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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Launched in March 2012, the African Peacebuilding Network (APN) supports independent African research on conflict-affected countries and neighboring regions of the continent, as well as the integration of high-quality African research-based knowledge into global policy communities. In order to advance African debates on peacebuilding and promote African perspectives, the APN offers competitive research grants and fellowships, and it funds other forms of targeted support, including strategy meetings, seminars, grantee workshops, commissioned studies, and the publication and dissemination of research findings. In doing so, the APN also promotes the visibility of African peacebuilding knowledge among global and regional centers of scholarly analysis and practical action and makes it accessible to key policymakers at the United Nations and other multilateral, regional, and national policymaking institutions.

ABOUT THE SERIES

“African solutions to African problems” is a favorite mantra of the African Union, but since the 2002 establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the continent has continued to face political, material, and knowledge-related challenges to building sustainable peace. Peacebuilding in Africa has sometimes been characterized by interventions by international actors who lack the local knowledge and lived experience needed to fully address complex conflict-related issues on the continent. And researchers living and working in Africa need additional resources and platforms to shape global debates on peacebuilding as well as influence regional and international policy and practitioner audiences. The APN Working Papers series seeks to address these knowledge gaps and needs by publishing independent research that provides critical overviews and reflections on the state of the field, stimulates new thinking on overlooked or emerging areas of African peacebuilding, and engages scholarly and policy communities with a vested interest in building peace on the continent.
Introduction

Nigeria is one of a few African countries where religion has largely been associated with conflict. The dominance of the two major Abrahamic religions—Islam and Christianity—on each side of the divide has made religion one of the more potent factors in the contention for political, economic, and identity spaces in the country. Although the use of religion for identity construction, power legitimization, and economic achievement characterized the colonial and immediate post-colonial period, it was not until the late 1970s that religion became highly disruptive, with the onset of religious violence into the country. While these eruptions appeared to be restricted to the core northern cities, the re-democratization process associated with the post-Cold War period generated new tensions as politicians mobilized group identities for contested positions. Thus, other northern Nigerian cities that were hitherto known for peace became susceptible to violence. It was in the wake of this development that Plateau and Kaduna states became the epicenter of violent clashes of a religious nature. Various strategies have been adopted by both governmental and non-governmental bodies to address these conflicts. While some of them have been successful interventions, others have failed to stem the tide of conflict. Can religion, which is
claimed to be a factor in these conflicts, become part of the solution? The current study seeks to identify the role(s) of faith-based actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Plateau and Kaduna States of Northern Nigeria between 2000 and 2015. The aim is to explain the conditions that have accounted for the success or failure of their intervention.

Beginning with Johnston and Sampson, who identified religion as a missing dimension in statecraft, various authors have highlighted numerous ways through which religious actors can have a positive influence on the peace process. According to Johnston and Sampson and Appleby, religious actors are better positioned than politicians to reach out to local and regional actors. This is because they are often believed to be in possession of moral and emotional qualifications as well as professional approaches that command the respect and confidence of the parties to a conflict. In his study of religious actors in peace process, Weingardt believes that while all actors involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding ideally have these qualities, they are more common with religious actors. He further explained the three dimensions of the confidence and trust which faith-based actors enjoy from the conflict parties. The existence of religious thinking in all cultures can be used to justify the call for peace and non-violence. Religious actors are often seen as those who go beyond mere resolution of conflict to address issues of morality, reconciliation, forgiveness, and responsibility, which underlie conflict resolution and are often perceived as those motivated by selfless interest. Though these may be at the level of perception rather than reality, Weingardt is of the opinion that such perceptions are informed by the respect generally accorded to religion and religious values. The importance of legitimacy and leverage was equally underscored by Aroua and Bercovitch and Kadayici-Orellana, who assert that religious leaders with deep understanding of religious beliefs and ideals are better placed to promote inter-religious dialogue by transferring codes from one value system to the other. In some cases, their influence over conflicting parties, or at least one of them, may become the basis for opening a communication channel.

Other scholars further emphasize the role of religious organizations in promoting peace. According to Smock, they are very effective in delivering aid and development projects, which is considered an important aspect of the peace process. Their effectiveness, as observed by Bouta, Kadayici-Orellana and Abu-Nimer derives not only from the trust and confidence they command, but also because faith communities are less expensive, hav-
ing with them, in most cases, a network of volunteers who may not just be committed but who are also ready to make enormous sacrifices informed by their religious beliefs and values.\(^8\) Although aid and development are at the pragmatic level, they help immeasurably in addressing the root causes of conflict.\(^9\) In addition to what religious actors can do, available literature points to several conflicts that have been mediated by faith-based actors. Among the outstanding cases are: the successful mediation in Mozambique by the Rome-based Community of Saint Egido, which helped to end the country’s civil war; and the Lome Peace Agreement of 1999 through the instrumentality of the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone; (2001).\(^10\) There have also been cases where mediation by religious organizations in peace processes was not successful. For example, Saint Egido failed in its effort to resolve the conflicts in Algeria, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.\(^11\) Religious leaders in Liberia were unsuccessful in their attempts to intervene in the country’s first civil war.\(^12\) In the widespread protests and riots that followed the cartoon published by a Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten, seen as depicting Prophet Mohammed as a terrorist in 2005, an attempt by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to initiate interreligious dialogue in Maiduguri also failed.

Despite ever-growing interest in the field of faith-based actors in peacebuilding, one crucial question has remained unanswered: under which conditions can religion contribute to peace? Bercovitch has called attention to the need to go beyond the discussion of what success in conflict intervention means or may mean to understand the factors that could potentially contribute to such success. This view was re-echoed by Susan Hayward, who noted that “there is a pressing need for greater monitoring and evaluation of religious peacebuilding work...to understand better which interventions led by whom, and in which situation have the greater effect.”\(^13\) The need to establish the constructive role of religion in the peace process has become crucial in the present era, when those involved in the negotiation and peacebuilding processes continue to marginalize religious actors, often considering them to have no constructive role.\(^14\) This study is located within this existing scholarship. It uses data from field-based primary sources in qualitative research - in-depth interview (IDI), Focused Group Discussion (FGD), official documents and extant secondary source materials, to explore the conditions that explain the successful or failed interventions of faith-based actors in three outstanding conflicts in Plateau and Kaduna States namely: the Jos and Yelwa conflicts in Plateau State and the Kaduna conflict in Kaduna State between 2000 and 2015.
Conceptual Framework

The concept of ‘conflict resolution’ is informed by the two broad understandings of conflict. Conflict, as defined by Niklas L. P. Swanstrom and Mikael S. Weissman, is the result of incompatibility or perceived incompatibility in human relationships, which must be dealt with to give room for peace. Underlying this view is the notion that the root of any conflict can be traced, identified and removed in order for conflict to be resolved. Conflict resolution from this background refers to the resolution of underlying incompatibilities in a conflict which leads to mutual acceptance of each party by the other. According to Maill, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, conflict resolution is an attempt to resolve conflict by dealing with the root causes of the conflict such that parties’ behavior will no longer be violent. The central argument here is that conflict is a short-term phenomenon that is capable of being completely resolved. The second idea of conflict holds that conflict is the perceived difference(s) in issues or positions between two or more people which characterize human relations. For the proponents of this idea, conflict is part and parcel of human existence and relationships, which cannot be rooted out completely, but which can be managed progressively to make for peace. In this case, conflict resolution is geared towards reducing the destructive tendencies of a conflict more than with dealing with the root of the problem. Mediation appears to be the most common method of managing conflict; this is a method of conflict resolution in which a third party helps to mitigate the conflict by advocating for negotiation, facilitating negotiation, or by taking an active part in finding solutions to the conflict. This study is focusing on the mediative role of faith-based actors in the study area.

Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined peacebuilding as an “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict.” In his supplement for the Agenda for Peace, Boutros-Ghali identified the essentials of peacebuilding as “the creation of structures for institutionalization of peace.” Though there can be a pre-conflict phase, peacebuilding is seen more as a post-conflict endeavor that is geared toward the normalization of relationships or creation of harmonious interactions between the parties that were previously in conflict. Generally, there are three dimensions of post-conflict peacebuilding, namely, creation of stability; restoration of state or community institutions; and addressing the so-
cio-economic dimension of conflict. This is in line with what Boutros-Ghali referred to as the early and medium-term recovery, and the transition to development. At the first and second stage, key institutions that are needed to stabilize the community are restored after the incentive for continuing the war have been reduced; at the third stage, trauma counseling, transitional justice and reconciliation, community dialogue, strengthening civil society organizations, building bridges, and promoting economic development and social well-being underlie peacebuilding efforts.

### Successful Mediation and Peacebuilding

There are three major approaches to understanding successful mediation. Success can be achieved at the process and outcome phases of an intervention. At the process level, success is referred to as what transpired during interventions, i.e., the output of the intervention. Success as outcome implies what is achieved at the end of a mediation process. Thus, success can be achieved if the parties, despite disagreements at the process level, are positively affected or empowered by the outcome of a mediation process. It can equally be realized when the parties and mediator feel that the process of a mediation is successful, even though no positive outcome occurred. Satisfaction, fairness, effectiveness, and efficiency are identified as four major attributes of successful mediation processes or outcomes. Success or failure in mediation can equally be understood using d’Estree et al.’s simple analysis of agreement and outcome of an intervention and their impact on the conflict being handled. A successful intervention occurs when the destructive aspect of a conflict is reduced or removed (settlement). In this case, the conflict is not resolved, but its negative effect is neutralized through a ceasefire, an agreement, or any other form of settlement that does not necessarily imply a permanent end to the conflict. In the same vein, mediation is termed successful when the root causes of conflict are addressed in such a way that the threat of further conflict is forestalled (resolution). Here, settlement becomes a half-measured success incapable of forestalling future conflict occurrences. Settlement and resolution can equally be viewed as short and long-term outcomes, or what Church and Shouldice refer to as outcome and impact. Here, settlement becomes an immediate result of a conflict resolution process while resolution is a long-term outcome. Finally, success can be measured by the goals and expectations of an intervention. Where an intervention is meant to reduce the destructive effect of a conflict or to prevent conflict from escalating, a settlement is seen as a full success, even though the root causes of the con-
Conflict might not have been addressed. In the same way, where the goal of the mediator is to help in opening up a communication channel, the endeavor is recorded as successful despite the fact that the parties may not reach a negotiated settlement.

Defining success in peacebuilding is one of the major challenges facing the field today. Its multi-dimensional approaches imply that peacebuilding is a dynamic and complex process involving many activities and actors who seek to bring about change as perceived by them. Thus, while Lederach conceives successful peacebuilding as dynamic and adaptive processes and structures that transform potential violent conflict into constructive social change, Smith sees success in peacebuilding as peaceful, stable, and prosperous social and economic change. Craig Cohen, using the theory of change, argues that peacebuilding is successful when it involves those actions that reduce violence and build local initiatives. Since the aim of peacebuilding is to make an impact, change is an important factor in the evaluation of its success. From whichever way it is carried out, a peacebuilding activity is successful when it pushes beyond its initial entry point; i.e., when the peacebuilding project has had a positive impact on the people or the community. For example, a problem-solving workshop or a dialogue is successful when the participants change their behavior through the new knowledge and skills acquired. More success is recorded if new behavior generates new relationships and structures that promote peace. From the transfer and linkage formula, successful peacebuilding is recorded when it moves from its initial entry point to another level of positive change which can be personal, relational, structural, or cultural. While change may not be noticeable at the level of project implementation (process level), the “intermediaries” can also be conceptualized as successful. Peacebuilding initiatives are in some cases rejected by either, or both parties. Sometimes, project implementations may be obstructed by certain unforeseen developments. A problem-solving workshop which involves less than 30 per cent of the targeted population may be regarded as a failed initiative. Although the intermediary stage may or may not lead to peace as Campbell argues, success is achievable at this stage as well.

Determinants of Successful Mediation

Numerous factors have been identified as possible determinants of the success of mediation. These variables can be subsumed under the contingency model. The contingency theory assumes that successful mediation is con-
tingent upon the context in which it is undertaken as well as the process adopted by the mediator Bercovitch and Langley (1993). Context here refers to systemic variables, which in most cases determine the extent to which the mediator can maneuver in a given circumstance before the commencement of the mediation process. Among these variables are the nature of the conflict, conflict parties, and the mediator. Within the context of the nature of conflict, concepts such as timing, ripeness, and conflict issues are very crucial in determining the outcome of mediation. Timing emphasizes the need to undertake actions in a certain sequence. Advocates of early intervention are of the view that an intervention is more likely to succeed when it is undertaken upon the outbreak of hostilities. However, in their earlier study, they postulated that mediation succeeds more often when the belligerents have undergone a test of their strength. Similarly, ripeness has to do with a set of circumstances needed for a conflict to be amenable for resolution. Using Zartman’s mutually hurting stalemate’s model, mediation succeeds when parties have reached a hurting stalemate in which neither of them could actualize its objective by continuing the war. Based on the rational actor’s framework, this model assumes that actors finding themselves in a dangerous and pain-producing situation will seek for a better alternative. Issues in conflict are also factored into mediation success. Mediation that deals with tangible issues such as territories and security is more likely to be successful than mediation that addresses issues of ideology. Ideological and moral issues, religious beliefs, and values are perceived to be rigid and difficult to resolve because they are based on assumptions that cannot be proved right or wrong. Another contextual variable upon which successful mediation may be achieved is the nature of the parties and their relationship. The level of cohesiveness between a party’s representative and his constituency will influence the outcome of mediation. Cohesiveness here implies the relationship between the party in a negotiation process and the constituency being represented. While leaders with a high level of legitimacy may compromise during negotiation without minding their ideology, representatives in negotiation usually need ratification of the agreement by their constituencies. Thus, successful mediation may be contingent on the ability of the party’s representative to reach an agreement that is acceptable to all.

Contingency theory considers the nature of mediators as a crucial factor in mediation success. The mediators’ power and leverage, perceived impartiality, and status have been identified as important prerequisites for success. Power, as Zartman and Touval argue, is the ability of the mediator
to move a party to its intended direction. The more powerful a mediator is, the more he or she can use available resources to change the parties’ attitudes and perceptions. Contention over the usefulness of impartiality has produced multiple perceptions of its role in successful mediation. While Andrew Kydd is of the view that mediation by the nature of its definition should exhibit some form of impartiality, Burcu Savun, Alistair Smith and Allan Stam argue against impartiality, noting that it is not necessarily a prerequisite for mediation and can even work against it.

In what appears to be a reconciliation of the two opposing views, Honeyman contends that both biased and impartial mediators can all be effective, although the likelihood of a better performance rests with an unbiased mediator.

The mediator’s status is equally emphasized in literature. Status here has to do with the mediator’s knowledge of the conflict, formal rank in his organization, expertise, and so on. The mediator’s status authenticates his or her credibility to the parties, not only for easy acceptance by the parties, but also for their cooperation.

Success in mediation is achieved based on adopted procedure. The choice of a mediation strategy is informed by the objectives of the mediation process. Among the most common underlying objectives of mediation are: changing the perception of what is at stake on both sides of the conflict; changing the physical environment; and changing the motivation behind the disputants’ desire for settlement.

To achieve any or all of these, a mediator may adopt any of these three strategies: facilitative, manipulative, and formulative, as identified by Tourval and Zartman.

Finally, the success of mediation depends on how secret or open a mediation process is. A secret negotiation process provides the mediator with the opportunity to deny his or her participation in the negotiation in the event of its failure. However, highly secretive mediation may be considered undemocratic and may lead to shoddy deals. On the other hand, too much publicity regarding the mediation process may draw the parties into addressing the public rather than each other and can equally make for difficult bargaining. Thus, for mediation to be successful, the process needs to fall somewhere between the private and the public.

For the purpose of this study, the narrow concept of conflict resolution is adopted to give room for the assessment of both short and long-term outcome. Basically, the goals of religious actors as well as the transfer and linkage formula at both the process and outcome levels will be used to
determine successful or failed mediation and peacebuilding respectively. Thus, success and failure are measured in terms of the output, short and long-term outcome. Success and failures of faith-based actors in mediation will be explained in the light of contingency theory. However, the use of this theory in this study is not restrictive as other identified factors were equally explained outside the theory most especially in relation to peacebuilding.

The Research Context

Historicizing Conflicts in Plateau and Kaduna

For a better analysis of the role of faith-based actors in conflict resolution and peace-building in Plateau and Kaduna States, especially in understanding the factors behind their successes and failures, it is important to understand the nature and development of these conflicts. Based on this, this segment of the paper is devoted to a brief historical development of the Jos and the Yelwa conflicts in Plateau State and the Kaduna conflict in Kaduna State.

Located in the North Central Zone of Nigeria, Jos is the capital of present-day Plateau State of Nigeria. It is made up of five local governments, of which Jos North is the epicenter of economic and political activities. Although it is a cosmopolitan city with virtually all the major ethnic groups in Nigeria heavily represented, Jos North is generally taken to be the ancestral home of the Berom (in majority), the Afizere and the Anaguta ethnic groups—known collectively as indigenes. There is also the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group whose presence, like that of the Igbo, Yoruba, and Urhobo, dates back mainly to the colonial period. While violent clashes between the Hausa-Fulani, who are regarded as settlers, and the indigenous ethnic groups began in April 1994, the conflict is situated in the age-old struggle for the ownership of Jos between the two groups.

Pre-colonial Jos harbored native Berom, Afizere, and Anaguta people. Irrespective of the presence of a small pocket of Hausa traders in the Naraguta outskirt of Jos on the eve of the colonial period, the bulk of the Hausa-Fulani settlers moved to Jos following the opening of tin mines by the colonial government. By way of colonial administrative expediency, Jos was placed under the Bauchi Emirate. A review of this policy in 1926 did not totally terminate the Bauchi influence on Jos, as could be seen by the emir of Bauchi’s appointment of the Hausa-Fulani ruler of the Jos section, which
was occupied mainly by the Hausa-Fulani and which later became the colo-
nial Native Town. Following agitation by the Berom, the Jos Native Authority
was handed over to them by the colonial government in 1947. This was an
unwelcome development for the Hausa-Fulani, who demanded for a policy
reversal without success.

The creation of the Jos North Local Government Area in 1991 by the gov-
ernment of General Ibrahim Babangida, which appeared to be a reversal of
the 1947 status quo, propelled the conflict into a violent phase. The new
local government did not only leave the bulk of the indigenous groups in
the less-developed Jos South Local Government Area, but also isolated the
King of Jos, a Berom, from his people. To remain in Jos North, which was
dominated by the Hausa-Fulani, implied a loss of his power. To leave his
seat of government for Jos South by implication meant a loss of Jos to the
settlers. Hence, the struggle for the ownership of Jos assumed a political
dimension manifesting at every of political elections particularly at the Lo-
cal Government level. Standing on the indigene- clause enshrined in the
Nigerian constitution, the indigenous groups maintained that political po-
sitions in Jos were to be occupied by them and not the settlers. Hence, the
appointment of a Hausa-Fulani man, Alhaji Mato, as the chairman of the
Caretaker Committee of Jos North Local Government in 1994 by the then
Plateau State Military Government led to the first violent clash between the
two groups, as protests and threats from the indigenous groups forestalled
the handover of power to Mato. Such resistance to the Hausa-Fulani’s oc-
cupation of political office was sustained up to 2001, when the seething in-
ter-ethnic tensions degenerated into a major clash in the city. The Septem-
ber 2001 crisis began when a Berom lady, Rhoda Nyang, who was passing
through a roadblock mounted for the Jumm`at prayer was assaulted by a
group of Muslim boys in the “Congo-Russia” section of Jos. This developed
into a crisis that spread to other parts of the city and beyond, leaving the
area completely devastated. As in the 1994 crisis, one of the major anteced-
ents to the 2001 crisis was the appointment of Alhaji Usman Mohammad, a
Hausa-Fulani man, as the co-coordinator of the National Poverty Eradica-
tion Programme (NAPEP) in Jos North. The indigenes decried the appoint-
ment through protest letters. Threats and counter-threats were issued by
each party to the conflict. Taking all this into account, it was obvious that
a state of anarchy was imminent. The manhandling of Rhoda sparked off
what was already an impending crisis. One unique feature of the 2001 crisis
was that it led to reprisal attacks in some other parts of Plateau State and
beyond. Another important development stemming from the crisis was a
re-configuration of the city of Jos. Most Christians relocated their homes to places such as Apata, Rukuba Road, and some other areas where there was no Muslim presence. Similarly, the Muslims occupied places such as Ali Kazaure, Angwan Rogo, Sarkin Mangu, etc. that had little or no Christian presence. This division and re-composition of the city into identity-based enclaves magnified the significance of religion and explained the geography of in subsequent urban conflicts.

From 2001 onwards, Jos and its environs became the epicenter of violent clashes between Christians and Muslims. Other episodes of major eruption since then include: a 2002 Christian-Muslim clash over the election of a PDP ward leader in Etobaba; the 2008 election violence which was fought along religious lines; the 2010 clash between Christian and Muslim youths over a move to rebuild a burnt house; and the 2011 clash in Gada Biya and Rukuba Road between Christian and Muslim youths over the decision of the Izala Muslim sect to perform Ed al Fitri in an old mosque at Rukuba Road. Other minor skirmishes took place along Bauchi Road, Angwan Rukuba area, Dilimi, and so forth. The bombing of the Christian area of Gada Biya in 2010 added another dimension to the religious aspect of the conflict.

Another major eruption in the Plateau region took place in Yelwa in 2002 and 2004. Located in the Shendam local government area of Plateau State, Yelwa was inhabited by the Goemai ethnic group of Plateau and also by the Jarawa. As in Jos, both groups claimed ownership of Yelwa. The Jaara- wa, a predominantly Muslim community supported by other Muslim groups such as the Hausa-Fulani, Boghom, and Pyem in Yelwa and its surroundings, claimed ownership of the traditional political administration of the town. Arguing that they have always lived in the town independent of any other group, they blamed the British for the subordination of Yelwa to the Shendam District. Dismissing this claim, the Goemai, backed by other Christian ethnic groups in Yelwa and its surroundings, particularly the Taroh and Sayawa, maintained that the Jarawa were settlers who had moved from Bauchi. Hence, there was no basis on which they could claim Yelwa traditional authority.

While this was the basis of the Yelwa conflict, there were some other factors that fanned its embers. Among them were: a political crisis manifested in the attempt by the two groups to manipulate the 2002 ward chairmanship election; frustration of the Jarawa’s quest for the creation of a separate district; cattle rustling; ethno-religious divisions and the Jos 2001 crisis.
sudden release of the Tarok traditional masquerade on the night of June 26, 2002 sparked off another round of violence that engulfed the town, resulting in killings and destruction across the religious divide. The 2002 violence was followed by the February 2004 killings of forty-seven Christians in a church by a group of unidentified mercenaries. Since the February attack appeared to have been masterminded by Muslims, a reprisal organized by Christians in May 2004 claimed more than six hundred Muslim lives. It was this development that led to the declaration of a State of Emergency in the Plateau State by the then President Obasanjo.

Like Jos, the present-day Kaduna State was occupied by the old Zaria Emirate Province. Aside from a few independent chiefdoms, the non-Hausa-Fulani people were reportedly subjected to all forms of domination. There have been age-long agitations and increased opposition against perceived Hausa-Fulani economic and political domination. While such agitation led to violent encounters in 1946 and 1966 (Zuberu 2009), further politicization of religion under military rule heightened the rate of violent clashes in the state. Although these eruptions were suppressed by the military, the transition to democracy threw open a new wave of violent encounters between the two groups in Kaduna city.

As a sequel to re-democratization, some states in northern Nigeria adopted Sharia Islamic Law. This generated tensions between Christians and Muslims in the north. The plan of the Kaduna State House of Assembly to pass the Sharia Bill into law was resisted by an initially peaceful Christian mass protest in February 2000, which later degenerated into a bloody clash between Christian and Muslim youths in the city. From Kaduna city, the crisis spilled over to Kachia and Birnin Gwani in Kaduna State, where unemployed youth and hoodlums looted and destroyed shops and residential houses. As in Jos, one of the major consequences of this conflict was the partition of Kaduna city in such a way that a section was solely inhabited by Muslims and the other by Christians. Since the 2000 Sharia Riots, Kaduna city has witnessed some other major eruptions of an ethno-religious character. These were: the second Sharia crisis which occurred in May 2000 following the murder of a Christian woman purportedly to have defied Sharia Law in a Muslim-dominated community; the 2002 Miss World crisis, generated by protests against a write-up by a fashion journalist, Isioma Daniel of This Day newspaper, which protesters claimed had blasphemed against Prophet Mohammed; and the post-election violence of 2011. All these clashes assumed an ethno-religious dimension, leading to heavy casualties on both sides of
the ethnic and religious divide.

Beginning in 2000, a number of measures were adopted by various groups to address these conflicts.\textsuperscript{59} The relative peace in Jos particularly in recent times has been attributed to such measures.\textsuperscript{60} Similarly, the fragile peace in Kaduna amid tension and urban polarization has been credited to a series of moves made by individuals and groups in the quest for peace in the state.\textsuperscript{61} Among the groups that have been at the forefront of peacebuilding activities/programs in these areas were faith-based actors. Unfortunately, their involvement, especially their post-conflict activities, has been barely studied or analyzed.\textsuperscript{62} Literature on conflict in these two states has paid more attention to the role of the state and security agencies, analysis of the conflict situation, causes and effects of conflict, conflict dynamics and trends, and institutional factors and the inability of the authorities to address the conflict.\textsuperscript{63} This study highlights the major activities of faith-based actors in these states’s vis-à-vis conflict resolution and peacebuilding between 2000 and 2015. It also proffers explanations for the success of both their short- and long-term attempts at peacebuilding.

**Faith-based Actors in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding**

Though the conflicts in this study area appeared to be of a complex nature, their entanglement with religion as well as their destructive nature has informed the increasing involvement of faith-based actors in the search for peace.\textsuperscript{64} Initial involvement of these actors centered on the humanitarian needs of the victims, especially displaced persons. Relief items were sent to these victims to alleviate their sufferings. For instance, Jama’atu Izalatil Bid’ah Wa’qamatis Sunnah (JIBWIS) provided relief to more than one thousand victims of the 2001 Jos violence. Items such as rice, beans, blankets, mats, and cooking oil were distributed at satellite mosques located in Gango, Rikkos, Angwan Rogo, Dilimi, and some other areas of high Muslim concentration.\textsuperscript{65} Jama’au Nasril Islam (JNI) in conjunction with Rahaml-Is-lam Wal Hajj, another Islamic organization, distributed women’s wrappers (garments) and other apparels to about four hundred persons from the Muslim communities.\textsuperscript{66} Similarly, the Justice and Peace Development Commission (JDPC) of the Catholic Archdioceses of Jos and Kaduna organized a fund for the victims during the 2000, 2001, and 2002 crises.\textsuperscript{67} To improve coordination, JDPC formed the Emergency Preparedness and Response Team (EPRT), through which it responded to subsequent emergency situations in the states. Also, Bishop Kaigama provided shelter and food to a host of Mus-
lims who took refuge in his house upon the outbreak of the 2001 violence in Jos. In addition to provisions of relief, victims were resettled in various places through provision of new houses and reconstruction of destroyed ones. The resettlement of Muslim internally displaced persons (IDPs) was conducted by JNI, which assisted close to one hundred and ninety victims to move back to their houses in places such as Dutse Uku, Tudun Wada, and Rikkos. Resettlement of the IDPs was carried out by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and JDPC in Kaduna and Jos after the 2000 and 2001 crises respectively. Except on a few occasions such as in the case of Jenta, where Bishop Kaigama provided both food and shelter to Muslim groups, emergency responses were tailored along religious lines in the early phase. Starting in 2004, interfaith relief assistance began to receive more attention. By the end of the period of this research, inter-faith relief distribution and other assistance has become almost a norm in the study area.

In addition to relief measures, mediation featured prominently from 2002 on as a strategy of conflict resolution by faith-based actors. The increased level of volatility of the region called for proactive measures to address the drivers of the conflicts. About six outstanding mediation attempts were identified between 2002 and 2005. While some of them yielded positive fruits, as can be seen in the table below, others were only partially successful.

**Conflict Resolution through Mediation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Short term outcomes</th>
<th>Long term outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<th>2001-2002</th>
<th>Mediation</th>
<th>Kaduna</th>
<th>Inter Faith Mediation Center (IMC)</th>
<th>To get stakeholders from the two sides of the divide to declare their commitment to peace in Kaduna and through this put an end to violent eruption in the city</th>
<th>22 persons (11 from each group) targeted were all present</th>
<th>Kaduna Peace Declaration in 2002 which was based on the Alexandria Declaration for peace in the Holy land</th>
<th>Intermittent/fragile peace, tensions and city polarization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>Facilitative mediation</td>
<td>Jos</td>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>To bring the two groups together for a reconciliatory meeting</td>
<td>Hausa-Fulani Muslims in poor attendance, Absence of opinion leaders.</td>
<td>No outstanding outcome recorded</td>
<td>Not identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>Jos</td>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>To find a solution to the Jos conflict by bringing the two sides together at various levels for meaningful discussion</td>
<td>Opinion leaders of the indigenous group in poor attendance. About 60% of the youth responded. Harmonized the position of the youth in a signed document but failed to reach concrete agreement. Not identified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Facilitation/mediation</td>
<td>Jos and other conflicts in Plateau</td>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>To find solution to persistent conflicts in Plateau state</td>
<td>Poor attendance of the Hausa-Fulani Plateau Peace Accord produced and signed though without the major Hausa-Fulani stake holders. Short-lived peace. Failed to forestall future violence in Jos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Facilitation/mediation</td>
<td>Yelwah Shendan Bishop Kaigama and the Emir of Wase</td>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>To open up a channel of communication for the parties in the conflict by bringing the stake holders together to discuss the issues in the conflict</td>
<td>85% of the expected participants turned out. Made some suggestions; Peace affirmation, and acceptance of the Long Goemai (Chief of Goemai) as the traditional authority of Yelwa by Muslims and Christians. Relative peace in Yelwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>Yelwah Shendan</td>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>To bring various factions: together to address the conflict issues and find a workable mode of living together in Yelwa</td>
<td>All the expected group were represented through their leaders in the five days of sharing and negotiation. A joint peace affirmation signed by all the participants on the 19th of February 2005 after the two groups had willingly apologized to each other. Relative peace in Yelwa</td>
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Experience from mediation and a deeper understanding of conflicts in the two states informed the increased use of workshops to build the capacity of community-based organizations and other local actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding mechanisms. As rightly observed by Ndukwe, workshops became important tools for bringing parties and stakeholders together for interactions which prepared grounds for fruitful peacebuilding outcomes. Prominent among subjects of these workshops were capacity-building, training the trainers, problem solving, and a host of other subjects. The JDPC, for example, organized a series of workshops on early warning signals after the 2008 crisis in Jos. Convening about thirty people from each of the seventeen L.G.A. in Plateau State, the workshop helped to build trust among participants who were hitherto suspicious of one another based on religious differences. Since the end of the program, early warning reports have been received in JDPC offices by officials who, upon verifications, forwarded them to security agencies. Through this program, over 6,000 people were reportedly trained on how to mitigate and de-escalate conflict, as well as recognize early warning signs. Records of such workshops were also found with other faith-based organizations such as Dialogue, Reconciliation and Peace Center (DREP), JNI, Alfacare, Women Interfaith Council (WIC) and many others. Among them were a three-day response mechanism workshop organized by JNI in Jos North in conjunction with CAN in 2005, and a one-day workshop on Conflict Analysis and Transformation by WIC in 2012 and 2013. Earlier in 2011, various stakeholders were invited by the organization to participate in a workshop on UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Records of capacity-building workshops on non-violent communication, conflict mitigation, and peacebuilding in the entire LGA of Kaduna city between 2004 and 2012 indicate sponsorship by Alfacare. Pastor Moye also claimed that IMC has facilitated more than 200 of such workshops since 2005. One outstanding feature of these workshops was most of them centered on community-based or grassroots organizations, exposing their members to all forms of strategies needed for successful interventions in their communities. In some cases, particularly in post-conflict situations, members of these organizations were given opportunities to design plans listing what they needed to do in their communities to restore peace.

Regarding how these workshops have promoted peace, a majority of the participants claimed that the workshops they have benefited from have helped them to gain better understanding of the need for peace and have
contributed towards nurturing a culture of peace in their communities. James Nuralhaqu and Sam Bala believed that their participation in workshops and other peace projects which involved empowering communities with skills in conflict transformation and early warning response also empowered them. According to Sam Bala,

“On our return from Kaduna, we played an active role in peacebuilding at the lower level by forming peace missionaries and networks at the grassroots, and through this we educated our youth on popularized shared values, shared cultures and traditions, multicultural appreciation, and political awareness.”

Similarly, from their exposure to crisis management through some of these workshops, the youth of Nasarawa and Congo Russia in 2009 in Jos North were able to handle a development that might have metamorphosed into another round of killings in Jos. Reacting from a totally different perspective, Roselyn Joje argued that the organizers of most of these workshops were driven by the desire to acquire wealth under the pretext of peacebuilding. Expressing a similar view, Ibrahim Abu-bakar described some of the workshops and peace conferences he attended as “talk show jamboree where elders and youth talk and get their kickbacks or allowances for attending.” Arguably, while some workshops may have their downsides as identified by some of the participants, there is no doubt that they largely contributed towards creating a culture of peace in the study area.

In virtually all the eruptions of violence in Plateau and Kaduna between 2000 and 2015, the youth conspicuously featured as agents of violence. As the unyielding demand for dividends of democracy were prolonged, the tendency of the unemployed youth and hoodlums to give in to violence burgeoned. In response to this development, emphasis was placed on the establishment of skill acquisition centers where youth could be trained. Skill acquisition centers double their functions when youth from various factions are brought together to live and work as a team. A case point is the Interfaith Vocational Training Center, Bokkos, Plateau state. Speaking about Center’s goals, its founder, Archbishop Kaigama noted it was not only meant for youth who were educationally disadvantaged, but was also to be a place for “offering opportunities to Christian and Muslim youth to live side by side, overcoming little obstacles and prejudices and getting a better perspective of each other’s religion.” The center, in addition to provision of skills, was meant to dispel the darkness of fear, distrust, suspicion, and hatred between Muslim and Christian youth. Commenting on interfaith interaction in the center,
some of the trainees noted that they follow their own religious practices as Muslims and Christians. On how the center’s program has influenced them, the program participants noted that classes on the other religions were more interesting and more enjoyable because they exposed them to new knowledge about the religion.\textsuperscript{83}

Common to virtually all faith-based organizations studied was the use of soccer matches in bringing Christian and Muslim youths together. Aware that crises in conflict flashpoints were usually triggered or sustained by the youth, organizing football matches became one of the productive ways of cultivating the spirit of oneness and friendliness. Peace through sports activities, which was occasionally organized by these organizations became common after 2011. According to Hassan Abu-bakar, youth from communities located in conflict flashpoints were brought together by Alfacare to form the Kaduna Peace Corps after the 2002 violence.\textsuperscript{84} The outcome of these early tournaments informed the organization of many of such soccer matches after the 2011 violence in Kaduna.\textsuperscript{85} DREP also organized such peace tournaments in Jos after its inception in 2011.\textsuperscript{86} Some respondents expressed their feelings before and after the matches, noting that they never imagined such cooperation could be possible: “When I remember those boys who set fire on our peoples’ shops, I felt like going out for revenge, but you see, finding myself in our team -Reconciliatory Pillar – implied that we must work together to get the trophy.”\textsuperscript{87} In a similar reaction, Ayatap, overwhelmed by the cooperation during the tournament, called on the youth to redesign their future based on their own vision avoiding manipulations of politicians [sic].\textsuperscript{88} Arguably the spirit of cooperation engendered by working and playing soccer together promoted a new understanding that made room for peace from below.

Realizing that most of the conflicts in the study area had religious undertones, the need to use religious structures to promote interreligious dialogue received attention following the return of democracy. However, it was the failure of some of the earlier approaches in mitigating violence and the multifaceted nature of some of the issues in the region’s conflicts that resulted in the wide application of dialogue techniques as a tool for peacebuilding in the study area. Imam Ashafa and Pastor Moye established the Interfaith Mediation Center Kaduna, through which they advocated for and pursued the peaceful co-existence of Christians and Muslims in Kaduna. The center became more active in the use of dialogue for peace from 2005 onward. The outcomes of such dialogues were communiqués, recommen-
dations, and pledges. Through his Bridge Builders Association, Bishop Fearon demonstrated another serious commitment to interfaith dialogue in the Kaduna and Plateau states. A very good example of this commitment was in 2008, when he brought Christian and Muslim youths together for dialogue. A resolution to renovate some burnt houses in Nasarawa and Congo Russia in Jos by Christian and Muslim youths was partly the outcome of another dialogue moderated by JDPC Jos in partnership with Carefronting. Dialogue as an instrument of peacebuilding was jointly supported by Alhaji Abdullah and Bishop Ignatius Kaigama who in 2008 assembled Christian and Muslim leaders in the JNI office in Jos to discuss ways of peaceful co-existence. One of the major fruits of this joint effort was the constitution of the Inter-Religious Council for Peace and Harmony in Plateau. The council, which was co-chaired by the two religious leaders, became an avenue for richer dialogue for peace in the state.

The importance attached to dialogue as a tool for peacebuilding was clearly demonstrated by Bishop Kaigama, who in 2011 established DREP. Since its inception, DREP has provided a platform for various stakeholders to engage in a continuous dialogue and reconciliation process. Available records showed that the center has hosted more than twenty-six of such interreligious, inter-community, and inter-party dialogue sessions since its inception. Initially, meetings were invariably characterized by fears and suspicions, as participants often responded to such invitations to avoid being tagged as enemies of peace. All these, Ogbonna argued, gradually changed. Participants in various dialogue sessions increasingly trusted the center as a channel for true peace and reconciliation. The fruit of these meetings was echoed in the minutes of one of the dialogue sessions: “Arising from a dialogue and combined consultative meeting of religious and ethnic community leaders held on the 19th of June 2014, we observe with gladness that there seem to be more genuine attempt at peaceful co-existence by Christians and Muslims in the state, drawing from recent happenings like bomb attack in the Terminus area of the city center where, unlike before, everyone came together to help out and to condemn the attack, Christians and Muslims alike.” It was also through the same dialogue process that gubernatorial aspirants in the 2015 election were brought together to sign a peace accord which, respondents were convinced, contributed to a peaceful and violence-free election in the state.

Finally, solidarity in times of sorrow and joy, identified as another instrument of peacebuilding received wider attention than was hitherto the case.
Bishop Kaigama’s holy mass of solidarity, which he celebrated after violent eruptions in Jos were identified as some of the reasons why recent bomb blasts in Jos city did not produce violent reactions from Christian youth. Cross-faith solidarity visits were also identified as part of the peacebuilding effort. Before his death, Alhaji Abdullah and Bishop Kaigama engaged in such visits. For instance, the Bishop Kaigama spent two days in the emir’s house for the celebration of Salah in 2004. In 2010, he went to the Central Mosque in Jos to deliver the Pope’s message to end the Ramadan fast. In response to Ramadan gifts provided by Rev. Nmadu of ECWA to a Muslim community in Tudun Nupawa, Kaduna, Muslim groups made it a point of duty to honor an annual get-together organized by the ECWA in the community. All these moves gradually renewed a sense of fellowship and trust between Christians and Muslims in some communities. A very good example was the determination of the Tudun Nupawa Muslim youth protecting the ECWA building from being destroyed by an angry mob in 2011. From the foregoing discussions, faith-based actors were involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Plateau and Kaduna states during the period under review. Their efforts were largely associated with the return of peace in Yelwa as well as the relative peace in Jos and Kaduna cities today. Describing the relative calm in Jos, Bishop Kaigama noted that it was partially the result of fifteen years of doggedness and determination of the religious actors in the state. What then were the underlying factors in the successes and failures of these adopted measures?

Explaining Success and Failure in Mediation and Peacebuilding

Prominent in the early strategies of religious actors for peacebuilding was emergency response in the form of humanitarian interventions. Except on a few occasions, their involvement in the early phase was largely tailored along the religious divide. Both Christian and Muslim groups restricted their assistance to their members, thereby reinforcing the divide. CAN and its other associates paid attention to Christians and distributed relief items to camps such as: Voice of the Gospel, COCIN at Nasarawa, St Michael, Nasarawa, St Augustine Major Seminary, and other Christian Centers. Similarly, JNI concentrated on satellite Mosques in Anguwan Rogo, Anguwan Rimi, Dilimi, and Gangare in Jos. Despite the claims of cross-faith distribution by CAN in Kaduna during the 2000 and 2002 crises, most respondents who witnessed the crisis confirmed the intra-faith nature of the distribution. It was equally observed that some denominations within the same religious group restricted their interventions to members within their
denomination. Cross-faith responses gradually began to receive the attention of faith-based actors and became prominent from the second half of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Concerns of religious actors in emergency situations beyond their own faith opened a new era of solidarity that nurtured interfaith cooperation and dialogue in these states. This was demonstrated in the cordial relationship that developed between Alhaji Abdullah and Bishop Kaigama, following the latter’s cross-faith support to Muslim victims during the period of crisis in Jos. Bishop Kaigama was not only referred to as “our father Kaigama” by both Christians and Muslims in the state after the crisis, his relationship with Alhaji Abdullah became a platform for the development of interfaith dialogue in Plateau State. Undoubtedly, the mutual trust engendered by this sense of sharing and solidarity contributed to peacebuilding.

Prominence was also given to mediation as a strategy of conflict resolution, particularly between 2002 and 2005. While mediation succeeded in Yelwa, it was only partially successful in Kaduna and Jos. The success of mediation in Yelwa as shown in the Mediation table above could be attributed to a number of factors. One of such factors was timing. Some key informants were of the view that the two mediation processes took place at a time when the two parties had tested their strength and were ready for peace. One widely held opinion was that Yelwa would have witnessed another outbreak of violence if the mediation team had come before the revenge attack in May 2004. Mediation success in Yelwa can equally be explained from the relatively low interest of eternal actors or shadow parties in the conflict. Compared to Jos or Kaduna city, which was regarded as a microcosm of Nigeria, Yelwa is a small town of not much political significance. Although the two sides had their backers both within and outside the town, in terms of ownership, conflict and peace was largely up to the local people. This view was further affirmed by some informants who decried the lull in commercial transactions during the period of crisis, suggesting that they needed peace to protect their businesses. Local ownership of the Yelwa peace was also visible in the joint vigilante group set up on the heels of the peace affirmation to guard against developments that might generate a crisis in the town. Furthermore, the determination of the people to maintain and keep active the Peace Initiative Committee formed during the intervention is a proof that peace in Yelwa was the people’s peace. One of the leading members of the Yelwa Peace initiative, Pastor James Moye, confirmed the presence of spoilers who pressed for the termination of the peace process. “We brought them to Kaduna. While in Kaduna, some spoilers were calling
for them not to agree. But the people said, 'No, no, no, there is no double standard in what these guys are doing,' it is our process.' Arguably, there was a desire on the part of those who owned the conflict to live in peace.

It is equally important to underscore the role of the government and government agencies. The peace initiatives in Yelwa were facilitated by General Chris Ali who, according to Bishop Kaigama, provided all the necessary requirements for the trip. When the Muslims declined to attend the peace meeting scheduled by the IMC representatives for security reasons, the government provided two armored tanks that brought them to the venue. In addition, the presence of traditional rulers and other members of civil society organizations, including other faith-based organizations, during the peace meeting strengthened the process.

Finally, success as recorded in Yelwa can be attributed to the mediators' influence and long commitment. Bishop Kaigama and Alhaji Abdullah were the highest religious authorities in Plateau and have built their reputation as respectable and honest advocates of peace. Their unusual friendship orchestrated by their responses to violent conflicts endeared them to both Christians and Muslims. Bishop Kaigama, who already had a history of successful interventions in Jalingo before his transfer to Jos has proved himself as a lover of peace. As the president of CAN and JNI respectively, Bishop Kaigama and Alhaji Abdullah co-chaired the Inter-Religious Council in Plateau where they both worked to improve Christian-Muslim relations. Their impeccable records made them acceptable as unbiased mediators in the search for peace in Yelwa. In the same vein, Imam Ashafa and Pastor Moye, as their names suggest, were also religious leaders of high repute. Having been two archrivals who led opposing camps during previous episodes of violent conflict in Zango-Kataf, they later re-channeled their energies away from violence and began to work for peaceful relationships between Christians and Muslims. With support from funding bodies, they set up the IMC Kaduna, which has championed interfaith conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria and beyond. Their wealth of knowledge, experience, and reputations also explained their acceptance and the success of their mediation. The commitment of these men to the peace process equally underpinned their success. In an expression that showed their determination to lead the people through all the necessary steps needed for peace, Pastor Moye explained that they spent seventeen days in a program that was slated for five days, bearing the cost and other hardships generated by that decision, including sharing hotel accommodations.
Conflict parties through many days of continuous interactions, they were able to generate a peace affirmation which was signed by the groups after they had willingly and publicly tendered an apology to each other. It could be argued, that the success story in Yelwa is tied among other things, to timing, local ownership of the peace process as well as the experience, tenacity, and the commitment of the mediators.

Kaduna city is another area where mediation appears to have succeeded. However, there are two opposing interpretations of the Kaduna Peace Declaration of 2002. The first school of thought argues against the success associated with the declaration, noting that the city recorded a series of eruptions after the Sharia riots. The second school of thought maintains that the city has recorded fourteen years of relative peace since the declaration, irrespective of the 2002 and 2011 crises. From the model for determining successful or failed mediation used for this study, the Kaduna Peace Declaration could be said to have been successful since it brought together all stakeholders to the proposed meetings and produced a document which was signed by all the parties. Thus, in terms of its output and short-term outcome, the mediation process recorded a success. But unlike Yelwa, it appears the Kaduna Peace Declaration was influenced by suspicion and pretense. A majority of our respondents were of the opinion that the declaration was a product of window-dressing, because participants were eager to tell the world that they desired peace in Kaduna, while in reality the opposite appeared to be the case. Deductively, mediation in Kaduna succeeded at the level of output and short-term outcome, because none of the parties wanted to be seen as the source of the problem. It however failed to bring about lasting peace because in such a situation, issues at the root of the conflict are unlikely to be fully addressed. Expressing his view about the failure of the peace declaration to ensure peace in Kaduna, Maji Petek remarked, "You do not tell me to sign that we will live together for us to live together (sic); there are conditions that must be met. Unless those conditions are met, we are wasting our time." On the signing of the document, he reasoned further: "Two parties are involved in a conflict, you call them to sit on a table to sign that they will live in peace, if you do not sign, that means you are the problem. No one wants to be identified as the problem...so you will sign not because you believe in what you are signing that is why we do not uphold it because people have issues that have not been addressed." As for the reason why the issues have not been addressed, it was argued that Kaduna is strategic in the history and development of Nigeria and thus manifests, more often, most of the problems that
bedevil the Nigerian State. The perspective of eternal actors’ involvement was equally emphasized by Rev. Nmadu, who observed that both sides were backed by powerful actors whose interest appeared to be different from the issues manifesting in the conflict. The signing of the declaration was also linked to the desire of the mediators to produce a positive outcome by any means. With the presence of a foreign religious organization from Britain that was not only in collaboration with the IMC, but also sponsored the mediation program, the mediators were not ready to fail. In this sense, the peace associated with the declaration lost its owners as well.

Support and cooperation of the Kaduna State Government was also identified as a factor in the production of the declaration. The process that led to the Kaduna Peace Declaration was initiated by the state government led by governor Ahmed Makarfi, who supported the program and provided security and other necessary logistics until the end, and was also a signatory to the document, making it a more authentic instrument for peace in Kaduna. Makarfi’s regular meetings with religious leaders from the time of the crisis to the period the document was signed facilitated the success of the declaration.

In Jos, the move by CAN to facilitate a conciliatory meeting between Christians and Muslims at the TEKAN Conference Hall failed because the venue of the meeting lacked required neutrality. TEKAN was a Christian body while CAN was an umbrella body of all Christians in Nigeria. Both the convener and the venue created suspicion in the minds of Muslims, who interpreted the move as an attempt to undermine their interests. Thus, the Muslims that attended were few and were not opinion leaders who could reach any tangible decisions with their Christian counterparts.

A further attempt by faith-based actors to facilitate peace talks in Jos in 2004 was largely unsuccessful. The issue of the ownership of Jos stood out as the main impediment to conflict resolution. Although the Jos conflict, like Yelwa, is largely over the indigene-settler’s question, the centrality of Jos in north central Nigeria makes the city the hub of all resistance. As one of the first-class colonial cities in Northern Nigeria, Jos is not only the commercial nerve center of Central Nigeria but also the seat of Christian religious activities in northern Nigeria. Given its historical resistance to the flag bearers of the Islamic Jihad in the nineteenth century, it seemed to have assumed the role as a bulwark against perceived anti-Islamic expansion in North Central Nigeria. According to elder Dung, “though religion
is largely manipulated by the political class and conflict entrepreneurs, beyond religious exploitation is a question of Islamic expansion which Jos stands against. If Jos becomes a Muslim state” he further argued, “Abuja is only a question of time.”126 This seemed to have explained why the Afizere127 ownership of Jos was downplayed by the other indigenous groups in Jos.128 Though like Yelwa in outlook, issues attached to the Jos conflict were value-based.

In addition to value-based issues was the strong presence of shadow parties and spoilers, whose inputs contributed in frustrating the effort at mediation in Jos. The failure of the 2002 peace move was linked to eternal pressure on one of the groups to decline participation in the meeting, using the death of the traditional ruler of Jos as an excuse.129 The similar presence of external parties was identified as partly responsible for the failure of some other peace efforts beyond Plateau. Narrating why the Saminaka Peace effort of 2014 failed, Pastor Moye pointed out the influence of some spoilers from Bauchi and Kano who pressured party representatives so much that their attempt ended in a stalemate, frustrating the Alternative Road to Peace in Plateau program.130 The factor of timing was equally linked to the failure of mediation, especially with the IMC attempt in 2002. Anger, suspicion, and the desire for revenge were said to be running high at the period the peace meetings were scheduled.131 The death of Gbong Gwom Jos, Fom Bot, further aggravated the situation, making the period unsuitable for such a peace mission as was planned.

Finally, government influence also featured as one of the explanations for the failure of the 2004 mediation in Jos. It was observed that IMC was not fully in charge of the process.132 The government was said to have subtly dominated the process, reducing the representatives from IMC to mere resource persons.133 Thus, the center unlike Yelwa, could not take full charge of the process.

The success of workshops as an instrument of peacebuilding was largely attached to local ownership, funding, and long-term commitment. The EPRT capacity-building workshop succeeded because local people were selected and trained for emergency response in such a way that they were able to use their skills during crisis. Those who received the training were encouraged to share their knowledge with other people from their communities through workshops at the community level. Problem-solving workshops were equally grassroots based. Achir affirmed the bottom-up strategy of
JDPC Kaduna, noting that solutions came from the participants themselves because facilitators do not come with already-made answers, but rather with questions that help them to talk to each other.\textsuperscript{134} Funding was further identified by Dangiwa as one of the obstacles to the success of some of their workshops. The Saminaka peace initiative, he claimed, was inconclusive because the IMC ran out of funds.\textsuperscript{135} Failure was also identified in what Ogbonna called the “mad rush” to cover what is written down or proposed without minding its impact on the people.\textsuperscript{136} Such a rush was linked to donor’s non-flexible mandate.\textsuperscript{137}

Success associated with the use of skill acquisition and football for peace was equally tied to adopted strategies and government support. Some of the trainees credited the success of the Bokkos acquisition center to the strategies adopted by the administration of the center.\textsuperscript{138} Interreligious discussions and interaction emphasized at the center, they argued, gave room to better and richer understanding of as well as respect for each other’s faith.\textsuperscript{139} Also, the strategies adopted in the organization of soccer teams explained their success as instruments of peace-building. For instance, the names of the football teams in Kaduna: “Respect Squared”, “Tolerance Babe” and “Reconciliation Pillar”, were used to inculcate values of unity, friendliness, and a sense of fellowship among youth from various communities. Indeed, cooperation and friendships established during the preparation for the matches outlived these matches, as could be seen in the case of Chidi (Christian) and Idris (Muslim), who set up a joint Suya business at Television bus stop based on the trust built in those days when they were playing as a team.\textsuperscript{140}

Dialogue as an instrument of peacebuilding was initially hampered by mutual fear and suspicion. Advocates of interfaith dialogue and cooperation became objects of suspicion. The Muslims in Kaduna declared “fatwa” on Imam Ashafa with pamphlets in circulation commending anyone who killed him as having rendered a great service to Islam.\textsuperscript{141} Commenting on the attitude of his fellow Christian leaders towards his call for dialogue in Plateau state, Bishop Kaigama noted that they accused him of watering down Christian messages “It was not easy,” he lamented, “trying to convince our people that the only option is to open the door of dialogue... it was not easy, I tell you. Even my very close collaborators, did not believe me.”\textsuperscript{142} However, with commitment and determination, the call for dialogue began to yield fruit. Indeed, solidarity more than any other factor appears to have promoted the dialogue and relative peace recorded in these two states in recent
Distribution of food to Muslim communities during Ramadan ended the hostilities that once led to the destruction of ECWA’s building in Tundun Nupawa community. To maintain this fellowship, an annual friends’ day celebration was created to bring the two faith-based groups together. In a similar tone, Bishop Kaigama’s two-day visit to Wase was groundbreaking, as it convinced the Muslims in Plateau of his honest commitment to peace. It was therefore not surprising to see him delivering the Pope’s message to end the Ramadan fast. The fruits of these solidarity visits were reduction of tension, fear, and suspicion, and a gradual building of trust among Christians and Muslims, a development that opened the door for more inclusive and richer dialogue.

Conclusion

There was obvious involvement of faith-based actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Plateau and Kaduna States during the period under review. Success in mediation at the level of output and short-term outcome is explained from the mediators’ influence, experience, commitment, neutrality, timing, and ripeness. These variables accounted for considerable – and in some cases, overwhelming – representation of both parties during mediation meetings and signing of peace agreements. For example, while the presence of religious leaders of high repute from both sides of the conflict in Yelwa and their commitment restored the peoples’ confidence in the peace process producing fruitful outcomes, CAN’s move to mediate in Jos and the choice of location for the meeting denied that effort the opinion leaders from one of the groups who perceived the move as biased. Also, it appears the time of the intervention in Yelwa was not just appropriate, the conflict was ripe for a third-party intervention. Being largely the peoples’ conflict with less influence of shadow parties, both sides felt the destructive effects of the violence and were willing for peace. Thus, they responded to calls for meetings and made their declarations at the end despite the role of the spoilers. In Kaduna and Jos, most of the interventions were done when the parties were still taking the position of hard bargainers and so were not committed to peace. The factor of “peace on the gallery” equally accounted for the dynamics of success at these two levels. The Kaduna peace declaration was signed by both parties because none of them wanted to be tagged an obstacle to peace in the city. The mediators working in collaboration with a foreign body were equally eager to produce a document that will justify the resources pumped into the process. Hence, the declaration for peace in Kaduna by the two sides which was indeed popular was followed by another
violent clash few months after.

Success beyond these two levels, as recorded in Yelwa, was linked to the engagement of the real owners of the conflict and peace at Yelwa. The relatively low-profile Yelwa conflict compared to Jos and Kaduna attracted fewer shadow parties and spoilers, and so gave the parties a better chance of determining the course of the peace process and its impact. Such ownership appeared to be lacking in Jos and Kaduna.

Beyond ownership of conflict and peace, conflict issues played a major role in the long-term failure of the mediation processes in Jos and Kaduna. Except in Yelwa where the peace declaration appeared to have contributed largely in maintaining peace for more than a decade, neither peace meetings nor peace affirmations, writing or oral, have been able to ensure peace in Kaduna or in Jos. Issues in these conflicts are not only complex, some of them are value-based. The struggle for Jos and Kaduna goes beyond mere manipulation of religion. The role of religion in the conflict in these two cities can be comprehended from the context of the links between religious, ethnic, and political identities in a diverse country like Nigeria. The indigene-settler clause as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution provided a caveat for checkmating the expansion of Islam into the old Middle Belt region of Nigeria. Beyond its manipulation of religious and ethnic identities, some actions by government and politicians fanned the embers of conflict across the lines of division in the two cities. This partly explained the strong influence of external forces impacting negatively on the peace process in these cities. It can therefore be argued that mediation as an instrument of conflict resolution may succeed beyond the output and short-term outcome, where the owners of the conflict or peace are willing to have peace restored. Such willingness becomes palpable when both parties have witnessed the destructive effects of conflict and so desire peace. On the other hand, mediation at the level of long-term impact is likely to fail when the real owners of a conflict or a peace process are not meaningfully engaged. Lack of meaningful engagement may be a consequence of untimely intervention, the overwhelming influence of shadowy parties or spoilers, who in most cases are external actors unaffected by the destruction and losses caused by violent conflict, mediator’s penchant for signed documents as evidence of success, and the presence of underlying value-based conflict issues.

Grassroots-based peacebuilding was crucial to the success of the Yelwa program. Capacity-building and other workshops engaged communi-
ty-based organizations and other local actors who were able to work towards sustaining peacebuilding projects in their communities. Engagement of the youth through soccer and skill acquisition activities was another dimension of religious peacebuilding at the grassroots level which helped to reduce suspicion and encourage fellowship and cooperation. Such grassroots interventions produced giant strides as could be seen in the rebuilding of houses in “Congo-Russia” and Nasarawa through the joint effort of both Christian and Muslim youths and in their joint efforts to ensure the protection of the ECWA building. Although it may be difficult to ascertain the overall impact on peacebuilding of faith-based actors, the relative peace in these states can, among other things, be attributed to these grassroots programs. It suffices to argue therefore that a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding is capable of engendering a culture of peace in conflict-ridden zones.

Support from governments and other civil society organizations contributed to the success story of faith-based actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the study area. Government and government agencies, traditional rulers, cultural groups, and NGOs within and outside the region assisted faith-based actors in brokering peace talks between Christian and Muslim communities. In addition to funding, organizations such as Care Fronting Nigeria, Center for Management and Peace Studies, University of Jos, and a host of others provided resource persons who helped to facilitate the talks and training activities of the religious actors. Such partnership points to the great potential embedded in secular and faith-based cooperation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria.

Finally, the concept of “no enemy to conquer,” which engendered solidarity, appeared to have opened a new era of meaningful dialogue in the study area. Cross-faith distribution of relief, solidarity visits, and joint celebration of festivals by both groups produced some concrete evidence of willingness to live with and accommodate one another. In what Bishop Kaigama calls “overcoming evil with good,” he argued that practical love through solidarity and fellowship has worked more than any other strategy of peacebuilding in Plateau state in the last five years. This was equally echoed by Rev. Yanusa Nmadu, who in a response to a question on why the ECWA building was given protection by its supposed enemy stated: “It was just the old saying that you cannot resist genuine love from the heart.” The founder of Christian Solidarity noted that before 2011 they used to come in their big cars, isolating themselves from the Muslims in the community. But a change in the attitude of the community and its people occurred when the door to a
closer relationship through solidarity visits and dialogue was opened. According to him, “they began to see us no longer as enemies that needed to be conquered.” Thus, pacifism, as Addua opined, may be the most viable solution to Christian-Muslim conflict in the region and in Nigeria as a whole.

In summation, religion can simultaneously be an agent of conflict and peace. In the study area, religion was not only manipulated and implicated in violent conflicts; it also formed the basis for contestations over those cities. The success of faith-based actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding as shown in the study and the relative peace it engendered in the two states is a clear indication that religious actors cannot continue to remain at the periphery or play a marginal role in the search for peace in the twenty-first century. Their failures and successes as recorded in the study areas point to further options and potentials to be explored.

**Policy Implications**

- The success of religious actors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, irrespective of whether religion is the key factor in the conflict or not, shows that faith-based actors can help to resolve conflict and build peace in situations of religious or non-religious conflict. Thus, they cannot continue to remain at the periphery in the search for peace in the twenty-first century.

- Inter-faith concern from religious actors in times of sorrow or joy is a necessary pre-requisite for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, especially in conflict-affected contexts characterized by mutual suspicion, lack of trust, fear, hate memories, and the quest for retaliation. Faith-based organizations need to put in place spaces and facilities that can promote emergency response and dialogue beyond intra-faith concerns.

- Support and cooperation from the government and other non-faith-based actors partly explain their success and shows that faith-based peacebuilding and secular peacebuilding are not mutually exclusive but can complement each other. The involvement of faith-based actors will be more successful where government and other sources of support are stronger.

- Although a top-down approach to peace has its place, peacebuilding at
the grassroots level is capable of reducing the domineering influence of external players or shadow parties in conflict-affected contexts. Faith-based peacebuilding actors therefore need to commit more energy toward developing grassroots peacebuilding programs.

- Proper analysis of conflict through conflict mapping is needed before faith-based actors can embark on mediation. Such analysis will show whether the time is ripe for mediation or not.

- A majority of faith-based actors are sponsored by donors who need quick results. This explains the quick drive for signed agreements, declarations, peace affirmations etc, and do not translate into durable peace. Flexibility of donors and local sponsorship of the peace process will reduce the tendency to produce the mediator’s peace or “peace on the gallery.”

- Both single and multi-religious endeavors yielded some positive results in the study area. However, multi-religious efforts appear to produce more lasting results. This approach may be more suitable in a situation where mutual suspicion and fear characterize the relationship between conflict parties of different religious affiliations.
NOTES

5. Ibid.
7. D. R. Smock, Faith-Based NGOs and International Peace-building
14. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Jacob Bercovitch and Jeffrey Langley, “The Nature of the Dispute and the Effectiveness of International Mediation,” in Journal of Conflict...


43. Ibid.


48. Sandia Touval and William Zartman, Eds. International Mediation in

49. Ibid.

50. Although the Hausa and the Fulani were two distinct ethnic groups, the Nigerian political equation redefined them as one ethnic group—Hausa-Fulani.


54. Although the Nigerian Constitution does not allow any Nigerian by birth, by registration and by naturalization to be discriminated against, but it accords recognition to an indigene in a State of the federation. Being an indigene in State of the country is one of the main criteria for appointing, for instance, a minister of the government of the federation. For more details, see the Nigerian Constitution 1999, Section 25, 26 and 27; 147 sub section 3.


56. The Jarawa of Yelwa were the descendants of the Jarawa of Dass from Bauchi, who migrated first to Wase and later to Yelwa.


59. These measures have been associated with the relative peace that has been recorded in the two states in recent times.


64. Interview with Maji Petek. Founder, Carefronting Nigeria, Kaduna, 26 Sept. 2016.


70. Interview with Charles Ndukwe, a staff member of the Inter-Faith Mediation Center (IMC) Kaduna, 1 Oct. 2016.

71. Interview with Japheth Philip.

72. Ibid.


74. See Women Inter-Faith Council (WIC) Newsletter, Vol. 1 no. 1. 2013.

75. Interview with Amina Kazaure.


77. Interview with Pastor James Moye, Co-Founder, Inter-faith Mediation Center Kaduna, 1 Oct. 2016.


81. Congo Russia and Nasarawa in Jos are two communities of Christians and Muslims in Jos north facing each other. They are among the most volatile part of the city of Jos.

82. Having built a relationship from their workshop, the youth of Congo Russia were able to reach their counterparts in Nasarawa when they were alerted about the impending attack from Nasarawa youth. Upon this contact, the Nasarawa youth conducted investigation and found out that the said youth were from another community which used to assist them against “Congo Russia” during crisis. The fear and suspicion that were already building up were dispelled.

83. Interview with Umar Garba.

84. Interview with Hassan Abu-bakar.

85. Interview Hassan Abubakar.


89. See Inter-Faith Mediation Center, Profile, Interventions, Peace process and Reports, 2016.
90. Interview with Maji Petek.
91. Interview with Majek Petek.
92. See Ignatius Kaigama, p.56.
93. Interview with Chris Ogbonna.
95. Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with some Muslim and Christian youth from Rayfield, Jenta, and Rock Haven.
96. Such opportunity was usually used by the Bishop for enlightenment and appeal for calm.
97. FGD with some traders around Terminus Market, 4 October 2016.
100. Interview with Ignatius Kaigama.
101. Interviews with Jibrin Musa and Jacob Ukecha.
102. Ibid.
103. Interview with Sunday Ibrahim.
105. Ibid.
109. Interview with P. Zuwau, Administrative staff, the Kukah Center for Public Policy, Kaduna, 7 Sept. 2016.
111. While on field work, three of the members of the vigilante group interrogated us thoroughly and searched our bags for security reasons upon our entrance into Yelwa.
112. Interview with Pastor James Moye.
113. Interview with Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama.
114. Interview with Pastor James Moye.
115. Ibid.
116. Interviews with Maji Petek Yamusa Madu; Zuwau.
118. FGD with some Christians and Muslims from Kaduna North and South 22 Sept, 2016.
119. Interview with Maji Petek.
120. Ibid.
121. Interview with E. Zuwau.
122. Interview with Yamusa Madu.
123. FGD with some Christians and Muslims from Kaduna North and South, 22 Sept. 2016.
124. See Inter-Faith Mediation Center, Profile, Interventions, Peace process and Reports, 2016.
125. Interview with Umar Faruk Musa; Also see S. G. Best 2011b, p. 78.
126. Interview with D. Dung, Berom elder, Jos, 16 August 2014.
127. The Afizere though not Hausa-Fulani has a good chunk of its population as adherents of the Islamic religion.
128. Interview with Pastor James Moye.
130. Interview with Pastor James Moye.
131. Interview with Japhet Philip.
133. Ibid.
134. Interview with Rev. Fr. J. Achir.
135. Interview with Pastor James Moye.
136. Interview with Chris Ogbonnaya.
137. Ibid.
138. Interviews with Umar Garba; Bong Reuben.
139. Ibid.
140. Interview with Chidi Samuel, participant in a peace tournament in Kaduna, 17 August 2016; Suya is barbecued meat spiced with pepper, ginger and groundnut paste usually sold at popular joints for human consumption.
141. See Interfaith Mediation Center, 2006. The Imam and the Pastor, a
Documentary film by the Initiatives of Change.
142. Interview with Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama.
143. Ibid.
144. Interview with Rev. Yanusa Nmadu.
145. Ibid.

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IN-DEPTH ORAL INTERVIEWS

Chris Ogbonna, Programme Manager, DREP, Jos, 27th Sept. 2016;


Amina Kazaure, Executive Director, Women Inter-Faith Council (WIC Kaduna, 26th Sept. 2016.


Sunday Ibrahim, Executive Secretary CAN, Kaduna, 17th Sept. 2016.


Umar Faruk Musa, Publicity Secretary JNI, Jos, 30th Sept. 2016.


Jacob Ukecha, a victim of the 2001 crisis in Jos, Jos, 14th June. 2015.


Pastor James Muye, Co-Founder, Inter-faith Mediation Center Kaduna, 1st Oct. 2016.


Bala, Participant in a workshop on conflict transformation and dialogue, Jos, 30th Sept. 2016.


Umar Garba, Trainee in a Youth Vocational Center, Jos, 29th August 2016.

Bong Reuben, Trainee in a Youth Vocational Center, Jos, 29th August 2016.

Siracus Chong, Trainee in a Youth Vocational Center, Jos, 29th August 2016.


Y. Salum, JNI Jos, 21st August 2016.


P. Byang, A member of the Yelwa Peace Committee, 7th Sept. 2016.


Umar Haruna, a member of the Yelwa Peace Committee, 9th Sept. 2016.

Dung, Berom elder, Jos, 16th August. 2014.

Bitrus Dangiwa, Co-Director IMC, Jos, 30th Sept. 2016.


**FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)**

FGD with some Muslim and Christian youth from Rayfield, Jenta and Rock Haven, Jos.

FGD with some traders around Terminus Market, 4th October 2016.


FGD with some Christians and Muslims from Kaduna North and South 22nd Sept. 2016

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