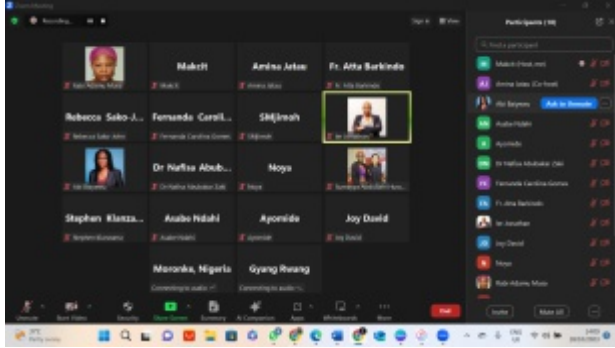
The monthly Community Dialogue Committee meetings in Sokoto and Kaduna States respectively: The Community Dialogue Committee (CDC) in Kaduna and Sokoto states to discuss on key security and early warning issues. The Traditional leader of the Gagi district, Alhaji Sani Umar Jabi, provided an update on the establishment of an early warning response (EWR) team. The team is made up of 45 volunteers, with 15 volunteers in each of the three districts: A, B, and C. These volunteers have been selected on a pro bono basis to report on security concerns in their respective communities. A WhatsApp group has been created, and EWR volunteers have been added from various wards, including representatives from security agencies such as the Department of State Security (DSS), Nigerian Police Force (NPF), and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC). This will enable quick responses to be taken when issues are reported on the platform. Also, the CDC members who received training from Global Right in the previous reporting quarter will conduct training sessions to equip the volunteers with information-gathering skills, reportage of Early Warning Response EWR, and safeguarding techniques. The CDC chairman also provided a progress report on visits made to various security agencies, such as the Department of State Security office located in Sokoto South LGA, as well as Divisional Police Officers (DPO) in divisional offices under Gagi district, including Old Airport Road and Ungwan Rogo. These visits aimed to inform the stakeholders about the



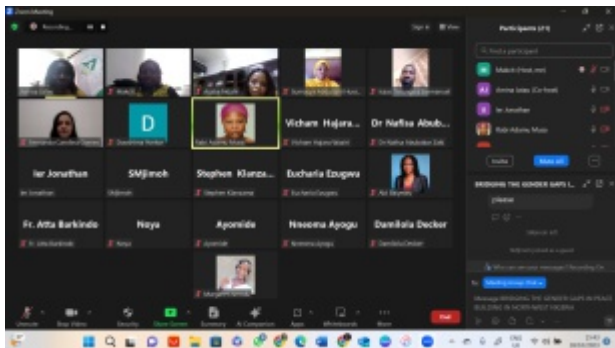


ongoing project and the existence of the CDC, as well as to establish partnerships and commitments to work together with the security agencies. The CDC plans to conduct further visits to other stakeholders in October. Similarly, the members of the CDC held a one-day workshop commemorating the 2023 International Peace Day on September 21st. The workshop focused on the "Role of Religious Tolerance in Peacebuilding" and took place in Sokoto State. Plenary sessions were conducted to discuss the causes and effects of jungle justice, and the event was attended by more than 200 participants from the Gagi district, including men, women, youth, and people with disabilities.

Webinar on Bridging the Gender gaps in Peacebuilding in Northwest Nigeria: This webinar was part of the project strategies to discuss and explore opportunities for empowering women to ensure they are actively involved in peace negotiations, dialogues, and decision-making processes related to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. To achieve this, peacebuilding experts were carefully selected from various organizations and the discussion identified the challenges and barriers that hinder women's participation in peace and security initiatives. It also provided practical insights and recommendations for addressing gender disparities in peacebuilding processes and recommended effective approaches that are essential to create more inclusive peacebuilding processes.



Twitter Space Engagement on Harnessing Women's Potential in Peacebuilding Processes: The Twitter space was hosted to leverage social media to generate ideas and recommendations to overcome barriers, harness women's potential for positive change, enhance women's participation in peacebuilding efforts and contribute to the advancement of women's roles in peacebuilding processes in Northwest Nigeria. The conversation also recognized the significant role that women play in fostering peace and stability, amplifying their voices, sharing insights, and mobilising collective action to peacebuilding processes in Northwest Nigeria.



IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

- Community Dialogue Committees that were set up provided significant platform for community engagement, and women who made up 40% now have the opportunity to be part of a community decision making process. Hosting two women-led postelection town hall meetings on participatory governance women's peace and security with at over 70% women participation.
- Feedback from Community Dialogue Committee meetings in Sokoto State highlighted the need for expansion of intervention to neighbouring villages for more inclusive and balanced representation in addressing security challenges in the community. As a form of community ownership of the project intervention, 45 community members have volunteered to work on a pro bono basis to report on Early Warning Signals
- Cultural and religious barriers play a huge role in the marginalization of women, youths, and persons with disabilities in peacebuilding processes, as such there is a need for intensive and target advocacy campaigns, and continuous enlightenment to sensitize religious and traditional stakeholders to facilitate in-depth conversations and secure future strategies for project impact.
- The nature of the insecurity issues in the Northwest is such that requires multi-dimensional and multifaceted approaches which involve the inclusion of women in the struggle to find lasting solutions.
- In managing bias and cultural sensitivities, it is important to maintain the target number of CDC members on the project for effective management. New media can serve as a veritable tool to promote peace in the community and society.

Profuturo Digital Classroom Project



▲ Group Photo - Profuturo Nigeria Team visit to Madrid

Basic Primary Education is typically the first stage of formal education that every individual receives. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] adequately capture this, as the 4th goal aims to achieve “Quality Education”, goal 5 talks about “Gender Equality”, while goal 10



▲ Project Manager - Profuturo Nigeria - Advocacy Visit to Benefitting States

focuses on “Reduced Inequality”. What this means is that the 4th, 5th, and 10th goals are all to ensure that children the world over, boys and girls alike, are afforded the platform to complete a full course of primary schooling with the same opportunities presented. Thus, the need for the ProFuturo Digital Classroom project currently being implemented in 13 States of Northern Nigeria is a response to the quest for digital child education. Despite the several obstacles surpassed, it is worthy to note that it has gained tremendous acceptance and support from all stakeholders. The overall objective of the project is to reduce the digital and social gap between children in vulnerable environments through the improvement of the quality of education. It also focuses on the enhancement of teachers' skills, methods, and competencies, leveraging digital technologies. With ProFuturo Foundation as the Donor, the project enjoys a tripartite agreement between The Kukah Centre, the Northern Government Forum, and the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria. The State Government through her

State Universal Basic Education Board [SUBEB] as well as the Catholic Dioceses, through her Education Secretariat, have provided the needed enabling environment for the project to thrive. Other key stakeholders are the coaches, teachers, pupils, PTA and SBMCs. So far, the project is being implemented in Adamawa, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Sokoto and Taraba states. There are 91 benefitting schools, with an activity rate of 91%. The children undertaking the activities are: 14.676 /17.025 (86%) while teachers designing learning experiences: 246/160 (153%). The activities implemented this year include:

Profuturo Project Advocacy Visits: Sequel to the need to ensure the effective implementation of the ProFuturo Digital Classroom Project in Nigeria, the Team embarked on a series of programmes and activities. These activities also captured Advocacy visitations with a focus on the sustainability of the ProFuturo Project. The advocacy visits were meant to assess the project impact in the benefitting states, ensure that the suitcases and their contents are intact and in good condition, discuss ProFuturo Project sustainability plans as designed by The Kukah Centre [TKC] with key stakeholders in the benefitting States and consolidate the cordial relationship between TKC and the key stakeholders and promoting a professional and smooth working relationship between champions and the beneficiaries and the lead implementing partners [The Kukah Centre]. In 2023, the team has visited Plateau, Kaduna, Nasarawa, and Adamawa States.

Visit to ProFuturo (Madrid-Spain) - The 21st-26th May 2023: As the project nears the sustainability phase, conducting a comprehensive performance evaluation and establishing a framework that fosters increased stakeholder engagement is crucial. For this purpose, The Kukah Centre 3-man team, comprising Mr. Michael Magaji (Lead



▲ Project Manager - Profuturo Regional Meeting in Zimbabwe

Consultant/Team Lead), Lawson Eselebor (Project Officer), and Mathew Shom Yari (Account Officer) were invited to meet with the ProFuturo team in Madrid, Spain, from the 21st to the 26th of May 2023. The meeting of The Kukah Centre with the ProFuturo team created the platform for both teams to understand the country and global contexts of the project. It provided the opportunity to have a more in-person conversation about the various approaches to adopt, particularly as the project fast approaches the sustainability phase. It agreed on a framework for long-term sustainability.

Regional Meeting in Zimbabwe - the 2nd - 6th of October 2023: ProFuturo in collaboration with World Vision Zimbabwe organized the 1st ProFuturo Africa and Asia Meeting for managers between the 2nd - 6th of October

2023 at Hwange Safari Lodge in Zimbabwe. The conference explored the potential of digital education in transforming educational systems, bridging the digital education divide, and fostering inclusive and equitable access to quality education. It discussed ways on how digital innovations can improve the way ProFuturo works to pursue its mission, vision, and values. At the conference, all team members shared their experiences, best practices, and suggestions that would help to improve the digital education intervention. The conference also discussed how best to address the creation of future opportunities, improved teaching competencies, motivation for changing teaching methods, educational innovation, improved competencies, addressing digital gaps, personalised learning, motivation of students, commitment of families, and changes in school planning. Improving our program would be possible only if we synergize our skills and talent.

▼ Group Photo - Profuturo Regional Meeting In Zimbabwe



IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Lead Consultant - Profuturo Nigeria -
Advocacy Visit To Benefiting States



- The ProFuturo solution remains one of the best ICT projects currently going on in the benefiting schools so far. The mission Schools are highly appreciative of this project and are committed to it that they have a ProFuturo period on their timetable.
- Many teachers across Africa and Asia have shown keen interest in the Profuturo model, and many have been trained and have now joined the project as a result of the output displayed by the trained teachers with the Profuturo digital solution.
- The use of the solution in the project-selected Schools has attracted other schools and these Schools have decided to go the extra mile in acquiring ICT skills by seeking assistance from ADSUBEB and other donors within the State.
- Teachers and students have also benefited immensely from various training and skill development on the use of e-learning and the operability of computer gadgets with utmost confidence. Now, terminal examination and continuous assessment are conducted via computer-based test (CBT) which the solution provides has been adopted.
- The Government is in full support of the project, the solution remains one of the best ICT projects currently going on in the benefiting schools so far. The Public and mission Schools are highly appreciative of this project.
- ProFuturo's education program is replicable, scalable, and sustainable. The project is based on a public-private partnership model to ensure the long-term socio-educational intervention of the program, taking into consideration the institutional, pedagogical, social, financial, evolutive and environmental dimensions.
- Following our engagements, Parents, Community/Religious Leaders, Union of teachers, Local Government Education Authorities, State Ministries of Education, are open to partnerships for the sustainability of ProFuturo Solution Nigeria.

Scholarship for Orphans in Northern Nigeria

Nigeria has one of the largest populations of orphans in the world. Out of the estimated 52 million children in 2001, about 5.4 million (10.3%) of the Nigerian children were orphans, and 995,000 (18.4% of the orphans) were orphaned due to AIDS, making Nigeria, as of 2001, the country with the probable highest number of AIDS orphans in the world. Evidence also exists to show that orphans are more vulnerable than non-orphans. Recent studies have indicated that the educational outcomes and nutritional status of orphans are worsening over the years following increasing levels of violent conflict and insurgency leading to the death of millions of people across the north especially. This has further exposed children to all forms of economic hardships, hard labour, forced/early marriage (for the girl child) and sexual abuse. Even though Nigeria has one of the highest burdens of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in the world, the lack of empirical data on their conditions has hampered the development of effective policies and programs to address the specific needs of OVC in the country.

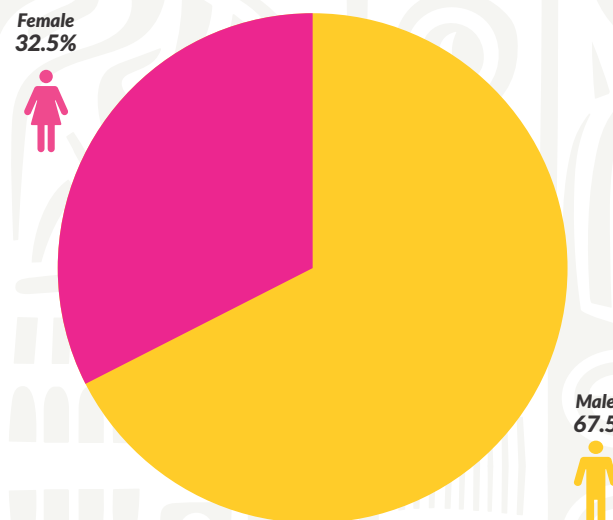
Despite efforts such as providing free education and banning children from hawking during school hours by the Nigerian Government to make basic education free and compulsory within the framework of the 2014 National Policy on Education, attention has not been given to orphans and vulnerable children in the region to make access to education and other needs easy. Research has also shown that at least 10.2 million orphan children at the primary level and 8.1 million children at the junior secondary school (JSS) level are reported to be out of school most of these children are girls and primary school-age children from northern states.[2] Hence, the responsibility for catering for orphans and other vulnerable children has been left to Christian communities, Charitable organisations, and Non-profit Organisations (NGOs) in the region.

Project Implementation: The Kukah Centre, in line with its mandate to provide leadership development for youths through providing access to proper education at every level, designed this project intervention to provide academic scholarships to forty (40) Christian Orphans in the northern part of Nigeria, with the support of The Fountain of Life Church under the Vineyard project. The scholarship is to cover the junior secondary and senior secondary school fees which is six (6) years of schooling for selected beneficiaries. The scholarship officially kicked off for the 2023/2024 academic year for the selected beneficiaries with 95% of the students starting junior secondary school (JSS1) and just two (2) students in junior secondary school (JSS2). The two (2) students in JSS2 had already enrolled and started school in 2022 when the initial mobilisation was done. The team decided to work with the above-mentioned students because they fit into the criteria set and would benefit immensely from the intervention. The overall goal of the intervention is to provide academic scholarship for forty (40) Christian Orphans in the following regions northwest (Sokoto and Kaduna States) and northcentral (Benue State). The activities carried out included: The development of a criterion for selecting the schools/orphanages and the beneficiaries; Identification and selection of the Implementing partners; Identification and selection of orphans and vulnerable children; Partnership framework and agreement with implementing agents; development of the framework for monitoring and reporting progress; budget review and implementation; Contract between implementing partners and actual implementation.

Furthermore, in order to achieve a smooth and seamless implementation process, the Kukah Centre collaborated with its existing partners in the selected states to conduct the mobilisation and identification process of the scholarship beneficiaries. The implementing partners are Christian Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) and Non-Governmental

Organization (NGO), the NGO arm of the Catholic Diocese of Kafanchan Kaduna State and the Educational arm of the Catholic Diocese of Sokoto. The implementing partners were selected based on their experience in implementing such interventions with a passion for improving the well-being of Christian children in northern Nigeria. The decision to work with implementing partners was very strategic, this is because of the longevity of the scholarship scheme (6 years) hence the importance of working with well-structured systems already existing to ensure accountability, consistency, and transparency on the interventions.

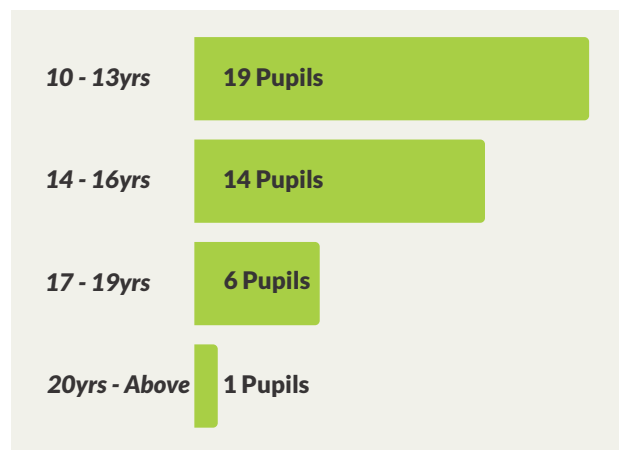
Following the agreement between the Kukah Centre and the Fountain of Life Church, the scholarship scheme intervention is to cover forty (40) Christian orphans living in northern Nigeria. After the selection process for the scheme beneficiaries following the criterion developed forty Christian orphans were selected to benefit from the scheme from the following states: Sokoto, Katsina, Kebbi, Kaduna and Benue States.



Sex disaggregated information of the project beneficiaries.

After the selection and documentation were concluded, it was important to profile and analyse the information obtained from the implementing partners of the scholarship beneficiaries. The graph below shows the sex-disaggregation data of the beneficiaries. Twenty-seven of the beneficiaries are male between the ages of 10 years-22 years and thirteen (13) of the beneficiaries are females within the same age bracket. Unfortunately, getting more girls to be part of the scheme was difficult due cultural perception that education is not for the girl child in the region.

Age-disaggregated information.



The graph presents the breakdown of the age-disaggregated information of the scholarship beneficiaries selected. 48% of the students are between the ages of 10 years-13 years which is the ideal age group for students to enrol in JSS1 according to the Basic Educational Board of Nigeria. Additionally, 35% of the students between the ages of 14 years and 16 years are beneficiaries of the scholarship. Most of the student in the category experience a lot of delays in attending school at the early stages of their lives, due to financial constraints. Also, 15% of the students between the ages of 17 years make up the students to benefit from this scheme. Most of the students as mentioned above experienced some form of delay due to financial constraints and negligence by their guardians. Just 2% which is just one student is between the ages of 20 years and above. This student in particular expressed high interest in wanting to go to school irrespective of the circumstances surrounding him. The passion and zeal could not be ignored by the implementing partner hence the reason for his selection.

Guardian and well-being of the scholarship beneficiaries: Apart from just selecting and providing academic support to the selected orphans, the Kukah Centre team and the implementing partners assessed the well-being of each of the orphans. This is to ensure that the orphans are in good living conditions, have proper guidance and are within the care of trustworthy family members, or external guardians that will ensure the children go to school and are willing and ready to learn. For the TKC team, the well-being and safety of the children needed to be attended to, otherwise learning would become very difficult if the environment in which a child lives is not conducive to promoting effective productivity. Out of forty (40) of the scholarship beneficiaries, thirty-six (36) live with a direct family member such as an uncle, aunt, grandmother, or older siblings. Four (4) live with external guardians or non-family members who took up caregiving roles for the orphans but were also unable to support the education of the orphans in their care.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A major limitation of this intervention is the inability of the project to prioritize the education of the girl child in northern Nigeria. With the evidence provided above, it is without a doubt that there is a need to support the education of orphan girls in northern Nigeria intentionally. During the selection process of the Christian Orphans, the criteria should have paid more attention to ensure the process was gender balanced and provided equal quotas for both the boys and girls. However, some implementing partners highlighted the cultural bias when it comes to providing educational opportunities for the boy child as against the girl in the region as a hindrance to addressing this limitation. This bias posed a threat to getting guardians to allow the girls within their care to benefit from this intervention.
- Interventions of this nature should also aim at providing other support to the beneficiaries apart from paying school fees. This is because most schools have additional fees attached to the enrolment of a student in their schools. For instance, in some schools, the student is expected to pay for furniture fees (table and chair the student will sit on) as additional fees. If this payment is not paid, the student will not fully enrol into the school.
- Interventions of this nature should also focus on not just orphans who are ready for school or want to attend school but also put into consideration orphans who have dropped out of school due to financial constraints or as a result of the death of their parents.

Memory Preservation, Advocacy & Knowledge Promotion Interventions

MacArthur Foundation: Strengthening Social Cohesion in Lagos State.



▲ TKC Staff with Femi Falana SAN

The implementation of The Kukah Centre's project on Strengthening Social Cohesion in Lagos State emerges from a crucial examination of the aftermath of the recent presidential and governorship elections. These elections, conducted across ethnic divides, have underscored the imperative for proactive measures to address emerging challenges and capitalise on



TKC Staff with Director_ Staff of National Orientation Agency, Lagos State Secretariat



Staff of TKC with the Archbishop Alfred Adewale Martins of Lagos State



TKC Staff with CAN Chairman



TKC Staff with Chairman Members of the Lagos State IPAC



TKC Staff with Leaders of Various Market in Lagos State

opportunities for fostering unity and understanding within the diverse communities of Lagos State. The rationality behind this project lies in the recognition of the profound impact elections can have on social dynamics, often exacerbating pre-existing fault lines or offering a unique moment for healing and reconciliation. Lagos, as a microcosm of Nigeria's ethnic diversity, has witnessed the potential for both positive and negative outcomes arising from the electoral process. It is in this context that The Kukah Centre seeks to contribute to the consolidation of social cohesion, recognizing it as a cornerstone for sustainable development, peace, and inclusive governance. By focusing on social cohesion, the project aspires to create a resilient social fabric capable of withstanding the strains of electoral processes, ultimately contributing to a more harmonious and united Lagos State. As The Kukah Centre takes on this initiative, it aligns with the broader vision of promoting social harmony and nurturing an inclusive society where every citizen feels a sense of belonging and participates actively in the democratic process. Activities implemented include:

Project Inception: The inception of The Kukah Centre's project on Strengthening Social Cohesion in Lagos State commenced with a meticulous recruitment process, aimed at assembling a dynamic project team and selecting short-term experts with specialised knowledge in social cohesion, conflict resolution, and project management. This



▲ MacArthur Team with DCP Admin Salihu Khan _DCP Operations T J Fatai

▼ MacArthur Team Members with Mr. Dele Farotimi and Tony Nnacheta (*President of Aka Ikenga*)





- 1. MacArthur Team with Chief Imam Of Lagos State
- 2. TKC Staff with Mrs. Ireti Doyle (Nollywood Actress)
- 3. Staff of TKC with JONAPWD Lagos State Chapter
- 4. MacArthur Team with Commissioner of Youth _ National Youth Council Chairman Lagos

foundational step ensured that the initiative is led by a group of individuals equipped to navigate the complexities of fostering unity across diverse communities and groups in the state. Following the team's formation, strategic meetings were organised to facilitate collaboration and draft comprehensive plans for implementation. This series of meetings served as a crucial platform for aligning all stakeholders. There were several online and offline meetings, brainstorming and research sessions before the selected stakeholders were identified. Subsequently, they were categorised and prioritised and strategies for engagements were devised for each stakeholder. Notably, most of these stakeholders are institutions and groups, understandably so because social cohesion is a collective process, and it must begin with institutional gatekeepers. Hence, the categories of the stakeholders identified include Traditional rulers, government institutions, Religious leaders, youth entities, formal and informal sectors.

Research and Context Analysis of Lagos State and Publication: To deepen the project's understanding of the intricate factors influencing social cohesion, a detailed Context and Conflict Analysis report was produced. This report delves into the social, political, and cultural fabric of Lagos State, providing valuable insights to inform targeted interventions that resonate with the unique context of the region.

Advocacy Visit to Key Stakeholders in Lagos State: The project team and the Short-Term Experts embarked on

advocacy visits to stakeholders between **Monday, October 30, 2023, and Friday, November 3, 2023.** These advocacy visits to stakeholders were to formally introduce the project and get the opinions of the stakeholders on the issues of social cohesion in the state. Furthermore, to create awareness of the need for social cohesion and seek their collaboration to strengthen social cohesion. It was also to get their commitment to participate in subsequent events to be organised by the project in furtherance of the project goal. The stakeholders visited include: The National Orientation Agency of Lagos State; Lagos Command of the Nigerian Police Force; Lagos State Commissioner for Youths and Sports; Lagos State Chapter of the National Youth Council of Nigeria; The Catholic Archbishop of Lagos Archdiocese; Lagos State Chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria; Chief Imam of Lagos State; Inter-party Advisory Council of Lagos State Chapter; Joint National Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD) Lagos State Chapter Lagos State Civil Society Organisations; Members of the Creative Industry (Nollywood); Informal Sector (Business Community in Lagos state) Leaders of the following Markets: Okoya-Ojogiwa market Lagos Island, Iron and Steel Dealers Market Orile Iganmu, Ereko Market Idumota, Trinity Market Olodi Apapa, Fancy and Furniture Market Alaba, erger Auto parts market; Igbo Traditional group (Aki-Ikenga sub-group of Ohaneze Ndi-Igbo) and Notable Personalities: (Mr. Femi Falana SAN, and Mr. Dele Farotimi)



▲ TKC Staff with CAN Chairman
 ▼ Staff of TKC with Ibrahim Suleiman (Nollywood Actor)



ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND NEXT STEPS

While it is too early to assess the impact of the project, it is plausible to say that the project has made significant progress in terms. These achievements are tied to some of the outcomes of the project as follows:

- **The stakeholder buy-in:** Many of the stakeholders bought into the project goal, which was to strengthen social cohesion in the state and made commitments to support the project and willingness to collaborate. These stakeholders were pleased that there were still projects that inspire hope in Nigerian youths.
- **Key informant interviews:** Key Informant interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders during the courtesy visits which provided valuable insights into the context of Lagos state politics and the strategies for social cohesion.

During the project implementation, certain challenges were equally encountered. Some of them include:

Stakeholder bias and or lack of acceptance: Some stakeholders showed bias against the project, while others indicated a lack of acceptance for the project, insisting it was a very sensitive topic and had the possibility of disrupting the pseudo-peace in Lagos. While some were sceptical on whether the project will yield the desired goal, considering

the country's political trajectory of hegemony and identity politics.

Fear, Mistrust and Distrust: from the interactions with some stakeholders, it could be easily inferred that there is a presence of fear, mistrust and distrust of government and other power brokers in the state, especially from the non-indigenes or supporters of the opposition parties in the state there is an initial resistance to express themselves freely on some instances of social disharmony. However, with the use of diplomacy and tact they granted interviews when they were guaranteed anonymity.

Next Steps: In the second quarter of this project lifecycle, the project team seeks to consolidate on the success of the meeting and mobilisation of stakeholders with bilateral meetings. The objective of this meeting is to facilitate dialogue between several groups of stakeholders. In addition, seek to improve commitment to and support for the project ensuring that the goal of a peace forum would be met after deliberations.



The Kukah Centre and United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) Collaborations:



As part of its strategic engagements, and within this period of reporting, the Kukah Centre held strategic engagements UNOWAS to fine-tune ways of supporting peaceful elections in Kaduna, Kogi, Enugu, Oyo, and Cross River States ahead of the 2023 general elections. The engagements conducted



between December and January had the theme 'Deepening Stakeholders Participation and Amplifying Voices of Citizens for a Peaceful 2023 Elections in Nigeria.' While the meeting was instrumental to some of the Kukah Centre engagements during the off-cycle elections, it necessitated the conversation for supporting a Peace Summit in Taraba state.



Peace Summit in Taraba State: The Peace, Unity, and Reconciliation Summit was organised by the Taraba Independent Peace Committee with the support of the Kukah Centre, the Secretariat of the National Peace Committee, the Taraba State Government, and UNESCO. The Summit promoted the bridging of gaps between different religious groups. It advocated for the implementation of past recommendations of commissions of inquiry, inclusiveness, tolerance, and political will as a sure way to end conflicts in the state.



The statement was included in a communique released at the conclusion of a two-day summit with the theme "In search for peace, unity and reconciliation among Taraba communities" held in Jalingo, Taraba State. According to the Communique read by the Chairman of the Taraba Independent Peace Committee, Prof. Talla Ngarka, the Summit acknowledged that the diversity of the state, which comprises over 100 ethnic groups, has been a source of conflicts despite being an asset to the state. This diversity has led to violent intergroup conflicts throughout the state's history. The summit unanimously urged the Taraba state government to implement all white paper reports on various crises in the state. It also called for the inauguration of white paper drafting committees to draft white papers for other Commissions of inquiry reports. Additionally, the summit called on the state government to depoliticize traditional institutions, ensuring full compliance with the traditions and





native laws of the people. Furthermore, it emphasized the need to devise innovative and modern ways of livestock management to address the farmers/herders crisis in the state. In promoting peace and religious tolerance, the communique, among other things recommended the following:

- Government should resettle internally displaced persons in their homes and ensure that empowerment programmes of government and corporate bodies should centre on skills acquisition training to make beneficiaries self-reliant, instead of relying on white-collar jobs. Religious leaders should preach and practise peace and unity always and avoid inciting their congregants against other faiths, while traditional rulers should be encouraged to promote community surveillance and local intelligence networking.
- Security agencies should strictly adhere to their rules of engagement in crisis management and the public should volunteer useful information always.
- Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Taraba State Council should be supported to train journalists and social media content providers on peace reporting, while efforts should be made to tackle fake news in the state.”

The Kukah Centre Series on Catholic Social Teachings and National Harmony (Kaduna Office)



Since the advent of Christianity, the Church has had massive influence in society. For instance, in the Middle Ages, education and other civilising influences were entirely in the hands of the Church. Priests were architects, philosophers, chief advisers to kings and queens, expert farmers, musicians,

glassmakers etc. The Pope also intervened in socio-political and economic issues that affect the ordinary man. Additionally, the central mission of Christ, and by extension the Church is love, peace, justice, and the promotion of human dignity. That is why the Church has always been considered the bastion of diplomacy and development. All institutions of diplomacy and development initiatives in the world trace their history to the Catholic Church, and the Church's social teachings. However, the influence of the Catholic Church and its social teaching in and within society is waning. This is particularly evident in traditional Catholic Countries in Europe and America. In Africa in general, and Nigeria in particular, the influence of the Catholic Church has come under severe scrutiny. The elements of Catholic Social Teachings appear not to influence public policy in the way and manner it happened in the past. Social and domestic issues that affect the wellbeing of families and communities are not approached and resolved based on Catholic Social Teachings, even by Catholics themselves. Catholic principles seem to be waning in dictating the direction of the Common Good.

It was against this background that the Centre organised this initiative to underscore the teachings of the Church as it relates to the socio-economic and political realities in Nigeria with the aim of promoting societal values that align with religious teachings. The beneficiaries of the project include religious leaders, youth, women, children, traditional rulers, CSOs, Community members, government agencies and securities personnel located in Kaduna Ecclesiastical Province.

Methodology of the Dialogue Series

The series focused on various topical issues affecting the family, the church and the society at large. A roundtable learning strategy was employed to discuss the topic *Christian*

Family Values and Challenges of Modernization: Perspective from Catholic Social Teaching. This strategy was chosen to provide each participant with an equal standing in the discussion, allowing them to contribute their perspectives and ideas freely and fully to the conversation. The roundtable learning strategy (RLS) approach aimed to elicit practical experiences from various segments within the church. Thirty (30) participants were carefully selected for each session, representing a diverse range of church groups, including Catholic Youth Organization (CYON), Catholic Men Organization (CMO), MSM, Zumuntan Mata, Zumuntan Maza, Choir, Reverend sisters, schoolteachers, Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Legion of Mary, and Family and Human Life units. The participants were divided into four groups to critically examine the effects of modernization on families and explore ways in which modernization can be used to maintain the social values of families and society, drawing from Catholic Social Teachings.

Mainstreaming Girl Child Education in Kaduna State: This roundtable had community members, school pupils(girls), schoolteachers, stakeholders and parents invited to discuss





the importance and challenges of Girl Child Education in Kaduna State.

Strengthening Synergy Between Religious Leaders and Security Personnel in Kaduna State: A one-day round table approach was deployed to ensure the participation and contribution of stakeholders in the conversation. This approach provided an opportunity for Religious Leaders, Security Personnel, and organisations that promote peace to come together and share their challenges, accomplishments, and concerns in person. Participants at the one-day roundtable include the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Department of State Security Services (DSS), NSCDC, FRS, NPF, JDPC, NIS, Vigilante, KASTELEA, WOWICAN, WIC, IMC, JNI Nigerian Air Force, Ministry of Justice, JONAPWD, YOWICAN, FOMWAN, Military, Nisau Sunna, Catholic Cadets, KADVIS, Peace Corps, and Kaduna State Peace Commission. Leading the dialogue were





Commissioner of Justice and Attorney General of Kaduna state, Suleiman Shuaibu, Regional Coordinator of Global Peace Foundation Nigeria, Sheikh Haliru Maraya, Director of Religious Affairs for Muslim Matters, Ibrahim Tahir Baba, Director of Religious Affairs for Christian Matters, John Baba, and CAN Chairman, Rev. Joseph Hayab. A total of 90 individuals participated in the event - 58 male participants and 32 female participants, and 4 Persons with Disabilities (PWD).

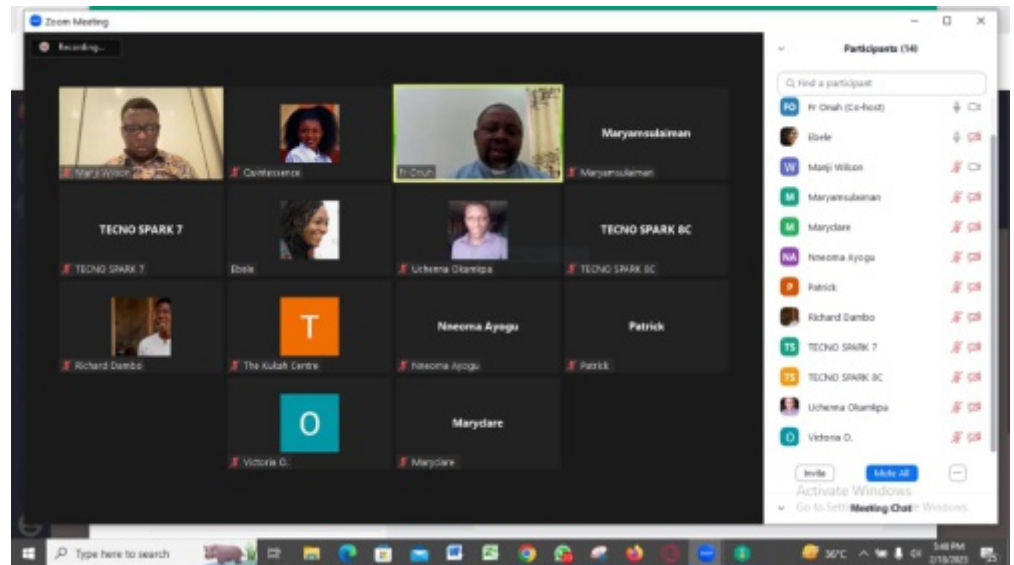
The Role of Women in Peace building in Kaduna State:
Seeing how critically important the subject of women's role in



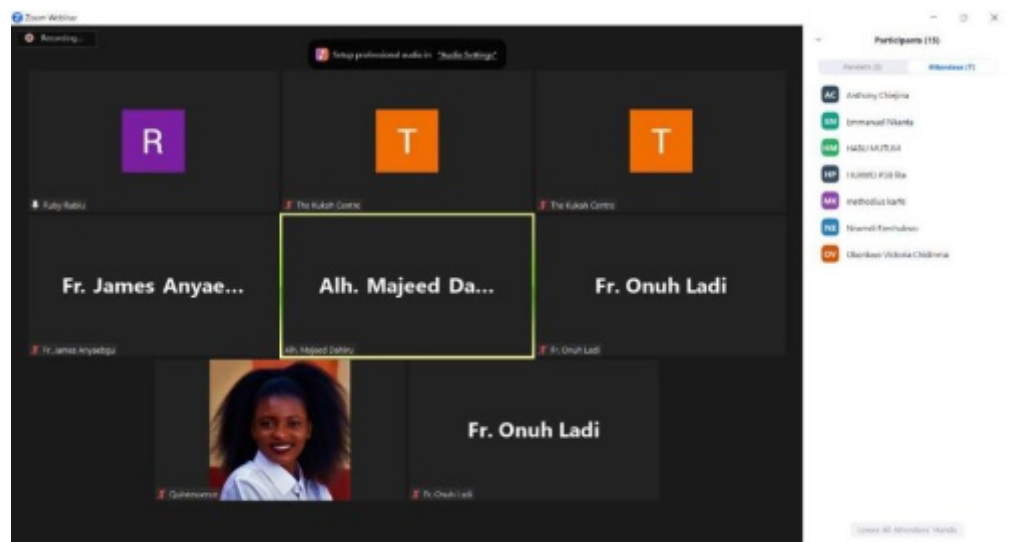
peace building is, a round table approach was adopted for this event. This is to properly allow full participation and clearly have their expressions communicated. To achieve this scheme, thirty (30) participants were selected. These participants were made up of twenty-eight (28) women and two (2) men (The Gender advisor to the Nigerian Police, Kaduna State and the representative from Kaduna Peace Commission). Organisations represented by these women include Women wing of Christian Association of Nigeria - WOWICAN, Women Interfaith council - WIC, Federation of Muslim women Association of Nigeria, FOMWAN, Catholic Women Organization of Nigeria - CEO, Ministry of Women Affairs - Kaduna State. Starting the conversation were goodwill messages and facilitating was Kaltumi Abdulazeez - Founder LEGASI, using video content to ignite interest. The conversation covered questions, experiences, challenges, recommendations, and prospects surrounding women's role in peace building.

Tackling Misinformation, Fake News and Hate Speech in the Society: The webinar was organised on Saturday, 29th April 2023 as part of a series of projects aimed at identifying social issues affecting society on economic, political, and social levels. The purpose of the event was to examine church teachings that advocate for responsible citizenship, protection of human dignity and rights, and freedom of expression as recognized in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended). It also sought to propose solutions for expressing these freedoms on social media without perpetuating fake news, hate speech, and misinformation, while educating the public on responsible and accountable information communication. To achieve this, discussants were drawn from the field of journalism, social media influencing, and the academia.

Christian (catholic) Youth Participation in Political Processes in Nigeria: The event, held on Saturday, 18th February 2023 at The Kukah Centre, Kaduna, was organised to educate youths on the criteria for Christians to make informed and conscious choices when voting. This is because a well-informed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political party or an individual law that contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals. A well-informed Christian conscience in turn shapes and influences how Christians contribute to civil and respectful public dialogue and political choices in the year of elections. This is a call to discipleship in the world of politics, which is a civic means ensuring equitable distribution of the common good, while guaranteeing both civic and religious virtue.



Inter-Religious Dialogue: Seeking Common Ground For Collaboration in a Community: To achieve the goals of this subject, a one-day round table conference was applied, to create room for participants to express their thoughts about the subject. 58 participants were in attendance: 23 female and 35 male participants. Making up the Participants were; the Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC), Women Interfaith Council (WIC), HISBAH, Kaduna State Peace Commission, Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOWMAN), JNI, Church and Society (JDPC), Nigerian Police Force (NPF), NSCDC, Political Parties, Catholic Women Organization of Nigeria (CWO) and the Catholic Youth Organization of





IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Nigeria (CYON). Stirring the conversation were Imam Dr M. N. Ashafa and Rev. J. M. Wuye. After their session of insights which covered historical role models, links by faith, community role model and bridge bonding, the participants were dissolved into four (4) Groups, they discussed; the obstacles of collaboration, lessons learnt over the years about religious diversity, the way forward from where we are as a community about the subject matter, recommendations, and action plans. During the discussions, individual and community role models were brought to light from history and light was shed on the portions of the holy books that call for peaceful coexistence. For instance, participants were fed the story of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who hosted 60 Christians in Madinah and even allowed them to stay in the mosque while they (Muslims) prayed.

- The participants shared diverse opinions during the discussion. The importance of understanding each other as a community with respect, civility, and decency, accepting differences and working together for a better society was emphasised. The views of the speakers underscored the crucial role of the family as the foundation of individuals' values and morals.

- Overall, the roundtable provided an opportunity for participants to engage in an open and inclusive discussion on the challenges of modernization on Christian families and the potential solutions based on Catholic Social Teachings.

- The dialogue series enhanced the visibility of the Kukah Centre and its stance on critical issues of national life. It fostered a spirit of awareness and social cohesion among diverse communities in Kaduna and the northwest region.

- It also strengthened collaboration among critical stakeholders Kaduna state, and paved the way for critical thinking on issues that affect society generally.

Ford Foundation: Developing a National Religious Ethical Policy Framework (NREPF) for preventing and combating GBV in Nigeria.



Gender based violence are the current issues confronting the world today. In many parts of the world, including Africa, sexual and gender-based violence have both theological and cultural roots that date back to the origin of

mankind. It includes any act by male or female dominated social institutions and structures that inflict physical or psychological harm on men, women, or girls because of their gender. In Nigeria as well as most of Africa, gender-based violence is legitimized by norms, traditional beliefs, and practices. Many government and non-governmental societies have attempted to proffer programs to mitigate violence against women. Yet, religious teachings and ideologies that appear to justify gender-based violence (GBV) on women remains unchallenged in all its forms. The innovation in this project is to go beyond socio-economic and political approach to the issue of gender-based violence. The project deploys the instruments of religion both at the institutional and doctrinal levels to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The Project developed an inclusive

national ethical and religious framework for preventing and combating gender-based violence among religious leaders and institutions in Nigeria. The activities carried out to achieve this include:

Review of Existing Codes of Conduct of Religious Leaders and Institutions: It is important to gather and review the existing code of conduct, constitution and other accountability documents religious institutions have in their various domains. Gaps were identified in line with addressing GBV issues in the constitution and code of conduct of religious institutions. In situations where the institution does not have such documents, religious leaders/scholars were encouraged to develop and then adopt such documents with specific attention to issues of GBV.



Additionally, this activity will be conducted mostly remotely. Research was conducted by DIWA and Lux Terra Foundation to inform this process. The research showed that most religious institutions and organisations do not have specific policies on preventing GBV within the institutions. Additionally, most institutional codes of conduct do not have specific strategies or responses to GBV issues within the institution. This informed the code of the two-day discussion workshop on religion that was carried.

Identification and engagement of key religious leaders/scholars and institutions: Various stakeholders across the FBO and other religious leaders were identified to be engaged in the processes of developing and adopting the NREPF. DIWA and Lux Terra Foundation mobilised religious leaders/scholars they had initially trained to be engaged in the project. Criteria for selecting these religious leaders were developed by the Kukah Centre team, DIWA, and Lux Terra team.

Training on safeguarding and protection for religious scholars/leaders: The initial proposal for the activities outlined in the no-cost extension request was to conduct a one-day training on safeguarding and protection for the mobilized religious leaders by DIWA and Lux Tera Foundation. After a series of discussions with the DIWA and Lux Tera Foundation team, it was impossible to conduct these trainings in one day due to the complexity of the training

modules. To address this concern, DIWA and Lux Terra mobilized religious leaders/scholars who have trained in safeguarding and protection and already have the necessary knowledge on issues around GBV. This training facilitated the sharing of opinions by the religious leaders. It created an understandable foundation for the issues being dealt with in GBV. It provided knowledge regarding what was expected by religious leaders and institutions as part of the policy framework in terms of accountability, education, psycho-social support, and others. Through this training, they also made significant inputs concerning the strategies for the policy framework.

FGDs workshop on the design and development of the Ethical and Religious Framework: The two (2) day discussion workshop featured an extensive discussion on the strategies to be developed for religious leaders and institutions to deploy to guide the behaviours and dealings of religious leaders as they carry out their roles in their domains. The workshop created an avenue to discuss the need to develop and adopt the Ethical and Religious Framework (ERF), identify strategies for implementing and communicating the ERF, and collate strategies for deploying the framework as an accountability document for religious institutions. Paramount to the series of discussions held, stakeholders present at the workshop gave their support



and buy-in in adopting the policy as an accountability document for the various religious institutions they were representing. These workshops were conducted on the following dates- the activity with the Christian leaders mobilised by Lux Terra took place on the 17th and 18th of August 2023 and for Muslim religious leaders/scholars mobilised by DIWA took place on the 3rd and 4th of October 2023. Forty (40) stakeholders were mobilised to participate in the two (2) day discussion workshop, twenty (20) stakeholders were mobilised each by DIWA and Lux Tera Foundation. The analysis below presents the sex-disaggregated information of the forty (40) stakeholders mobilised for the activity.

Unveiling the Ethical and Religious Framework for Addressing GBV through Religious leaders and Institutions in Nigeria: After a series of validation sessions of the ERF, the Centre organised a National Conference to unveil the Policy Framework on the 7th of December 2023 at the Yar'Adua Centre in Abuja. The event echoed the significance of integrating ethics, religion, and action in the collective fight against Gender-based Violence. It also emphasised the role of religious leaders in reshaping the narrative surrounding gender-based violence. Additionally, beyond just a document, the framework symbolised a beacon of accountability for religious bodies and institutions in Nigeria; a guide for leaders and scholars as they stand on the frontline, addressing, combating, and responding to GBV.





IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

- One of the fundamental things we have discovered in most of these legal instruments and policy frameworks is that the role of religious leaders and institutions, to support the prevention of gender-based violence and to hold themselves accountable is either absent or completely neglected.
- This ethical framework deploys a religious perspective in addressing GBV and leverages the influence of religious leaders to tackle GBV issues. It prioritizes creating awareness and accountability among religious leaders, ensuring that they actively promote a culture of respect, justice, and equity within their congregations. This ethical framework also highlights the need for comprehensive support services for survivors, including counselling, medical, and legal assistance. In the same vein, religious leaders are obligated by this to ensure that the law takes its full course in prosecuting perpetrators of GBV as a means of ensuring justice for the survivor. This framework does not only support the protection of vulnerable groups but also challenges deeply ingrained societal norms that perpetuate violence, ultimately contributing to a safer and more inclusive Nigeria.
- The Ethical Framework also affirms the commitment of religious leaders and institutions to human rights, gender equity, non-discrimination, non-violence, moderation, and tolerance of differences. It encompasses standards, strategies, and plans agreed upon by religious bodies, their leaders, stakeholders and practitioners across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria; recognising the existing policies in their various institutions and harmonizing the best practices from the various religious groups to create this framework. As a guiding principle, this framework was drafted using conflict sensitivity, trauma awareness, Do-No-Harm, and an inclusive gender lens throughout the process of drafting, revising and validation.
- It also enshrines mitigation strategies as proposed and agreed upon by the various religious institutions and stakeholders which include but are not limited to sensitization, awareness campaigns, education, a robust code of conduct template, behaviour change, communication on harmful social norms and neutralization of extremist ideologies on gender.
- It aims to prevent, mitigate, and respond to GBV in Nigeria by utilizing the collective vision of the various religious practices in the country of ensuring love, peace, and justice for all. Through our implementation plan and the feedback collected across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, we aim to provide moral guidance, educational awareness, and access to services in collaboration with religious institutions and social leaders in addressing GBV issues.



KAICIID: Mechanism for Monitoring Freedom Of Religion Or Belief In Nigeria (FORB).



Introduction

The abuse of Freedom of religion in Nigeria is on the rise. Scopes of discrimination, violent attacks, intimidation, and marginalization of both

Muslims and Christians in various parts of the country are either reported and legal actions were not taken or are underreported and undocumented.

In that the rights of people are not protected; the perpetrators continued their perversion against citizens who are supposed to be protected by their government. This has led to continued outright intimidation, unwarranted harassment, violent attacks, and in some cases loss of lives and property.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds that every individual has the right to practice any religion of his/ her choice anytime and anywhere without him or her being harassed or molested. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for freedom of thought, conscience, and religion including the freedom to change religion and evince, and strew religion "in worship, teaching, practice, and observation, as far as these rights align with the interest of defense, public safety, order, morality, or health, and protecting the rights of others".

For instance, there were reports of Muslims being denied land to build mosques in some parts of the country and being denied job opportunities.

Muslim groups in the southeast for instance have raised alarm about the unwarranted destruction of two mosques in Nsukka on the 2nd of November 2020. It took the courage of the then-sitting Governor Ugwuanyi, who ordered for the rebuilding of the two mosques. Likewise, Christian groups in some parts of the North have raised concerns about the denial of job opportunities, land to build churches, denial of promotion in offices, forceful conversion of their girls to Islam, and exclusion of Christian communities from basic social amenities etc.

Freedom of Religion is one of the God-given rights of every human being. It is ontological, inherent, and inalienable. Sadly, despite the international and National laws protecting these unsalable rights, many people, particularly in Nigeria continued to suffer abuses as a result of their beliefs or creed. The ordeals of the victims of these abuses have over a decade now been overshadowed by the manifold crises in various parts of the country such as kidnapping, banditry, terrorism, separatist agitations, and cultism, as a result, courageous voices calling government attention to the plight of the victims of violations of freedom of religion have been neglected.

Against the backdrop of this challenge, the National Human Rights Commission in collaboration with The Kukah Centre, and The Nasrul-Lahi-il Fathi Society of Nigeria with support from The King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, schemed a project aimed at collecting evidence of individuals and groups whose rights to Freedom of Religion have been violated.

- The project will provide undoubted evidence of violation of Freedom of Religion and Belief of both Christians and Muslims in the Six states of Ebonyi, Edo, Osun, Plateau, Kano, and Sokoto.
- The project will equally provide accurate data on incidences of violation of freedom of religion and Belief in Nigeria leveraging networks in the six states where the project will be carried out.

The idea of gathering evidence of these violations will culminate into a robustious policy document that the government could be engaged with to address the challenges.

Methodology

A mixed methodology- qualitative and quantitative research has been adopted to arrive at the findings. A sustainable and operational network has been developed under which research field officers have been deployed to collect and document data on incidences of violations of freedom of religion and belief from the grassroots for one month.

The data will be backed by the desktop findings of researchers from The Kukah Centre, NASFAT, and the National Human Rights Commission.

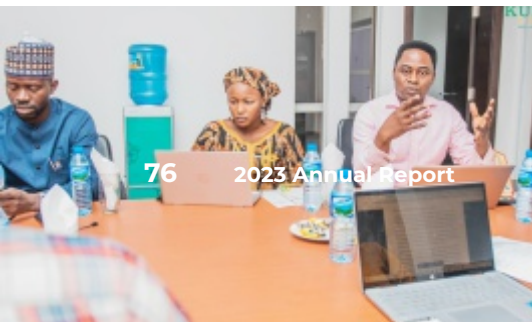
Activity Implementation for Q1

Activities within the first quarter of the project implementation include the selection and training of the project team members from The National Human Rights Commission, (NHRC) The Kukah Centre, (TKC), and the Nasrul-Lahi-il Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT). To enhance

project team members' capacities, a two-day capacity-building training was carried out. Their capacities were enhanced in public engagement, data gathering, report writing, and the latest procurement procedures for effective implementation of the project.

Furthermore, to prepare both the project team members and the state coordinators/ field officers for public engagement, a virtual training via Zoom was carried out on the application of dialogue techniques while engaging people of different faiths instead of debating about whose faith is superior. This was to give the project the needed acceptance among the different faiths in the environment where the activities will be carried out.

Following the completion of the training of the state coordinators and field officers, the collection of data commenced immediately in the states of Kano, Sokoto, and Plateau in the North and Ebonyi, Edo, and Osun in the South. Ten trained field officers in each of the six states spent a month distributing questionnaires and gathering data from different local government areas of the states, after which the raw data were forwarded to the data analyst for proper analysis.



LESSONS LEARNED

In the course of implementing this project, the team encountered some experiences that shaped the project activities in this first quarter. These experiences are worth noting as they will encourage the application of best practices in the remaining circle of the project.

- Gathering data within a specific timeline and in the context of religious freedom in Nigeria requires the application of certain strategies to facilitate such a process. One such is involving the gatekeepers of communities for easy access and to get the buy-in of respondents.
- The security situation in the country, particularly in states like Plateau, Sokoto, and Ebonyi could not allow the field officers to reach some communities for data gathering. It is important to articulate risks and assumptions associated with gathering data. This will help in identifying the right research tools and approach to situations that will come up while collecting data on the field.

NEXT STEPS

Moving forward, the project will validate findings from the research and data collection before organizing a public presentation where leaders of faith-based organizations, and government agencies will be invited to participate in the discourse. This will open a window for the adoption of certain recommendations that will mitigate the violations of freedom of religion and belief in Nigeria.

The project will embark on grassroots sensitization and awareness campaigns to promote respect for the freedom of religion and belief in Nigeria as well as highlight the dangers of violating this fundamental human right in Nigeria.

Head of Programmes, Mr. Esrom Ajanya, participates in Yiaga Africa's Election Study and Observer Mission (ESOM) during Liberia's Presidential Elections:



Head of Programmes at The Kukah Centre (TKC), Esrom Ajanya was part of Yiaga Africa Election Study and Observer Mission (ESOM) for Liberia's presidential elections held on the 10th of October 2023. The multi-disciplinary observer mission was led by Dr. Aisha Abdullahi, a former African Union Commissioner and Yiaga Africa Board Member. Preliminary report from the observation indicated that voter turnout was recorded at over 70%. It further said that there was "an unwavering commitment to transparency over the speedy conclusion of the process" on the side of the electoral management body, and greater citizens' participation in the electoral process due to patriotism. The Observer Mission advises INEC to review the format of ballot papers used in Nigeria elections to include photographs and names of candidates. This will improve the quality of electoral preferences and reduce invalidated votes during elections.

The Kukah Centre produces a documentary in honour of International Day of Living Together in Peace:

May 16 was declared as the International Day of Living Together in Peace by the United Nations to mobilise its efforts to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity across the globe. The Kukah Centre joined the international community and the rest of the world to celebrate the day, calling on people in Nigeria and around the world to embrace peace and unity, and to build a world where understanding and compassion prevail.



Pad a Girl: TKC Celebrates International Day of the Girl Child at JSS Gwako:



The Kukah Centre's Gender and Social Inclusion Desk partnered with the Citizen Participation Advancement and Awareness Initiative (CPAI) to carry out an outreach in JSS Gwako to provide sanitary products and create more awareness of menstrual health and menstrual hygiene Management, targeting female students in this school. According to UNICEF, 2.3 billion people - globally - lack basic sanitation services and in least-developed countries, only 27% of the population has a handwashing facility with water and soap at home, so managing periods is a major challenge for adolescent girls. With this initiative, it is hoped that fewer adolescent girls will suffer ignorance and poor menstrual management, and we can also break the stigma associated with menstruation.

The Executive Director, Fr. Atta Barkindo, on the Electoral Reform Roundtable titled “Unpacking Nigeria's 2023 General Elections and Prospects for Electoral Reforms:



The Executive Director of The Kukah Centre and Head of the Secretariat of the National Peace Committee, Fr. Atta Barkindo was part of the Electoral Reform Roundtable organised by Yiaga Africa and the Kofi Annan Foundation, supported by the Swiss Embassy. The event was held on Monday, October 23rd, 2023, at the Envoy Hotel, in Abuja. The Roundtable, with the theme: “Unpacking Nigeria's 2023 General Elections and Prospects for Electoral Reforms”, is one among the many series of initiatives intended to review stakeholders' participation and conduct in Nigeria's 2023 general election. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the leadership of Nigeria's National Assembly were part of the critical stakeholders at the event. Fr. Barkindo chaired the panel on Money Politics and Election Security in Nigeria.

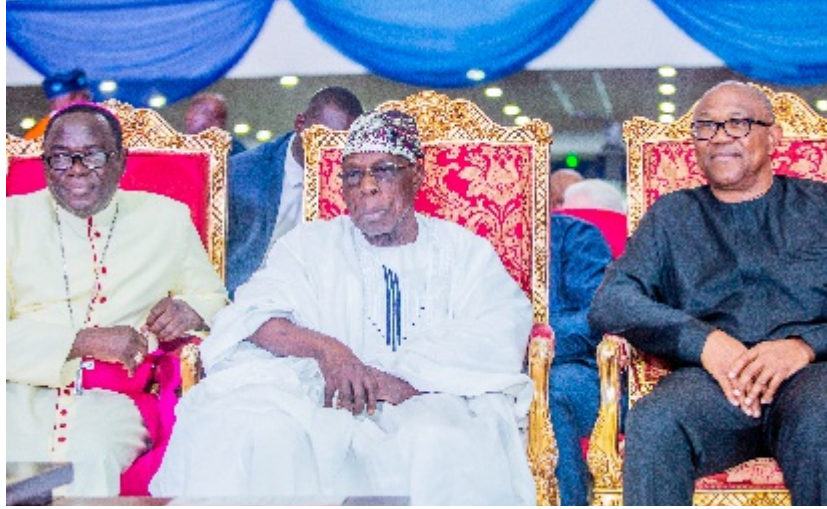


Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah Launches Book titled *Witness to Reconciliation*:

Founder of The Kukah Centre and the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Sokoto, Most Rev Dr Matthew Hassan Kukah, has launched his new book titled *Witness to Reconciliation* on the 26th of May 2023, at the Obi Wali International Conference Centre in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The new book – a sequel to *Witness to Justice*, is a documentation of Bishop Kukah's journey towards reconciliation in Ogoniland. He recounts his personal experiences of navigating Nigeria's complex challenges to emphasise the importance of reconciliation, peace, and social cohesion. Prominent among those present at the book launch were the former President

of Nigeria, His Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Former Governor of Rivers, His Excellency, Chief Barr. Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, His Excellency, Mr Peter Obi, and HRM King Suanu T.Y. Baridam.

Chief Olusegun Obasanjo congratulated Bishop Kukah on his book publication, describing him as a prolific writer, eloquent speaker, clear headed intellectual, and a man of God. He praised Bishop Kukah for his outspoken nature and ability to be trusted and viewed as a humanitarian. He shared his belief that all human disputes can be resolved through dialogue and



emphasised the importance of not leaving issues unaddressed. Governor Nyesom Ezenwo Wike expressed sincere appreciation to Bishop Kukah for his remarkable book and outstanding contributions to peace and reconciliation in Rivers State. He commended the cleric's dedication and emphasised the

book's relevance in fostering a harmonious society and documenting experiences for others to learn. The author, Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, who expressed gratitude to those that supported his assignment, emphasised the significance of storytelling and the collective action in shaping Nigeria's future. According to him, this was one of the reasons that informed his decision to write the book, *Witness to Reconciliation*.

Bishop Kukah Delivers the Keynote Address at the 2023 Presidential Inauguration Lecture: Identities are not a problem; it is how you activate those identities and what you do with them” - Bishop Kukah:

The Founder of The Kukah Centre, Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah has decried the effect of politics of identity in Nigeria, explaining that identities in themselves are not a problem. Bishop Kukah stated this while speaking at the 2023 Presidential Inauguration Lecture which was held on the 28th of May 2023 at the International Conference Centre

(ICC), Abuja. According to Bishop Kukah, with all its complexities and diversities, Nigeria can pursue a common citizenship which de-empathises religion or ethnicity. He therefore called on the government of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to adopt and deploy a leadership strategy that manages Nigeria's diversity well.



Executive Director Attends Conference on “Mobilising Collective Intelligence to Combat and Prevent Extremism and Terrorism in Africa” in Mozambique:



The Executive Director of the Kukah Centre represented the Centre at the International Conference on "Mobilising Collective Intelligence to Combat and Prevent Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Africa." This conference is being held in Maputo, Mozambique from September 27th to 29th, September 2023, at the Montebello Indy Congress Hotel. The main objective of the conference is to provide a platform for various governmental and intergovernmental actors, civil society organisations, grassroots



organisations, and the private sector in Africa to discuss emerging developments related to the threats of Violent Extremism in Africa. It is intended to design Africa driven solutions to these violent threats. Fr. Barkindo's presentation centred on the doctrinal and ideological foundations exploited by violent extremists and terrorists to threaten constitutional democracy, pluralism and the corporate existence of different states in Africa. To contend with this challenge, Fr. Barkindo suggested that religious leaders and scholars have a duty to condemn the exploitation of religious narratives by violent extremists and terrorists. They should provide genuine alternative narratives based on love, tolerance, and progress and work towards re-orienting former associates. The goal should be to unite the silent majority against violence in the name of God, emphasizing shared values and common humanity.

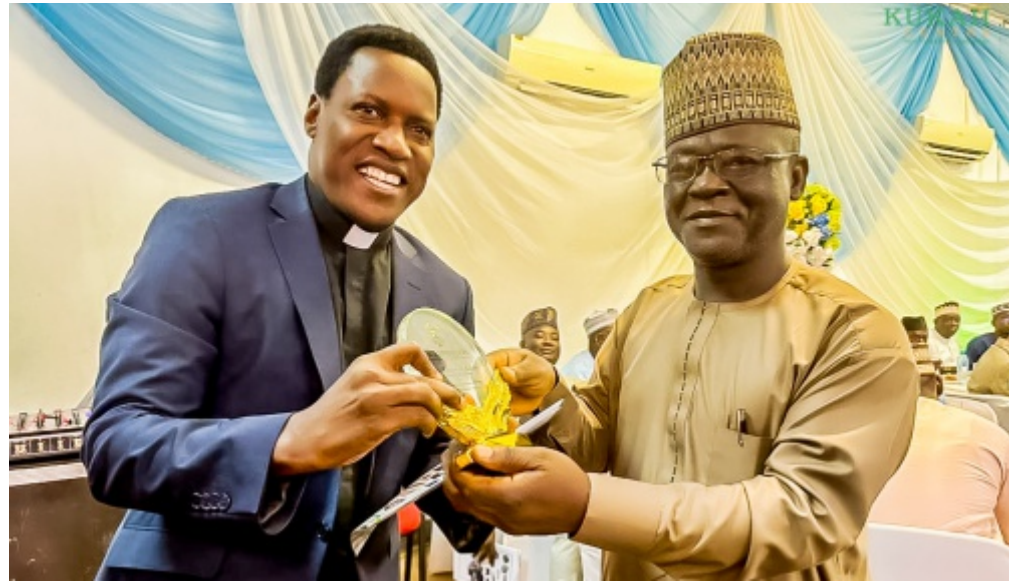
Founder, Bishop Kukah Speaks at the Caux Forum 2023, Presents Latest Book to Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala:



Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, Founder of The Kukah Centre delivered a talk at the 2023 Caux Forum, in Switzerland on the “Role of Civil Society in Upholding Trust and Integrity.” The forum, aimed to inspire and equip individuals, groups and organisations in building a just, peaceful, and sustainable world, was attended by prominent international leaders, including Director General of the World Trade Organisation, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. The forum also provided an opportunity for Bishop Kukah to present his latest book 'Witness to Reconciliation' to Okonjo-Iweala, which explains his mediation role in the reconciliation between the Ogoni-land and the federal government of Nigeria.

The Kukah Centre – National and International Recognition

Bishop Kukah, Gen Abdulsalami, Receive Award as Promoters of Peace in Nigeria



The Founder of The Kukah Centre and Convener of the National Peace Committee, Most Rev Dr Matthew Hassan Kukah, and General Abdulsalami A. Abubakar, GCFR, Chairman of the National Peace Committee have received the prestigious Peace Award for his distinguished role in facilitating peace and promoting unity and stability in Nigeria. Fr. Atta Barkindo, the Executive Director of the Kukah Centre and Head of Secretariat, National

Bishop Kukah and the Kukah Centre Win the 2023 Mundo Negro Fraternity Award:



Peace Committee, received the awards on behalf of Bishop Matthew and Gen. Abdulsalami at an event organized by the esteemed Ph.D. graduates of Peace and Conflict Studies, Course IV, Institute of Governance and Development Studies, Nasarawa State University. The awards underscore the impact of their peace making endeavours in the electoral process which is fostering sustainable peace in Nigeria.



His Lordship, Bishop Matthew Hassan KUKAH, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Sokoto and Founder of the Kukah Centre, has won this Year's Mundo Negro Fraternity Award. The news was conveyed to him through a letter signed

by Fr. Enrique Bayo Mata, a priest of the Comboni Missionaries and Director of the Madrid-based Spanish Magazine, Mundo Negro. According to the letter, Fr. Bayo Mata said that: Every year, the Magazine organises the Encounter with Africa during which the Award is given to a chosen African personality or institution that has been characterised by their contribution to the construction of a better world and a better African continent. The letter further stated that: Our eyes have been opened to the excellent work of the Kukah Centre founded by you. The Award, which carries a Ten Thousand Euros (10, 000 EUR) cash reward, will be formally presented to His Lordship in Madrid on February 3, 2024. The management and staff of The Kukah Centre are honoured and grateful for this wonderful recognition of the significant contributions made by our Founder. The Award will serve as a catalyst for the Centre to promote the values and principles that Bishop Kukah embodies.

“

With a proper understanding of Political Party processes, young men and women with vision can have a clear idea of the imagination and the resources required to form Political Parties.

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, speaking at the Public Presentation of the Needs Assessment of Political Parties in Nigeria.

The Kukah School of Government will be a place for visionary men and women who are ready to make a difference in their communities and country.

The dream is a hub of ideas, political science at its best, social and public policy discourse, a strong foundation for Nigerian policy makers.

Will you support the dream?

ACCOUNT NAME: Kukah Centre for Faith & Leadership Research	ACCOUNT No. 1020872486	ACCOUNT NAME: United Bank For Africa (Naira)
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THE KUKAH CENTRE
Faith • Leadership • Governance



▪ Accommodation



▪ Art Gallery



▪ Murtala Garden

Summary of 2023 Financial Inflow

S/N	DONORS	US Dollars (\$)
1	Open Society Africa (osf)	299,990.00
2	Profuturo	27,906.79
3	Macarthur Foundation	99,990.00
Total		\$ 427,886.79

S/N	DONORS	Euros €
1.	European Union (EU) – National Peace Committee Secretariat	486,724.66
2.	European Union (EU) – The Kukah Centre	512,952.49
3.	Swiss Federal Department For Foreign Affairs	289,990.00
Total		€ 1,289,667.15

S/N	DONORS	Pounds (GBP) £
1.	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)	484,418.00
2.	Global Rights	24,281.47
Total		£ 508,699.47

S/N	DONORS	Naira (NGN)
1.	The Fountain of Life Church	6,862,450.00
2.	Global Rights	36,618,477.50
Total		N 43,480,927.50

Appreciation

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our donors, partners, supporters, and network of friends across Nigeria for their unwavering support and collaboration. With you we share common vision of ensuring that the voices of ordinary people play significant role in promoting peace and good governance in Nigeria. In the year 2023, we were able to embark on transformative initiatives that echo our commitment to democracy, peace, education, and social justice.

The collective impact of our endeavours is evident in the strides made towards enhancing fair political processes, fostering peace, empowering communities through education, and addressing critical issues such as violence against women, men, boys, and girls. The successful implementation of projects, from promoting social recovery for victims of violence, providing alternatives for out of school children, supporting political parties, strengthening the capacity of religious leaders and critical stakeholders, to deploying strategies for access to justice, underscores the dedication and collaborative spirit of our partners.

The outcomes achieved, such as the creation of a national policy framework for preventing gender-based violence, signing of peace accords for the presidential candidates in the 2023 general elections, the report on the needs assessment of political parties, the ProFuturo digital education program

reaching vulnerable communities, the provision of scholarships for orphans, building social cohesion in conflict infested communities, countering fake news and the abuse of the digital space, all stand as testaments to the positive change that can be realised through shared efforts.

We express our gratitude to the Founder, Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, for his doggedness and consistency in shaping public policy. We thank the Chairman of the National Peace Committee (NPC), His Excellency, General Abdulsalami A. Abubakar, GCFR, and all the members of the NPC, for the tremendous task of providing a moral compass in terms of peaceful elections in Nigeria. We appreciate each partner, donor, and supporter for being an integral part of The Kukah Centre's journey. We thank all the members of staff at the Kukah Centre. Your belief in our vision has fuelled the impact we've achieved, and we look forward to continuing this meaningful dedication and commitment for a brighter future.



Rev. Fr. Atta Barkindo, PhD
Executive Director of The Kukah Centre &
Head of Secretariat, National Peace Committee



BE A PART OF
THE KUKAH CENTRE
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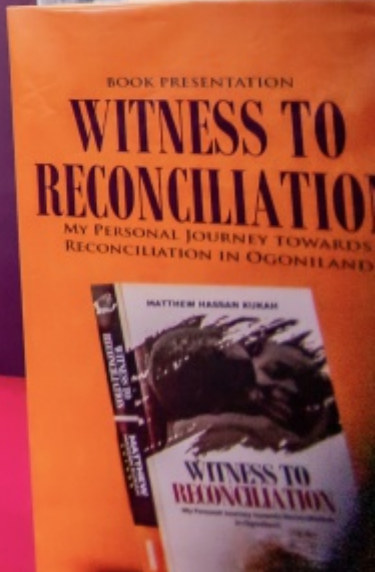
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2023 Annual Report



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