



BENUUE STATE

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE PEACE (CIPP)

**STATE ENGAGEMENT Policy Outcome
DOCUMENT With STATE ACTORS
(SEPOD-SA)**



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COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE PEACE (CIPP)



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ACRONYMS

CIPP - Community Initiatives to Promote Peace

GRR – Grazing Route Reserves

OGPRE – Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment

IMC - Interfaith Mediation Centre

LUA – Land Use Act

SCDDD – Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development

PARE – Pastoral Resolve

AMRC - Advocacy, Mediation and Reconciliation Council

ARDA- Africa Radio and Drama Association

CSOs - Civil Society Organizations

CEPOD – Community Engagement Policy Outcome Document

KASU - Kaduna State University

SEPOD- SA – State Engagement Policy Outcome Document with State Actors

IES- Inclusive Educational System

CRA- Child's Right Act

ORGANISATION PROFILE

About Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy & Development (SCDDD)

Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD) is a non-governmental organization committed to research, advocacy training and policy analysis in the areas of conflict prevention, management, democracy and sustainable development in Nigeria and Africa. The SCDDD is leading strategic discussions on inclusive governance for sustainable development, in order to promote human security, sustainable peace, good governance, rule of law and human rights in Nigeria and Africa, shaping public policy through research and knowledge sharing. We are committed to improving the democratic and governance space through advocacy and the provision of context-specific training and solutions to governments, policymakers and some non-state actors.

About Community Initiatives to Promote Peace (CIPP)

The Community Initiatives to Promote Peace (CIPP) project is a five-year peacebuilding program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to prevent violent conflict in the most at-risk communities across Six (6) states in Nigeria's North Central (Kogi, Benue and Plateau) and North West (Katsina, Kano and Kaduna).

CIPP is implemented in partnership with Mercy Corps Nigeria, Pastoral Resolve (PARE), Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC), Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD), and the African Radio and Drama Association (ARDA).

About Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action — helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Initiatives to Promote Peace (CIPP) is a five-year USAID-funded program that seek to empower communities to prevent and respond to violence and violent extremism by strengthening key skills and relationships, and to foster an enabling environment for peace through policy advocacy, media outreach, and linkages to development programs.

Since 2019, CIPP is being implemented by a consortium of organizations expected to play specific roles in the following manner;

- Mercy Corps Nigeria: Responsible for the management of the consortium as well as leading in the rigorous research, technical expertise in conflict prevention and response amongst others;*
- Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC): Leading interfaith dialogues and cross-religion exchanges for the purposes of promoting peace across the CIPP States;*
- Pastoral Resolve (PARE): Leading dialogue and mediation training, bringing its expertise working at the community level to prevent rural violence, especially between the farmers and pastoralists;*
- Africa Radio and Drama Association (ARDA): Leading a communication and mass media strategy across all program activities and amplifying critical project awareness;*
- Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD): Leading in analyzing evidence-based assessment on the relevant existing States and Federal policies vis-à-vis developing policies/bills that could possibly influence conflicts, as well as engaging with critical state actors and policy-makers in advocating for policy change or review where necessary for the purposes of promoting sustainable peace and to mitigate violent conflict in at-risk communities in six (6) CIPP States.*

Policies are specific decisions, actions and inactions, rules and regulations or conditions designed to guide present and future decisions, growth and development while advocacy is the process of strategically managing and sharing knowledge to change and/or influence policies, legislations and practices that affect people's lives. Policy advocacy, as a core component of the CIPP program, is spearheaded by the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD), who has so far organized a series of policy-focused activities at the community, state and national levels. At the state level, SCDDD has organized Policy Forums in Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Benue, Kogi and Plateau states to engage with selected critical stakeholders to raise awareness of conflict-relevant policies and to solicit inputs and recommendations. At the national level, National Policy Desk Review forums with selected critical stakeholders in peace building, governance, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), youth and women groups, Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) and the media amongst others, have been held to facilitate discuss around national policies that affect or have the potential to affect peace and stability in the country. At the community level, SCDDD leveraged on Community Town Hall Policy Dialogue events organized by other consortium members in Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Plateau, Benue and Kogi states to engage critical stakeholders in obtaining inputs and feedbacks on problematic policies and propose implementable recommendations towards policy change that can promote peace and mitigate crises in the communities .In the same vein, validation workshops were held in all the six CIPP States aimed at engaging and receiving systemic and logical input(s) from critical stakeholders and gatekeepers/gate-openers imperative to the impact of CIPP projects and workability of the State Engagement Policy Outcome Document (SEPOD).

In February 2021, SCDDD inaugurated a 7-member Advocacy, Mediation and Reconciliation Council (AMRC) to embark on quiet diplomacy and open advocacy using mediation and sustained dialogues to engage with major government stakeholders and gatekeepers/gate-openers. The council is to bridge the gap between community, civil society leaders, businesspeople, other stakeholders and state actors (decision-makers), to advocate for policy change where possible. The AMRC is composed of highly influential, patriotic citizens with access and a large circle of influence who embarked on strategic advocacy/engagement visits in the six CIPP states.

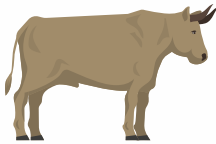


BENUÉ STATE

Benue State is in the North Central (geo-political zone) of Nigeria with a population of about 4,253,641 as at the 2006 national census. It is inhabited predominantly by three (3) major ethnic groups, who speak Tiv, Idoma, and Iggede languages respectively. Benue State is a rich agricultural state which grows variety of root crops, grains and assorted fruits and these have earned it the tag "the food basket of the nation". Benue State was created in 1976 by the administration of General Murtala Muhammed. There are adherents of Christianity, Islam and traditional religion in the State. The State has enjoyed relative peace over the years, except for the periodic communal clashes between the Tiv and Jukuns and other intra-communal disputes. However, conflicts between farmers and herders have been on the increase with dire consequences on economic opportunities and agricultural resources. These have manifested in violent conflicts, kidnappings, proliferation of small arms and light weapons vis a vis other

skirmishes. The government (both State and Federal) in the bid to curb the rising incidences of violence in the State has put in place several intervention policies, laws, and structures aimed at dousing the tensions and bringing about peaceful coexistence. While some of these policies and laws have flourished, some have been alleged to bedrivers of violent conflicts in the State.

Lists of Reviewed Policies in Benue Community Engagement Policy Outcome Document



*Benue State Open Grazing
Prohibition and Ranches
Establishment Law (2017);*



*Benue State Policy on
Indigeneity;*



*Violence against Persons
Prohibition (VAPP) Law 2019*

ADVOCACY VISITS

HIGHLIGHTS

- i The paramount goal of this project, is to ensure that laws and policies in operation are widely accepted by the people
- ii Often times, when laws are made, the people are not widely consulted and neither do they understand the purpose for which the law was made
- iii There is a lot of misunderstanding among the people because of the inability to understand the exact intention and agenda of the government when certain policies are made

CHALLENGES

i

Women are often neglected in terms of active participation across board, especially in peacebuilding

ii

Whenever there is an outbreak of violence in Benue state, women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly are most vulnerable

iii

Over time laws become obsolete and need to be reviewed

iv

The influx of armed herdsmen in the state is one of the major causes of the violent conflicts in the state

RECOMMENDATIONS

i Before a bill is passed into law, there should be adequate research and wide consultation(s) with communities and stakeholders

ii Round table discussions with critical stakeholders on contentious laws and policies in the state are important for sustainable peace

iii More women should be included in policy making processes and appointed into decision making positions in compliance with the Benue State Women Peace Security Policy

iv The youth in the state should be actively involved in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation

v Principles of fairness, inclusion, equity, conflict sensitivity and integrity should be core values in formulating policies in the state

vi The Federal government should respect the constitutional powers of States to make and implement laws

RECOMMENDATIONS

vii

Sustainable peace is a core need which can be attained through dialogue and continuous engagements

viii

Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) should be included in policy making processes and appointed into decision making positions in compliance with the Disability Act 2018

HIGHLIGHTS

- i The implementation of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law is contentious in the State, though it evolved from the citizens as a measure to bring an end to the incessant conflict between herders and farmers
- ii Some citizens are not adequately enlightened regarding some laws, therefore, there is need for more publicity on the contents of the laws
- iii Failure of some Federal government agencies to adequately enforce relevant laws/policies passed by the State government
- iv The herders most times are not ready to adapt to the ranching style of grazing for their animals
- v The Livestock guards employed to enforce the provisions of the law are accused of compromising on their responsibilities and this leads to continuous conflicts

CHALLENGES

i

Farmers are not adequately compensated for the loss and destruction of their crops and this leads to violent reactions

ii

The incessant crisis has led to an increase in the number of traumatized persons and this has serious effect on productivity

iii

The wrong perception and faulty implementation of the law (OGPRE- Law 2017) has instigated a lot of violent conflicts in the state

iv

Some of the persons often invited for town hall meetings, do not adequately represent the interests of the people in society

v

The judicial system is slow especially for the prosecution of rape crimes and justice is often delayed in the state

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i There is need for sensitization at the grass-root level before and during implementation of laws/policies
- ii The town-hall meetings should be more inclusive in nature
- iii The laws enacted at the state level should be supported and enforced by agencies of the Federal government
- iv There is need for continuous dialogue among the three tiers of Government
- v The Herders and Farmers in the state should be properly sensitized on the OGPRE- Law 2017, to ensure understanding and cooperation
- vi An effective monitoring mechanism should be put in place to checkmate the activities of the Livestock guards and those found guilty of abuse and compromise should be appropriately sanctioned

RECOMMENDATIONS

vii

There should be more inclusive engagement of women, youth, Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) and other minority groups in promotion of peace in the state

viii

Religious leaders and traditional rulers should be taught, trained and sensitized on how to handle rape cases being reported to them to ensure that justice is served accordingly as a way of discouraging future perpetrators

ix

A family court should be operationalized (funded) by the ministry of justice in the state, to ensure that justice is served effectively especially for the rape victims

PHOTO GALLERY



CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

In conclusion, the Centre intend to consolidate lessons learned from the State Engagements with State Actors and other stakeholders on conflict activities to leverage positive impacts by improving on new sets of activities in the coming years across violent prone communities vis-a-vis conflict prevention and trust-building at the community, state and federal levels.

The centre also poise to strengthen more efficiently citizenry sensitization, participation in policy formulation and implementation processes by deepening inclusion of women, youth and other marginalized groups via sustainable dialogues, strategic collaboration and critical engagements in problem solving mechanisms, in addressing and responding to root causes of violent conflicts and plausible ways to strengthen policies.

The Advocacy, Mediation and Reconciliation Council (AMRC) For Community Initiatives to Promote Peace (CIPP) Project

**A 7-Member Council with a Mandate to
Embark on Strategic Advocacy Activities
for Conflict Mitigation and Peace building**

ROLES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ADVOCACY, MEDIATION AND RECONCILIATION COUNCIL (AMRC)

The Advocacy, Mediation and Reconciliation Council (AMRC) is tasked with working with Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD) in the six CIPP States and at the national level to:


1. Mitigate violent conflict:
2. Promote peaceful coexistence and stakeholders' collaboration vis-à-vis influencing policy change or review of laws or bills that are conflict sensitive by nature in the following States; Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Plateau, Benue and Kogi respectively.
3. Embark on strategic advocacy/engagement visits to Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Plateau, Benue and Kogi States, using mediation and sustained dialogues to engage major critical stakeholders and gatekeepers, namely; State Government (Executive, Legislative and Judiciary) as well as Security Agencies.
4. Periodically or as the need arises, engage with critical State actors at the Federal level.


The AMRC will draw on findings from policy analyses and community consultations to support community and civil society leaders, businesspeople, and other concerned stakeholders to meet with policymakers and government decision makers at the Federal level to advocate for new policies, recommend revisions for proposed legislation, or make recommendations for policy implementation. In the fifth year of CIPP implementation, it is expected that the AMRC will use these sets of Policy Outcome Documents (POD) produced from years 1 - 4 to present community concerns and recommendations at the National level.

MEMBERS OF THE ADVOCACY, MEDIATION AND RECONCILIATION COUNCIL (AMRC)


S/N	STATE	NAME	DESIGNATION	STATUS
1.	Kano	Amb. Aminu Wali, mni, CON	Former Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria.	Chairman
2.	Katsina	Mal. Abidu Yazid, OON	Development Economist and Chairman, Board of Directors, Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development.	Co-Chairman
3.	Plateau	Ms. Sarah Ochekepe CON,	Former Minister of Water Resource, Federal Republic of Nigeria.	Member
4.	Kogi	Ms. Eugenia Abu	Founder and CEO , The Eugenia Abu Media Centre	Member
5.	Kaduna	Prof Hauwa' u Evelyn Yusuf	Director, Centre for Gender Studies, Kaduna State University (KASU)	Member
6.	Benue	Ms. Charity Echor	Founder/CEO, Northern Nigerian Women Initiative	Member
7.	Abuja	Amb. Sani Bala (Wamban Katsina)	Former Nigerian Ambassador to Qatar , Former Federal Permanent Secretary and the Executive Director, Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development	National Coordinator





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