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KANO: Unlearning Violence



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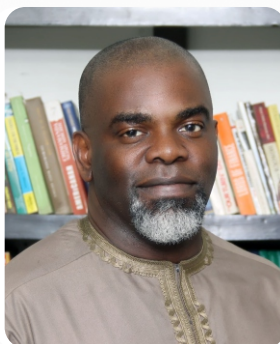
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Editor's NOTE

PLATFORM FOR DISCUSSIONS

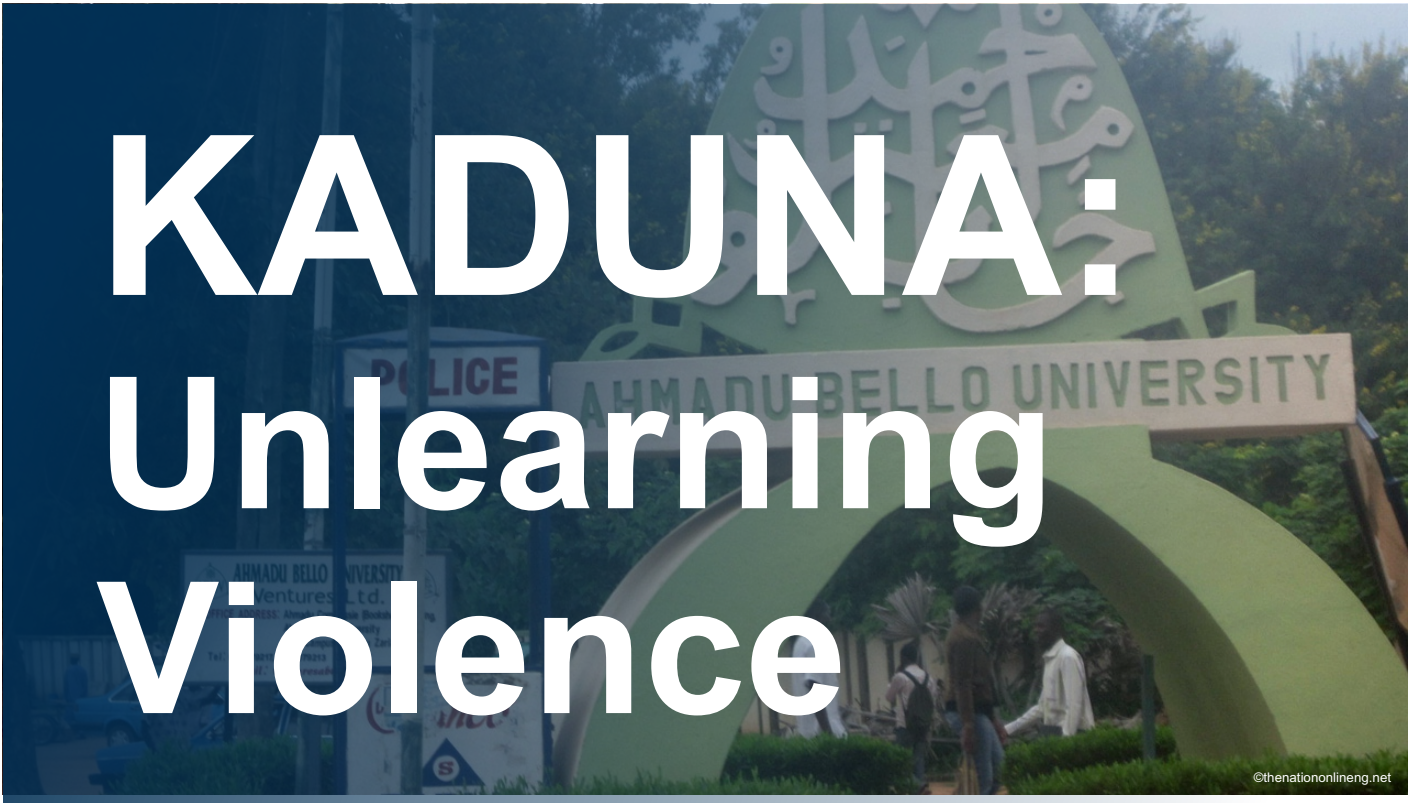
Welcome to the April 2019 edition of Nextier SPD Monthly publication. This magazine is designed to deepen our knowledge and insight on security, peace, and development issues in Nigeria. It brings to the fore thematic issues such as conflict, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, and security sector reforms (SSR), disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), violent deaths, state building, environmental violence and natural resources-fuelled violent conflicts. Every month, this publication provides a step-by-step analysis of security and development issues using different narratives, research philosophies, methodologies and trajectories.

The fundamental objective of the publication is to provide a platform for evidence-based and scholarly discussions of contemporary security issues facing Nigeria in particular and other African countries in general. The publication provides evidence-driven research and proffers well-thought out policy recommendations. It is our desire that policymakers, practitioners, and development partners will use the ideas presented here to engage in discussions to improve their policies, programmes, projects, and operations.

This month's Nextier SPD Monthly explains the protracted, deep-seated ethnic hatred and sectarian violence in Kaduna state. With the constant loss of lives and destruction of property worth millions of Naira in the state, the necessity to develop and implement comprehensive sustainable solutions to the violence is greatly needed. Relying on observation and desk research, the monthly traces the origin, history and causes of some of the high profile violent conflicts and how they were politically motivated. Additionally, this publication uses Political Settlement arguments and Political Settlement Analysis (PSA), to demonstrate how lack of political settlement has sustained violent identity conflicts in Kaduna State. Subsequently, it proffers recommendations on how learning new approaches to peacebuilding, unlearning the culture of violence, and re-learning new skills can promote inclusion and development.



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KADUNA: Unlearning Violence

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Introduction

Kaduna State has been a major flashpoint of sectarian violence for several years. In the last one year, it has been embroiled in recurrent communal clashes especially in Southern Kaduna where Christian populations are dominant. In February 2019, low-intensity conflicts in Kajuru Local Government Area of the state resulted in [over 60 deaths, wanton destruction of properties](#), and massive displacement of persons. Though there have been similar conflicts in Plateau, Nasarawa and Benue states, yet the case of Kaduna has been more enduring. Scholars and analysts are divided over the fundamental causes of the incessant conflicts. While some interpret it as a resource conflict (Adisa & Adekunle, 2010), others see it as a

fall out of identity politics (or citizenship crisis). Indeed, while the Nigerian constitution promotes national rights as a result of citizenship, it also paradoxically predicates communal rights on the principle of indigeneity (Johnson, 2013). This relegation of a single citizenship engenders a violent struggle for power between “us versus them”, struggle over resources (such as land, pasture, water, etc.) and other forms of scarce public goods.

This edition of Nextier SPD Monthly presents a historical and contemporary analysis of violence in Kaduna state. It also examines the key drivers of violent conflicts in the State and makes recommendations on how they can be addressed.



History of Violence in Kaduna State

The present Kaduna State encompasses the area of the old Zaria (Zazzau) emirate of 1800-1950. In both historical and anthropological terms, Zazzau emirate was characterised by two dominant cultural segments, namely, Hausa-Fulani in the Northern part and the so-called pagan groups in the South (Smith 1960). Apart from being the seat of the colonial government in the North, Kaduna State is reputed as a mini-Nigeria because of its unique ethno-religious mix of Muslims and Christians. It is also a gateway state between the far North and the Middle Belt.

The state has had a long history of sectarian violence which has been worsened in recent times by pervasive criminality. Cases of ransom kidnap, armed robbery and cattle rustling have become pervasive. The upsurge in criminal violence has seriously affected the movement of persons and goods in

the state especially on the Kaduna-Abuja highway. The narratives of conflicts in the state have often been woven around ethnicity and religion even though their immediate triggers relate to entitlement claims and property rights over common resources.

Over the years, there have been numerous violent clashes between the identity groups in the state. In 1981, there was violence between the Hausa traders and residents of Adara in the Kachia Local Government Area (LGA) of the state. Similarly, a local resistance to the candidature of a Muslim headship of Lere in Lere LGA in 1986 triggered a deadly violence. There is also the Kafanchan Crisis that broke out in March 1987. The hope that durable peace would be restored in the 1990s was cut short by the [Zangon Kataf Riots of February 1992](#) and those of May 1992 which were sparked by the relocation of a local market. Seven years after, ethno-religious confrontations engulfed Kaduna North LGA in 1999 and spread to Kafanchan and other towns in a deadly orgy of violence.

The imposition of Sharia law in Kaduna State in 2000 resulted in intense conflicts between Christians and Muslims. While the Muslims accepted the Islamic law, Christians opposed it because it violated the secular character enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution. In addition, the victimisation of the poor in the implementation of Sharia law led to growing discontent even among moderate Muslims (Akinola, 2015). With heightened tension, plans to host the [Miss World beauty pageant in Nigeria in 2002](#) triggered violent resistance and conflicts in Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, emergence of Dr Goodluck Jonathan as the winner of the 2011 Presidential election sparked violence in Kaduna and across the Northern region.

The ubiquitous cases of ethno-religious violence in Kaduna State have led to huge human casualty, internal displacement, destruction of investments, and mutual distrust among the people. For example, the Sharia uprising in 2000 claimed over 1,400 lives and destruction of over 1,944 homes, hotels and business premises, and about 700,000 internally displaced persons in Kaduna State (Adejumobi, 2005). The 2002 violence over the Miss World Beauty pageant was particularly destructive in Kaduna State as homes, churches, mosques, and markets were set ablaze especially in Zaria, Kaduna, Zonkwa and Kafanchan.

Incessant identity conflicts have severely undermined Nigeria's image locally and internationally as reports of the violence are beamed across the world by global media organisations with the risk of scaring away both existing and prospective foreign investments. Crucially, the conflicts have resulted in

spatial relocation of ethnic and religious groups. This has been acute in areas where ethno-religious identities tend to overlap such as in Jos and Kaduna. The emergence of this spatial relocation of people in Kaduna made Abubakar Momoh to describe the phenomenon as the “creation of Mecca for the Muslims in Kaduna North and Jerusalem for the Christians in Kaduna South” (quoted in Adejumobi, 2005:36). This denies the 'hybridity' that characterises inter-group relations in a plural society (Eisenberg, 2009).



Conflict, Compromise, Consensus and political settlement

Conflict is inevitable in human social relations especially in diverse societies such as Nigeria which is characterised by multiple identities. Undoubtedly, the resources to satisfy human wants are scarce and limited. Therefore, conflicts may occur as people pursue their goals. This is also the case in advanced societies and Western democracies where it manifests as “nationalism”. They are able to channel their grievances through established institutions set up for conflict resolution such as the police and judiciary. In much of Africa, many aggrieved persons take the laws into their hands on account of lax rule of law. The political elite also often politicise conflicts which, in turn, fuels violence.

Compromise, as a conflict resolution technique, is a valuable asset in political settings. To avoid hostility, parties in conflict are brought to negotiation where their grievances are outlined and interrogated. At the end, the needs of disputants are balanced up and each encouraged to give in on some points in the interest of resolving the conflict (Parjis, 2012). Though time-consuming, this style of conflict resolution is more rewarding than other mechanisms

because it gives all parties the sense that their grievances have been given due consideration. Parties walk away with some sense of victory. Ultimately, this results in consensus which builds peace and mutual trust in society, especially if “the formal and informal processes, agreements, and practices that help consolidate politics, rather than violence, as a means for dealing with disagreements about interests, ideas and the distribution and use of power” are considered and integrated for the interests of all parties concerned (Laws and Leftwich, 2014: 1).

Interestingly, recent research shows that compromise and consensus are part and parcel of political settlement. This is a theory and practice with a core assumption that societies cannot develop in the midst of all-out violence or civil war. Indeed, the way societies solve their problems of violence, (and the political settlement they arrive at, do create powerful path-dependencies for the way they do or do not subsequently develop (Kelsall, 2016). There seems to be reduction in this practice in Kaduna states, especially in the last four years, and could the reason or reasons for the growing nature of violent conflicts among the diverse groups in the state.

Making Peace or Fueling Violence?



The governments and political elite in the region have ostensibly mismanaged the conflicts in Kaduna State. Rather than ensuring compromise and building consensus among conflict actors, their actions and inactions have further divided the people and promoted violent conflicts. If we consider Leftwich arguments on political settlement and development policies, and on how they affect who gets what, when and how, and the creation of coalitions in support of or opposition to governance (leftwich,2011), It is evident that Kaduna has not been able to use political settlement as a means of navigating its turbulent and diverse situation.

The political elite deliberately promotes identity politics through a patronage system that favours some groups and spites the others. For example, many mission hospitals and schools in Northern Nigeria were “stripped of their Christian names and symbols, which were replaced by more befitting Hausa-Muslim ones” (Ludwig, 2008:612). A good example is Our Lady's High School in Zaria (Kaduna State) which was established by the Catholic Mission in 1940. The college was later re-christened Queen of

Apostles' College. However, in the 1970s, it was renamed Queen Amina College to reflect a Muslim nomenclature. Indeed, in Katsina State, ECWA (a religious organization) was even prevented from completing the construction of a church building because it was “higher than those of Muslims” (Ludwig, 2008:631).

Earlier, during the drafting of the 1999 Constitution, Sharia became a lightning rod that divided the delegates into camps. Despite formidable opposition, representatives of the core northern states argued against section 10 of the 1999 Constitution which states that “the government of the federation or a state shall not adopt any religion as state religion”. The delegates argued that the declaration of Nigeria as a secular state was incompatible with Islamic law (Oyerinde, 2011). Following the return to democratic rule in 1999, a number of northern politicians campaigned for votes on the populist promise of implementing full Sharia law in the North. This promise was realised in January 2000 when Zamfara State's House of Assembly enacted a law for the full implementation of the Islamic penal code in the state (Akinola, 2015).

Elite hypocrisy fueled the violent conflicts around the introduction of Sharia (a Muslim penal code) in 2000 in the 12 Northern states including Kaduna. There was little or no resistance to Sharia law in Zamfara State probably because Muslims make up over 90 percent of the state's population. The situation was different in Kaduna when Sharia was introduced in February 2000. The resistance to its introduction by Christians and some moderate Muslims led to violence which left over 1,000 people dead (Salawu, 2000). Kaduna State has an equal number of Christians and Muslims. As such, introduction of Sharia law in the state was seen as a violation of the religious and human rights of non-Muslims. More so, despite its claim of justice, implementation of Sharia was characterised by torture of offenders, mutilation of human body parts, abhorrent promotion of patriarchal domination, sacred cow syndrome, and promotion of the interests of the governing elites (Harnischfeger, 2004).

The disregard of social inclusion and integration by the political elite witnessed renewed ascendancy during the 2019 governorship election in Kaduna State. Rather than nominating a member of another faith as Deputy Governor as has been the practice in Kaduna State (and Nigeria as a whole), Governor Nasir El Rufai nominated a fellow Muslim. Even though the identity of personnel has nothing to do with the quality of governance, yet such exclusionary politics is capable of undermining mutual co-existence between members of the two dominant

faiths, especially in a state that has many fault lines and have dwelled on an acceptable and informal political arrangement. As observed in Political Settlement Analysis (PSA), replacing one political settlement with another, is a very problematic exercise, such new undertaking should involve “some kind of adaptation to these formal and informal processes, practices and power balance, and their associated path-dependencies” (Kelsall, 2016:2).

Perhaps on account of elite manipulation, efforts aimed at resolving the conflicts in Kaduna State have not been successful even though members of the security agencies have been deployed to the conflict zones several times. In 2017, the Nigeria Army declared Operation Kunama II in parts of the state. Yet, security agencies are often taken by surprise by various ethnic and religious militias who resort to violence to settle political and economic scores. In October 2018, a 24-hour curfew was imposed on some areas of Kaduna State. The National Emergency Management Agency has been struggling to assist thousands of displaced persons. There are current plans to set up a commission of inquiry over the incessant killings in Kajuru and Kachia local government areas of Kaduna State. There is the need to understand that in situation where powerful groups receive a low distribution of benefits to relative to their power, there is the likelihood that they will seek different means (including conflict) to challenge the situation “until they are satisfied or they give up” (Khan, 2010:4).

Re-Learning Peace to Reduce Violent Conflicts

There is need for deliberate programmes, policies and projects to relearn peace, peacebuilding, inclusion and ethno-religious cohesion. As Klein opined, re-learning “is the process of creating new understandings and behaviors around the same concepts” (Klein 2008). This process should include the elite, political and religious actors, as well as communities.

First, Kaduna state must create a new peace narrative which is acceptable to all stakeholders in the state. Such process could include a formation of joint civilian vigilante groups consisting of respected representative of warring communities to complement the overstretched government security agencies. Such joint security initiatives in Kaduna, especially in the volatile Southern Kaduna, will help to build trust and protect vulnerable communities against invaders and aggressors. This type of intervention is required especially in the hard to reach areas where it takes the security agencies too long to respond to distress calls from communities.

Second, the Kaduna State government and the political elite in the state need to unlearn and dismantle the culture of structural and cultural violence. The Kaduna State government should consider “undoing” some old policies which tend to rank one ethnic or religious group over another in a plural

society, thereby promotes exclusion and violent social relations. Thus, the extant government in the state should build, rather than destroy, bridges across ethno-religious divides. For instance, as contained in Kafanchan Peace Declaration mediated by Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, one major observation is that five local government areas in Southern Kaduna are divided societies, [polarised in some of the most institutionalised structures, such as housing areas specific to ethnic group, Christian and Moslem Schools, ethnic or religious based markets as well as cultural activities.](#) This is the time to embrace new “learning by building new content and pedagogical content knowledge relevant” to Kaduna state and its diverse ethno-religious groups (Klein, 2008:80). As described by ODI (Oversea Development Institute), good policymaking involves getting to grips with the coalitions of who gets what, when and how, in such a way that it promotes peace and development (Kelsall,2016). Therefore, groups naturally feel that are a policy will be good for them, when someone from their community is part of the decision-making.

Third, civil society organisations in the state (and Nigeria) should wake up to their watchdog roles. They should scrutinise government policies and responses to social issues and act as a voice for the voiceless, marginalised, and



oppressed. They should embrace and promote new thinking and understanding in development. For instance, the “Thinking and Working Politically” approach to development, led by the Development Leadership Programme(DLP) and DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, formerly AusAID) and the others, is anchored on the belief that 'the political settlements approach focuses on how competition among groups shapes the creation, distribution and use of rents, especially learning rents, as well as the ability of ruling elites to implement changes in formal and informal institutions that are contested'(Gray & Whitfield,2014: 3).This should form the foundation for the campaign against violent conflicts and exclusion, especially having an inclusive elite bargain(Lindemann,2008).

Fourth, political elites, traditional and religious leaders in the state should not make statement which can fuel violence. Their influence within these communities make their suggestions almost like a directive to commit violence. People who promote divisive ideology and hate speech should not be allowed to lead the state or communities, knowing full well that a good leader unites rather than divides the people. For instance, the claims and counter-claims around the Kajuru village killings,(a day to the rescheduled Presidential and National Assembly elections of February 16, 2019), [were labelled as insensitive and unhelpful to the cause of peace in the state.](#)

Fifth, employment should be generated for the youth in both public and private sectors. Since conflict entrepreneurs incentivise and mobilise unemployed youth for violence, employment

opportunities should be promoted to reduce the vulnerability of youth. Judging from the economic situation facing the nation, with a lot of industries having closed down in Kaduna state, there must be new approach to generate employment. There is need for 'new thinking' on approaches to employment generation, just like the Doing Development Differently (DDD) network, which brings together diverse stakeholders with shared frustrations about the frequently disappointing results of development aid, Kaduna state must think through its employment generation strategy, working with all relevant stakeholders in the state.

In conclusion, the escalation of conflicts in Kaduna State is a strong indication that extant violence mitigation strategies have not succeeded. Considering the slight power parity between political elites on both side of the state, building an [inclusive political settlements, addressing causes and effects of age-long violence, will contribute to a strong state-society\(communities\)relations, which will building peace and the society.](#)



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