The Incessant Conflicts in Taraba State: The Agonies of Women during and After the Conflicts, 1991 – 2021

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Abstract

Taraba State was created in 1991 with far reaching enthusiasm among the various groups occupying the State. The ethnic violence erupted in 1991/92 laid foundation for the seed of discord among these people. Its rich natural endowments explain why the state was given the slogan "Nature Gift to the Nation". However, the anticipated blessings have turned to be mix sorrow because of the incessant communal, farmers-herdsmen conflicts and banditry attacks. The affected areas are Wukari, Ibi, Donga, Takum, Gassol, Bali, Ardo-Kola, Jalingo, Lau, Gashaka, Kurmi and Sardauna Local Government Areas. This ugly events within the areas mentioned above have claimed several lives and huge amount of properties destroyed, in addition to the thousands of Internally Displaced Persons some being compelled to live in camp in different parts of the state. Very worrisomely, the unfortunate development has left many women widows and thousands of children orphans who find it difficult to have access to quality life not to talk of access to education. Equally very disturbing is the fact that the living conditions of many women during and after the conflicts have hindered the chances of actualizing better future for their children. Unfortunately, both the Federal and State governments seem not to be paying adequate attention to the plight of the affected women. This has compelled NGOs, religious body and philanthropists to take over government responsibilities in IDP camps which are even established by the government. The thrust of argument in this study is that

even though women are not the main actors in these incessant conflicts, they bear the brunt during and after the conflicts. This paper therefore seeks to assess the causes of incessant conflicts in Taraba state, the challenges faced by women during and after conflicts, the implications of neglecting the women during and after conflicts. Equally importantly, the paper examines the ripple effects of this development on the people and development of state in general. Methodology adopted in the study is primary and secondary sources. The primary source relies on oral interviews, while the secondary source examines relevant documents such as newspapers, textbooks, journals, compendium, seminar papers and other relevant documents.

Keywords: Incessant Conflicts, Agonies, Women, IDP, NGO

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Introduction
Taraba State has about eighty (80) ethnic groups1. The dominant ethnic groups from inception till date are the followings: Mumuye, Tiv, Jukun, Mambilla, Kaka, Kambu, Panso Hausa, Fulani (Fulbe), Wurkun, etc. The group had been in existence in what became Taraba State which was carved out of defunct Gongola State[1]. Immediately, after its creation, the conflict between Tiv versus Jukun, Hausa-Fulani versus Jukun/Tiv, became source of worry to residents of state.

Conflict results from mental and psychological state of mind associated with opposition arising from simultaneous but incompatible desires, needs, drives, or impulses, disagreement or clash between ideas, principles, or people. Incessant conflict could be regarded as a long drawn warfare between opposing forces, especially a prolonged and bitter struggle. In summary, conflict means open violent aggression between or within groups.

Taraba state has over the years been witnessing series of conflicts such as ethno-religious, disputes over land, communal conflicts, farmers-herdsmen attacks and banditry attacks.

Most of these conflicts have occurred more regularly in areas such as Wukari, Lau, Sardauna, Jalingo, Ardo-Kola, Takum, Donga, Bali, Ibi, Gassol, Gashaka, Kurmi Local Government Areas. While some of these conflicts have led to loss of several lives and properties, they have also caused many to become Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in camps in Jalingo, Bali, Gassol, Takum, Donga, Wukari and other areas within the state. Specifically, from 2015 – 2021, Tiv extraction are badly affected in conflict in eight (8) Local Government Areas namely Wukari, Ibi, Ardo-Kola, Gassol, Takum, Donga, Bali and Ghasaka. The Internally Displaced Camps are visibly located in the above mentioned eight (8) LGAs[2]. Some of the IDPs are further disadvantaged by the inability of their children to enroll in schools in the camps because of financial incapability and hardship. The living conditions of parents and guardians have also hindered the chances of actualizing their dreams in life. The experiences of women during and after the crisis in the state is pathetic. The perpetual conflicts in Taraba State have become monsters hunting every souls living within the state. Many analysts have traced the cause of these long drawn conflicts to state creation exercise on 27th August, 1991, because of the multifaceted ethno-religious nature of the State[3]. Alas, the cosmopolitan nature of the Nigeria state could be seen as the seed of discord when it ought to be source of wealth taken from cultural perspectives. Although, the incessant conflicts are deeply rooted in both remote and immediate causes, while the remote causes could be traced to cleavage in ethnicity with sharp identity, the immediate causes are also deeply rooted in political rivalry among the major ethnic groups in the State.

Both the Federal and State governments are seemingly not paying adequate attention to the plight of the victims of crises. This has shifted most of the responsibilities to the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious bodies and philanthropists to perform. The paper seeks to examine the causes and implications of the neglect of the IDPs on the agonies of women and children in the State. Both primary and secondary sources have been adopted through oral interviews, data analysis, newspapers and relevant written documents for data collection.

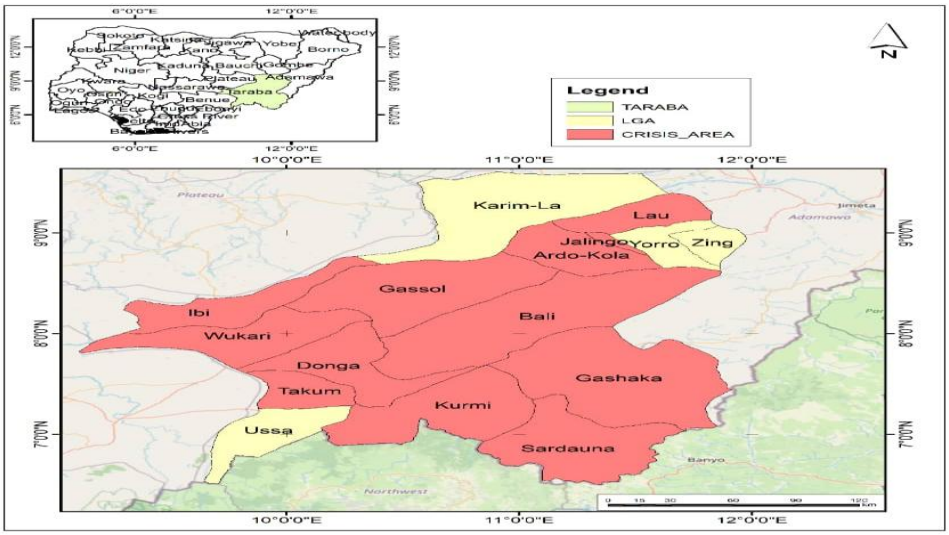
Geographical Locations of Taraba State

Taraba State was created out of the defunct Gongola State on 27th August, 1991, by the military government under General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. The area used to be referred to as the Southern part of the defunct Gongola state. The State is named after the Taraba River which transverses the southern part of the State.

Taraba State is located within the North-east region of Nigeria. The State has a land mass of about 60,291.82sq with a population of about 2,300,736, according to 2006 Census. By

landmass, the state is the third largest in Nigeria with 54,473km, following Borno state with 70,898km, and with Niger states coming first with 76,363km[4].
The state lies between latitudes $6^{0}36'$ north and longitude $9^{0}10'$ and $11^{0}50'$ east. It is bounded on the north and north-east by Bauchi, Gombe, and Adamawa States; on the north-west, by Plateau State; on the West by Benue and Nasarawa states. Taraba state equally shares international boundary with Cameroon on the south and south-east.

On its inception on the 27th August, 1991, Taraba state had nine (9) Local Government Areas, namely: Bali, Gashaka, Jalingo, Karim-Lamido, Lau, Sardauna, Takum, Wukari, and Zing. In September, 1991, Donga, Ibi and Yorro were added to the LGAs, while in 1996, Ardo-Kola, Gassol, Kurmi and Ussa LGAs were created. This raised the number of the LGAs to sixteen (16) till date. Also, two Special Development Areas Yangtu and Ndaga, were created in 2008 and 2017 respectively[5]. Below is the map showing the location of Taraba State in the map of Nigeria and Map of Taraba State showing the sixteen (16) Local Government Areas of the State. The map equally shows twelve (12) Local Government Areas that have been affected by the incessant conflicts.



Designed by Nkyareuten M. Ipeyen, Cartographer in the Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences, Taraba State University, Jalingo, Nigeria[6].

The People and Mineral Resources in Taraba State

The major ethnic groups in Taraba State are: Mumuye, Tiv, Jukun, Fulani, Wurkun, Chamba, Jenjo, Kuteb, Mambilla, Yangdang, Karimjo and Hausa. There are other groups such as Kaka, Kambu, Mbamga,Tigun, Zo, Lo, Panso, to mention but few. Interestingly, prior to colonial rule, and even during and after colonial rule, the history of inter-ethnic relations among the group was impressively very cordial[7].

Taraba state lies within the tropical zone and has a vegetation of low forest in the Southern part and grass land in the Northern part. The rich agrarian and alluvial nature of the soil found in most parts of the state makes Taraba state to be conducive for the cultivation of all types of food and cash crops.

The state is blessed with solid mineral resources in different parts such as Graphite, Feldspar, Iron Ore, Muscovite, Glassy Quartz, Flourspar, Garnet, Tourmaline, Sapphire, Zircon, Tantalite, Columbite, Cassiterite, Baryte, Galena, Gypsum, Limestone, Laterite, Brine (Salt Solution), Calcite, Bauxite, Magnetite, Pyrite, Salt (Evaporates), Lead/Zinc Ore. These mineral resources present the state really as "Nature's Gift to the Nation". Agro raw materials such as Sorghum, Maize, Millet, Rice, Wheat (Irrigated), Groundnut, Yam, Cow Pea, Livestock, Soyabeans, Bambara Nuts, Beniseed, Cotton, Jute, Cassava, Sweet Potato, Cocoyam, Vegetable, Banana and plantain are abundant in the State. Fishing is equally an important aspect of the economy of the state, including crafts at various sorts like blacksmithing, pottery etc[8].

Also, in the southern part of Taraba State, people engage in the production of traditional textile industry. This has become a trademark to sons and daughters of the area in any occasion as a means of identity. Unfortunately, even with all these resources, peaceful co-existence has become a mirage to the teeming population residing in the State.

The Nature of Conflicts and Parties Involved in Taraba State

Taraba State has sixteen (16) Local Government Areas, with Jalingo as its capital. The general belief among the people living within the state capital is that Jalingo is relatively peaceful because people hardly experience serious skirmishes. However, the people living around the sub-hubs of the state capital are not free from one conflict or the other. This usually brings up IDP camps within Jalingo metropolis. Among such camps could be seen at Muslim Council. Seminaries, Secretariat, Kona Village, Sabon-Gari and few uncompleted buildings around Babanyau opposite the new complex of Central Bank of Nigeria[9].

The conflicts in the northern Zone, have always been either ethno-religious in nature or farmer-herdersmen conflicts. The parties involved in farmers-herdersmen conflicts in the Zone are either Fulani versus Kona or Fulani-Mummes. However, ethnic conflicts have always been Kona versus Mummye within the affected villages[10]. In the case conflict in southern Taraba the major has remained the struggle over land ownership and indigene-settlers question. This is largely between the Tiv-Jukun on one hand, and Kuteb-Chamba/Jukun on the other hand. And for the Central Zone, the conflicts have always assumed ethno-religious and economic colorations.

In summary, for the Southern Senatorial District, the areas badly affected by conflicts are Wukari, Ibi, Donga and Takum. While Bali, Kurmi, Gashaka, Sardauna have experienced conflicts in Central Senatorial District, Northern Senatorial District has Jalingo, Ardo-Kola, Lau and Zinc equally involved in one form of conflict or the other. The table presented below details about the nature of conflicts in Taraba state from 1991 – 2021. It also gives detail information about the location, date and nature of conflicts, as well as sources of information provided.

Summary of Ethno-Religious and economic Conflicts in Taraba State, 1991 – 2021

S/N	Location	Date	Nature	Parties Involved	Immediate cause	Displaced Figure	Effects	References
1.	Wukari	1990-1992	Ethnic	Jukun Vs. Tiv	Dispute over farm land and politics	Loss tangible number of lives	Loss of lives with large quantum of properties destroyed	Oral Interview, Atando Dauda Agbu, Department of History & Diplomatic Studies, Taraba State University.
2	Jalingo	February, 1992	Religious	Muslims Vs. Christian/ Traditionalist	Killing of Christian Student in Science School and killing of Muslim Students GD SS Jalingo	Over 8,000	Loss of Lives and Destruction of Properties	Oral Interview, Alhaji Chindo Muhammad (Secretary), Muslim Council, Jalingo,

								Taraba State & Pastor Samson Ekiran, Faith Kingdom Inter'l Church, Jalingo
3.	Karim Lamido	Mar-April, 1996	Ethnic	Herdsmen Vs. Farmers	Dispute over farmland		Destruction of farm settlements properties and killing of cattle.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
4.	Karim Lamido	April, 1997	Ethnic	Herdsmen Vs. Farmers (Fulani-Wurkun)	Dispute over farmland	Non	Destruction of farm settlements properties and killing of cattle.	Muhammad Chindo, Secretary Muslim Council, Jalingo
5.	Karim Lamido	March, 1998	Ethnic	Herdsmen Vs. Farmers (Fulani-Wurkun)	Dispute over land		Destruction of farm settlements properties and killing of cattle	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
6.	Wukari	July, 1999	Ethnic	Herdsmen Vs. Farmers (Tiv-Fulani)	Dispute over grazing on the farm land	Over 12,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	Destruction of properties, killing of people and displacement of communities.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
7.	Tsokundi Wukari	August, 1999	Ethnic	Herdsmen Vs. Farmers (Tiv-Fulani)	Dispute over grazing on the farm land	Over 5,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	Destruction of properties, killing of people and displacement of communities.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
8.	Wukari	May, 2001	Religious	Muslims Vs. Christian	Demolition of Mosque within the Federal	Non	Several lives were lost in the conflict with	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis,

					Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Premises in Wukari		properties destroyed.	Unpublished Work
9.	Gidan Idi, Wukari	26th June, 2001 – 20th January 2002	Ethnic	Fulani/Jukun Vs. Tiv	Clash over farm land	About 13,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	Over 268 people were killed and properties destroyed.	Akombo I. Elijah,, 2016, p197-208
10.	Gidan Idi, Wukari	February, 2002	Ethnic	Fulani Vs. Jukun	Cases of cattle rustling against Jukun	Over 4,000 people were displaced	Killing of people and destruction of properties.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
11.	Gembu	March, 2002	Ethnic	Fulani vs. Mambilla	Discrimination, hatred, intimidation amongst the warrying the two groups	About 2,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	Loss of lives, destruction of properties and displacement of persons.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
12.	Wukari	October, 2005	Religious	Muslims Vs. Non-Muslims	An Argument between Wukari Prince and a young Muslim person	Non	Loss of lives and destruction of properties.	Oral Interview Alhaji Haruna Mohammad
13.	Lau	July, 2007	Ethnic - Religious	Hausa Vs. LauHaube	Political motivated conflict	About 2,000 persons were displaced (Oral source)	Loss of lives, destruction of properties and displacement of persons.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
14.	Takum	March, 2008	Ethnic	Kuteb Vs. Chamba/Jukun	Misunderstanding over Cultural festival	Non	Many Properties were destroyed.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work

15.	Wukari	July, 2010	Religious	Muslims Vs. Non-Muslims	Mosques was demolished at the Police Area Command	Non	Several people were killed with large quantum of properties destroyed.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
16.	Takum	February, 2012	Ethnic	Kuteb vs. Tiv	Dispute over land	About 1,500 Tiv farmers were displaced	Farmland and properties destroyed	Oral Interview with Ande Simon, Retired Civil Servant
17.	Takum	June, 2012	Ethnic	Fulani vs. Tiv	Dispute over land, the Fulani grazed on farmland owned by Tiv farmer	Displacement of 500 Tiv in Peva community by Fulani herdsmen	Farm land destroyed and the Tiv houses were burnt with properties.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
18.	Donga Ibi Takum} LGAs Gassol Bali Wukari	Feb. – Dec., 2013	Ethnic	Herdsmen Vs. Farmers (Fulani-Tiv)	Argument between farmer and Fulani herdsman over grazing on farm land	Between 5,000 to 6,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	187 People were killed in six (6) LGAs with large quantum properties destroyed and victims left their abode for ID camp in Bali Local Government Area.	Open Letter to the President of the Federal Republic on Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, on 30th June, 2014 by Tiv people.
19.	Ibi	June, 2014	Religious	Muslims Vs. Christian	Attack on Muslims caused the fracas	Over 7,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	People were killed and properties destroyed.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
20.	Ardo-kola	April, 2015	Religious And Politic	Muslims Vs. Christian	Jubilation over the announcement	Non	Part supporters were killed and	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis,

			al rivalry		gubernatorial election of 2015		properties destroyed	Unpublished Work
21.	Wukari	November, 2015	Religious	Muslims Vs. Christian	Attack on Muslims caused the fracas led to full blown conflict	About 2,000 people were displaced (Oral source)	People were killed and properties destroyed.	Badamasi, A. M. PhD Thesis, Unpublished Work
22.	Nammai, Gassol LGA	July, 2015	Ethnic	Mummye Vs. Fulani	Forceful grazing on farm land by Fulani herdsmen	Non	People were killed with large quantum properties destroyed	Madu A. Y. & Ibrahim G, IJSH, Vol. 4 No.3
23.	Gashaka	April, 2016	Ethnic	Fulani Vs. Ndola	Fulani Herdsmen killed an Ndola woman on farmland	Non	Several people were killed and Seven Fulani leaders were arrested	Madu A. Y. & Ibrahim G, IJSH, Vol. 4 No.3
24.	Karim-lamido	April, 2016	Ethnic	Shumo Vs. Wurkun	Reprisal attack on Shumo people	0ver 2,000 people were displaced (Oral source).		Femi B. The Guardian Newpaper
25.	Dan_Anacha,, Gassol	December, 19, 2016	Ethnic	Tiv Vs. Fulani	Fulani herdsmen open fire on newly returned farmers to the village	Non	18 people reportedly killed (Sources: Vanguard Newspaper)	John M. Vanguard Newspaper
26.	Gembu, Sardauna LGA	June, 2017	Ethnic and Religious	Fulani Vs. Mambilla	Land dispute between Fulani Herdsmen and Mambilla	Over 15,000 persons in different IDPs in Sardauna, Gashaka and Bali LGAs	Over 728 lives were reportedly lost with large properties destroyed.	Daily Trust Newspaper

27.	Sardauna LGA Mayo-Sina	December 14, 2017	Illegal Miners	Illegal Miners Vs. Police Authority	Illegal business activity	Villagers ran away for safety	Many people were killed	Premium Times
28.	Maisamari Town in Sardauna LGA	January 7, 2018	Ethnic	Militia group vs. Fulani	Dispute over cultural festival	Non were displaced	Three (3) persons died, six other sustained serious injuries.	The Premium online media
29.	Lau LGA	January 10, 2018	Ethnic	Herdersmen Vs. Famers	Dispute over land	Over 800 people were displaced	55 people killed	Rafiu Ajakaiye, Africa on line Media
30.	Jandeikyula Village, Wukari LGA	April 2, 2018	Ethnic	Fulani Vs. Famers	Dispute over land	Non were displaced	Twenty-five (25) persons were killed	
31.	Lau LGA	July 9-12, 2018	Ethnic	Farmers vs. Herders men	Over land dispute	Twelve (12) villages were destroyed with over 2500 displaced	42 people were reportedly killed by community leaders. While media house reported only 16 people.	The Premium online media
32.	Kona District, Jalnigo	April, 2019	Ethnic	Kona/Mummy vs. Fulani	Dispute over farmland when Fulani herdsman invade a Kona famer	Over 8,000 people were displaced and camped in different camps such as Gullum Maternity IDP camp, Mayo Dassa Primary	About 60 persons were killed houses belonging to Kona, Mummuye and Fulani were destroyed with large number of properties.	The Premium online media

						School, Nukkai Primary School		
33.	Yauwai, Abare Jakoro I, Jakoro II And Abare under Kona in Jalingo LGA	June, 2019	Ethnic	Fulani vs. Kona	Dispute over land between Fulani and Kona people	About 1,208 people were camped in Kona Primary School	Many houses razed down. About 123 people were killed	Odeleye A. The Punch Newspaper
34.	Wukari	July 31, 2019	Ethnic	Tiv Vs. Jukun	The protest by students over the kidnapping and subsequent killing of the victims along Wukari-Kastina-Ala highway	Non	Three (3) people were killed.	Sam A. The Nations Newspaper
35.	Lau LGA	April 13, 2020	Ethnic	Shomo Vs. Jole	Long-standing animosity between the neighbouring communities over lake's ownership	Non	About 100 houses were razed down. Nineteen (19) people were killed.	Aljazeera
36.	Kurmi LGA	June 8 -9, 2020	Ethnic	Ichen Vs. Tiv	Communal fight	Moved in numbers to Benue State and IDP camps in Takum and Gassol LGAs	Villages belonging to Ichen, Tiv and Jibawa were deserted	Daily Trust Newspaper

37.	Bali LGA	May 13-15, 2021	Ethnic and Religious	Tiv Vs. Suspected Herdsmen	Herdsmen attack on various communities in the area.	Over 4,000 people were displaced. Taking refuge in Traditional Council Hall, NKST Church, and Legislative Quarters in Bali town	Thirteen (13) persons killed	Vanguard Newspaper

Sources: Field work, Report of the enquiry committees, Petitions, Unpublished work, Newspaper Reports, Textbooks and Journals.

The Causes of Incessant Conflicts between the Tiv and Jukun in Taraba State, 1991 – 2021

Several reasons are responsible for the incessant conflicts in the twelve (12) Local Government Areas of Taraba State earmarked for the study. In the case of the Tiv and Jukun, animosity between the two actors in the conflicts areas is really beyond what can be examined on the surface. From available information about the Tiv-Jukun conflicts, the animosity between the two groups goes beyond land, political, economic or claim over traditional stool. It is deeply rooted in individual and collective hatred for one another. It has in fact, assumed the dimension of enemy image, which this study uncovered clearly in thee series of interviewed conducted with members of the two groups below. For security purpose, the identity of people interviewed are covered.

1. Respondent i: A young Tiv man responded to the gravity of the enmity between his people and the Jukun lamented thus:

   > I proposed a lady living with a man of God pastoring a church in Wukari, when the pastor got to know that I am a Tiv boy from Seriki Kudus in Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State, he said over his dead body for the lady to marry a Tiv person. The lady came and told me to call elders in my church to go and plead with her Uncle for him to bless our union, which I did, but the man refused our plea completely. This is a big blow

> to me as a Christian. I asked myself, what is the essence of church and the same God we claim we are worshipping. Since that day, any Jukun person to me does not seem to believe in oneness of God[11].
>
> A Tiv Interviewed in Jalingo 02-03-2021

2. Respondent ii: In my interaction with a middle age Jukun woman on why the incessant conflicts between her people and the Tiv seem to defy all solutions despite all efforts put in place by Non-governmental Organisations, Government Agencies, and relevant authorities, she stated emphatically that:

> You know this people are not from our Local Government Area. They (Tiv) always claim they are indigenes, meanwhile, from available records from our parents, we were told that the people (Tiv) belong to Benue State. How can they be laying claim to two states in one country? Can that be possible? Certainly, it is unacceptable to us as far as we are concerned. They have taken over all fertile lands with no positive impact of their (Tiv) existence on our soil. These are group of people who are settlers but asserting unnecessary authority on our soil[12].
>
> A Jukun Woman Interviewed in Jalingo 20-03-2021.

3. Respondent iii: on why the attainment of peaceful co-existence between Tiv and Jukun is very difficult an anonymous person from Wukari asserted that:

> A Jukun man is a very friendly person with another fellow man, but a Jukun man does not want you to rear your head above him. If you stay for one million years with a Jukun and you remain submissive to him without proving or rearing your head progressively above him, the friendship will be smooth. Stay with him (Jukun) as if you are worshiping him, you will stay peacefully without any problem, but the day you show or try to rise above him, prepare for fight[13].
>
> A Displaced Person from Wukari living in Jalingo 12-10-2021.

4. Respondent iv: A Mambilla man on why it is difficult for Tiv and Jukun to co-exist peacefully declared that:

> A Jukun man is a very sociable person who loves enjoyment but when it comes to tribal issue, a Jukun man is very sensitive and he can be sentimental. This is what I know very well about the Jukun with number of years I have been interacting with them socially. A Tiv man has ego, he believes and sees his language superior to any language. Give a Tiv man

> little opportunity, he will expand and capitalize on it to suppress you later[14].
>
> A Mambilla man living in Jalingo 12-10-2021.

The ripple effects of the crises between the Tiv and Jukun could be regarded as the main cause of conflict in other LGAs in Southern Taraba Area. In fact, these Local Government Areas like Takum, Donga and Ibi, are influenced directly or indirectly by the wave of conflicts between the Tiv and their Jukun brothers in Wukari LGA.

The information culled from Community Conflict in Nigeria: Management, Resolution and Transformation, edited by Onigu Otite and Isaac Olawale Albert gives further insight about the Jukun and Tiv, why it is difficult for the two to co-exist in peace. Accordint to the Document:

i. You see, these Jukun people are people who loved trouble since from the day, that God created them. They will never live in peace with anybody. How can you make peace with a Jukun man?[15]

   A Tiv commentator at Wukari

ii. A Tiv man, what will make him happy? Nothing, except that which he chooses. They are a very stubborn people and you can't satisfy them permanently[16].

   A Fulani commentator at Wukari.

iii. The Tiv people have a unique problem, different from others. They don't consider anybody of fame, except criminals who cause trouble. They prefer such people to lead them to prison. The Tiv have no structure of authority. If for, example, you bring their elders to talk about peace, they-may agree but the youths will reject it. The elders will remain helpless[17].

   A Jukun commentator at Wukari.

iv. You see our Jukun brothers do not want anybody to lay claim to any important thing within Wukari LGA, what they want is for us to remain in perpetual servitude for the rest of our lives. With level of inter-marriage and our involvement in cultural activities we were still regarded as non-indigenes. Though, our fore-fathers migrated to this place long ago, we do not know any other place apart from Wukari, but we are still a second fiddle in our own area. We cannot contest for any political position, to get indigene certificate is becoming

> a difficult issue. With these challenges in Wukari, it could be very difficult to have a required peace in Wukari[18].
>
> A Hausa commentator from Wukari LGA living in Jalingo.

No matter the foregoing comments, the issue of ownership of land and its utilization stand paramount among the causes of crises between groups in Taraba State. There is no group in the state which does not depend on land for its survival[19]. This explains why the major question Atohinko posed in his book bothers on the owners of Wukari land, whether the Jukun or Tiv? He associate the incessant hostitlities in Wukari more with land issue. According to him, for instance the crises could be traced three main issues as follows:

> Three main reasons have been given by various people for the causes of the Tiv-Jukun communal clashes. Such reasons include the pervasive atmosphere of suspicion, ignorance and intolerance of some unpatriotic politicians and other unscrupulous elements among the Jukun and Tiv as well as Hausas within the area who exploited the situation to advance their own selfish and inordinate ambition. Secondly, the recent past conflict which claimed several lives and properties should be seen from the provocative write-ups by both the Tivs and the Jukun elites. And third reason, could be traced to ownership of farmland. Thus, Jukun have continued to see Tiv, Hausa/Fulani as foreigners in their land. And for these ethnic groups, having lived in the area for ages, have continued to reject the foreign status in their place of birth[20].

Although, Atohinko agrees that other factors also played vital role in the incessant conflicts in Taraba State, land factor triggers most of the conflicts experienced in the State. This is because one cannot play politics or write provocative letters or allegations without economic base, which makes land the core of all, the factors[21].

In Sardauna LGA otherwise known as the Mambilla area, the problem is between the Mambilla people and the Hausa/Fulani. Land, religion and other factors are the major issues that usually trigger conflict among them. Apart from these issues, citizenship question is so prevalent among the following ethnic groups: The Mambilla-Kambu/Panso crisis of 2002, Fulani versus Mambilla, Kaka, Kambu and Panso in 2018 were serious conflicts which left many people, particularly women homeless.

The major causes of the conflict on the Mambilla Plateau, particularly between the Mambilla group and the others. Kaka, Kambu, Panso and the Fulbe, has remained the profiling of other groups by the Mambilla as foreigners[22].

Apart from the corrosive profiling, economic factor equally plays some role in the incessant crises on the Plateau. Land ownership and illegal mining activities stand paramount in the series of crises in the area. The case of illegal mining activities has increased the number of weapons imported to the area for the protection of illegal miners[23]. On 15th December, 2017, Iro dan Fulani reported, for instance, that the clash between the police and illegal miners resulted in the death of many people as illegal miners resisted attempt by the police to disrupt their operations. This incident happened in Mayo-Sina area of Mambilla in Sardauna LGA[24].

In Kurmi Local Government Area, the major ethnic groups are Ndola, Tgun, Ichen and Fulani. The Itchen and Tiv in the area are usually be at loggerhead over land issue, while grazing on the farmlands usually triggers conflicts between Fulani and Itchen/Tiv.

In Takum LGA, the Kuteb, Tiv, Chamba and Jukun are the major ethnic groups. Takum town serves as both the seat of Takum Chiefdom and Takum Local Government Headquarters. The major sources of controversy have been the struggle over the ownership of the town and the Chiefdom. The controversy led to Chamba/Jukun -Kuteb clash on October 22nd, 1997, which led to full blown warfare during which several people were killed, many were injured and property worth millions of naira destroyed[25].

Having explained reasons for the incessant conflicts in the twelve (12) LGAs earmarked for the study. It is pertinent to mentioned that eight (8) LGAs are in constant turmoil which Tiv extractions are mostly affected. These Local Government Areas are: Ardo-Kola, Gassol, Ibi, Wukari, Donga, Takum, Bali and Gashaka[26].

The Agonies of Women during and After the Conflicts

Having analysed the causes of incessant conflicts in the areas under study, it is very important to examine the agonies of women during and after the conflict. The agonies of women emanated from the incessant conflicts and wanton destruction of properties. The Encarta Dictionary describes the word 'agony' as great pain or anguish: intense physical pain or mental anguish, intense emotion and a consuming emotion. It usually causes extreme physical or mental suffering[27]. It is a natural phenomenon to see many people emigrating under tumultuous situation caused by violence of any kind, particularly in the event of ethno-religious crises.

The victims of conflicts suffer intense physical pain or mental anguish. The most vulnerable people during and after conflicts are women. The first pain that women encounter is protection for the household particularly children. For the lucky ones, available IDP camps inevitably become the places to hibernate. Unfortunately, IDP camps are environments where freedom is traded off, privacy to life is totally lost because they location dedicated to people who are forced to flee their permanent residence. In this case, no access to luxury of life, required kitchen equipment, adequate food, shelter, clothes and other necessary things that make life meaningful to women are not adequately provided. For instance, according to Beatrice Adi, one of the IDP camps at Ebenezer Primary School, Wukari;

> "the day we entered camp my horrible experience was cold, without good wrapper to cover myself and children, I watched my children suffering helplessly. At that time, evil thought enveloped my life because I felt like committing suicide until help came from the Missionary the following day[28]".

The IDP camp experience for women is very traumatic. It is even more traumatic in the case of women who lost their husbands during conflicts. They (women) automatically wear the cap of head of family. The life in IDP camps subject women to the authority of camp leaders. The women live at the mercy of a different authority outside the family circle. More worrisomely, means of survival usually become the paramount concern in the mind of lucky woman who had survived the gory experience to tell the story. This was testified by Lucy Atoshi at the IDP camp at Ebenezer Primary School, Wukari thus:

> since I came to this camp my children school had stopped because we could not have access to our village where we registered them. My farm destroyed, there is no job I could do which can feed my children adequately. Ability to give command on the choice of food is lost completely, it is what I see with the help of care givers we share to eat. The menial job we do outside is too small to cater for my family. There is no intimacy again between me and my husband. We are all in solitary confinement. The difference between prisoners and Internally Displaced Persons is just movement without prison officers[29].

The information available has shown that women suffer in the IDP camps more than men because women usually experience serious inhuman treatment in the hands of security agents and male counterparts within and outside the camp. The male counterparts usually

take advantage of women by molesting them sexually. At times, as Amina Patrick in Mayo-Dassa Primary School IDP camp testified,

> Some female are being forced to engage in sexual relationship as means of livelihood. She lamented, for instance, that; Feeding is herculean task in the camp. It is very difficult watching our children crying of hunger. We do not care to engage in any ungodly act to feed our family! When legal food ceases to come, we must accept an illegal means to feed them, thereafter we will ask for forgiveness because it is not from heart to sin against God[30].

A similar sorry story was told in the Kona Primary School IDP camp by a woman who confessed that they are forced to allow their grown up girls to go out in the night to hang around with men for money to feed. She mentioned specifically, Jalingo/Mayo-Dassa road. She lamented that they embark on this unwholesome act to make ends meet, especially for the supply of basic woman needs such sanitary pad and underwear for grownup girls

Another very traumatic experience for the women during and after conflict is loss of loved ones during attacks in the course of the conflicts. The loss of bread winners, in particular, throws family members into untold grief and agony. In addition to the grief of losing loved ones is the complication created by total loss of means of livelihood. The entire predicament adversely affects children, since the parents do not have the means to enroll their children in school where they relocate to.

Another gory experience is life in camp, as mentioned earlier. Apart from overcrowding, with little or no health and social facilities, the experience of women in IDP is highly dehumanizing. For instance, the picture below shows the magnitude of overcrowding in internally displaced people's camps in Taraba State. IDP camps were created in the three (3) Senatorial Districts of the state with large number of women occupying the camps. In the Northern Senatorial District, Mayo-Dassa Primary School Camp and Kona Primary School camp are used for the illustrations. In the Southern Senatorial District, Ebenezer Primary School Camp, Wukari and Government Rest House Quarters, Wukari are picked for illustrations, while the Tiv Traditional Council Hall in Bali town is used for llustration in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State, in addition to the St. John's Catholic Church Camp at Mutum-Biyu shown below:



Internally Displaced Persons in St. John's Catholic Church, Mutum Biyu, Gassol Local Government Area. This is an offshoot of 2019 crisis in Bali. The conflict erupted again from February, 2020, till July, 2020, with total number of 18,008 who fled from Bali LGA into Mutum Biyu, Gassol LGA (Northern Senatorial District), Taraba State.



The Internally Displaced Persons inside Tiv Traditional Council Hall, Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State, being addressed by the Representative of Tiv Traditional Council.



Internally Displaced Persons waiting to fetch water at Kona Primary School, Kona, Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba State.



Internally Displaced Persons at Kona Primary School, Kona, Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba State.



Internally Displaced Persons at Ebenezer Primary School, Wukari, in Wukari Local Government Area, Taraba State

Consequences of Incessant Conflicts Taraba State

The consequences of incessant conflicts in Taraba state have become an open wound which is very difficult to manage. The conflicts have caused serious divisions among ethnic groups in the state. They have also caused sharp dichotomy in residential areas. At initial stage of the problem in Taraba state, both Muslims and Christians were co-habiting harmoniously. Unfortunately, at present, it is difficult to find both faiths living in numbers harmoniously in one place. Precisely, Muslims buy land in the areas where they believe their fellow brothers reside. Similarly, Christians prefer to live where their fellow Christian brothers and sisters are living. The example of these areas can be given as follows; in Jalingo metropolis, Baba'yau area consists 98% percent Muslims, Kona area within Mayo-Dasa has large concentration of Christians. The FGGC area which stretches to Coca-Cola Depot is largely populated by Christians, while Angwa Gadi comprises Muslims. These divisions have led to sales of land at giveaway prices whenever members of both parties discover they are found in wrong places[31].

Also, in Wukari town, Angwan Wapan-Ngha-Aku are dominated by Christians. To sum it up, two wards are densely populated by Christians[35]. These wards are Wukari Avyi Ward and Puje Ward, while the Muslims dominate the Hospital Ward. The incessant conflicts

had created sharp division between the two brothers in Wukari and its enviros. Much effort is required on both sides to heal the wound created by the protracted conflicts[32].
Before the creation of Taraba State, the people did not see religion as a barrier. Rather, it was regarded as a way of life which was being used to foster unity among the people. Unfortunately, shortly after the creation of Taraba state, the ethno-religious crisis of 1992 between the Mummye and Fulani created sharp dichotomy between Muslims and Christians. To buttress this point, a Teacher in one of the Secondary Schools remarked that:

> We are faced with serious imminent danger in this state. When we were young as teenagers we mingled, rejoiced and celebrated with our Christian brothers during any festive period. You could not differentiate between Muslims and Christians. The same way our Christian brothers dined and wined with us during any Muslim festive period. Today, the reverse is the case. We are far from each other. It is very difficult to mingle with our Christian brothers. They (Christians) also find it difficult to interact whole heartedly with us. There is sharp dichotomy between our students in our public schools. The seed of discord we are sowing among our new generation portray great danger to our children yet unborn[33].

Another Christian Teacher in another school gave similar assertion, when she said:

> The ugly event we are experiencing in our state has polarized the whole system. The authority concerned in the state must urgently work to ensure the attainment of the required harmony among the people. Both Muslims and Christians are pretending as if all is well with us. Hence, it is brother on the surface, enemy in the mind. There is no true love for one another. It is a mere high service[34].

The dire consequence of incessant conflicts has resulted in segregation among the ethnic groups in the state. This has ushered in ethnicity, marginalization and oppression of certain ethnic groups. It is equally made some ethnic groups to re-write the history of ethnic composition in the state targeted at changing political architecture of Taraba state. The result of this is politics of exclusion. This is really affecting developmental issues which is why the real development that people are yearning for cannot be achieved in many parts of the state.

More worrisomely, the civil service that is regarded as the engine room of development which engages people of diverse groups no longer performs the function because the civil servants no longer work in unison[35]. The gory effects of conflicts are clearly factored into

daily activities in various offices in the State civil service. Nepotism and lack of love for one another have taken centre stage which is why incompetence has taken over our civil service. Merit has been traded off completely. What is paramount to leaders of every ethnic group in the state is my kinsmen not but not who qualifies for the job[36]. These factor have been great obstacles to the development of state.

Conclusion

It is not arguable that struggle for direct access to limited natural resources such as land, forest, water and wildlife can lead to outbreaks of inter-group violent conflicts. This is because the marginalisation or exclusion of certain groups from these resources makes them to become easy targets for political victimization. This is one of the problems accountable for the perennial conflicts in Taraba State.

Apart from the phenomenon of land and resources related disputes, politics equally serve as another major cause of the perennial conflicts in Taraba State. This is caused mainly by political actors or gladiators in each of the groups across the state. Most political actors do not want to open the political landscape for members of every group to participate without one form of discrimination or the other.

Ethnicity, hatred for another, suspicion and intolerance, including indigenes-settler factors are other variables responsible for incessant inter-group conflicts in different parts of Taraba State. These factors result mainly from political and land issues. Needless, to conclude that the conflicts have devastating effects on the history of inter-group relations and general development in the State. This is the reason why frantic efforts have to be employed to mitigate the conflicts as recommended below:

Recommendation

1. Government should take educational development seriously with adequate funding as at when due. This will reduce the number of illiterate and idle youth in the society.
2. Arbitrary creation of Chiefdoms should be checked in order to prevent cultural rivalries.
3. Provision of basic infrastructure to keep able youth busy in developmental activities.
4. The government should employ more security personnel with adequate training that will guarantee safety of lives and property.
5. The use of local vigilante is important for effective policing and adequate intelligence gathering.

6. Religious leaders should learn how to teach beyond the four walls of Churches and Mosques. Adequate knowledge of societal values that will provide meaningful and harmonious co-existence should be promoted by the religious bodies.
7. Politics of exclusion should be discarded by the politicians.
8. Members of ethno-religious groups should imbibe the spirit of tolerance for one another.

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