VOICES OF THE INVISIBLE STAKEHOLDERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON YOUTH, CONFLICT AND PEACE BUILDING IN JOS, PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
While the debate young people as threats, perpetrators or victims of armed conflict persists in literature, their exclusion as invisible stakeholders in decision-making processes present fundamental challenges for conflict management and peace building. Since this vulnerable group have the capacity to be threats or facilitators of peace, listening to their voices, particularly the way they are (re) constructing their experiences with conflict introduces new perspectives to this discourse. This study responds to this deficiency. Data for the study was collected through qualitative in-depth-interviews and focus group discussions in Jos, the Plateau State capital. Findings of the study indicate that political marginalization, and social exclusion served as trigger factors for violence among young people in the state. The findings also show although young people feel alienated and lack an outlet to articulate their needs, aspirations and grievances, they are promoting peaceful coexistence through self-initiated non-violent alternatives like peace meetings and mutual participation in religious activities. The paper recommends among other things, that government and civil societies recognize young people as important stakeholders in the peace building process. The paper also advocates the importance of creating of a youth-centered, and youth- specific policy that will provide a platform for youth engagement in post-conflict peace initiatives in the state.

Keywords: Invisible Stakeholders, Youth, Conflict, Qualitative, Jos Crises

Youth and Conflict
Youth are often a targeted group during conflict. Young people’s participation in armed hostilities is facilitated through the trade of small arms and light weapons. The dearth of opportunities in their communities often leads them to gravitate towards violent conflict and acts of terrorism. Many are successfully mobilized through the ideologies of war. As victims and witnesses, they cannot help but be affected by the grim realities surrounding them (United Nations 2003, p. 371).

In recent years, there has been a global focus on youth engagement in armed violence. Trends in contemporary political violence show that young people are no longer just victims; they are increasingly becoming hired perpetrators of violence all over the world (United Nations, 2003). While arguments about youth engagement in violence are documented, there is statistical evidence that draw a correlation between growing youth populations and armed conflict (Hilker & Fraser, 2009). There are also arguments that suggest that grievances such as economic and political inequality could trigger youth engagement in violence (Hilker et al., 2009).

Even though several case study evidences support these arguments, it is important that context-specific assessments of the problem are conducted to understand issues like specific characteristics of a conflict, trigger events, and the ways in which young people get involved with a view to identifying how these issues could be addressed within such contexts. This study responds to this gap.
The study examined the sectarian crisis in Plateau state, Nigeria with a view the goal of identifying the role and experiences of youth with conflict in the state. Like in other parts of Nigeria, young people are identified major threats to the peace and stability of the state, particularly as perpetrators of violence (Ajaebu, 2012). Young people account for over more than half of the total adult population in Plateau state (UNFPA, 2003) and are therefore important stakeholders in the conflict transformation and resolution initiatives in Plateau State.

This qualitative study examined the role of young people in the conflict. The goal is to understand how they have been affected by the crises, and to identify their shared interests, which could be harnessed to prompt peaceful coexistence in the state.

Plateau State and Sectarian Crisis: Background Information

Nigeria has almost since its independence experienced one form of violent conflict or another. The country is as popular for its petroleum oil and gas reserves as it is for what many have also come to know as its volatile political and security climate. A report compiled by the Human Rights Watch in 2001 revealed that Nigeria has been in conflict since the Biafra war of 1966. From the Niger-Delta region in the South-South to the Northern part of Nigeria, violent sectarian, religious and inter-communal conflicts have remained very active threats to the nation’s existence. The increasing involvement of young people led to the emergence of militant youth groups like the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta in the South-South area, Oduwa People’s Congress in the South West, Movement for the Survival of Biafra People in the South East and Boko Haram (western education is sin) in North East, Nigeria (Ambe-Uva, 2011).

Plateau, in North-Central Nigeria gained international reputation as a conflict zone, an ironic twist from its nickname as the ‘Home of Peace and Tourism.’ The state remains one of the most volatile states in the country, with the state becoming notorious for its spate of incessant crisis, which have left thousands of people dead and many others displaced from their homes (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Even though people of different religious leanings inhabit Plateau state, majority of the residents in state categorize themselves as Christian indigenes with a significant number of Muslim-Hausa community categorized as settlers by the indigenes (Danfulani, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Ostein, 2009). These identity descriptions or categorizations of remain at the core of issues instigating violence that has in the past 14 years pitched the ‘indigenes’ and ‘settlers’ in a supremacy battle for dominance over the state (Ambe-Uva, 2011).

The conflict can be traced to the early 1990s when the then Military Administrator of Plateau State, Col Mohammed Mana, appointed Alhaji Aminu Mato, a settler Muslim in Plateau State to serve as Chairman of Jos North Local Government Area, a move strongly resisted by the Jos indigenes. Ostein (2009) recalled the action of the Administrator was resisted by the indigenes, who staged a protest to the Government House in April 1994. Despite these disagreements, the new LGA chairman attempted to resume office and was stopped by the indigenes, an action that led to the reversal of the appointment. This reversal in turn infuriated the Muslim settler community, who insisted they are not settlers, but first inhabitants of Jos city. Best (2007) narrated that protests by the Jasawa to protect what they consider their birth right, led to the loss of lives and destruction of property:

The following day, Jasawa youths took to the streets…. This later finally degenerated into chaos and violence in the city of Jos, leading to the destruction of property and the death of four persons. Parts of the Jos ultra-modern market, the Gada Biyu market, and an Islamic school and mosque along Rukuba Road were destroyed (p.55).

The decision of local government official in Jos North Local Government Area to issue indigene certificates to the Muslim community their alleged exclusion from political participation increased tension between the two groups, leading to a full-blown crisis in 2001(Human Rights Watch, 2001; Ostein, 2009). It could therefore be inferred that the major trigger issue in the Plateau conflict is the indigene/settlers debate that has led to accusations of marginalization by some groups in the state (Best, 2007; Danfulani, 2006).
problem, which is not peculiar to Plateau state has been identified as the underlying cause of violence in different parts of the country, including the Modakeke/Ife, Sabongari/Kano, Sabo/Ibadan, Zango/Kataf, Urhobo/Itsekiri, Jukun/Tiv, Kuteb/Jukun-Chamba and the Hausa/Shagamu violent conflicts in the 1990s and early 2000s (Adam 2011; Danfulani, 2006).

The indigene/citizenship problem can be traced to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria attaches, which seems to promote the concept of ‘indigene’ more than it does with citizenship of the country. For example, the 1979 constitution in section 14(3) aims at ensuring equal representation of all ethnic groups in the activities and affairs of the Federal government through the creation of a Federal Character Commission (Ostein 2009). The commissions mandate, the FCC Act 17(2) (k) however defines an indigene of an area as someone whose parents or grandparents was/or is an indigene or one who is accepted as an indigene by the local government area (Ostein, 2009). This definition does in a sense present complication for the application of the law, particularly the last second part of the definition, which subjects the law to different interpretations. In Plateau state, Jos North Local Government Authority implemented the law act by issuing resident permits to those people they considered settlers in Jos (Ostein 2009). Refusal of the Muslim-Hausa community to collect these permits and by extension, their rejection of second class status in the state resulted in continued confrontation between the two groups. Danfulani (2007) explained the Muslim-Hausa community demand to be treated as indigenes of Plateau state and owners of Jos, the state capital. The onset of democratic rule in Nigeria and subsequent introduction of Shari’a law in states like Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto, Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe and Borno is also viewed as playing a critical role in fueling the Jos crises. The 2001 Human Rights Watch Report revealed that anonymous letters and leaflets demanding for the Sharia law in Plateau State were circulated prior to the September 2001 violent conflict between Christians and Muslims.

**Peace Building Initiatives in Plateau State**

Since the conflict began in 1994, there have been several attempts by government both at the state federal and local levels, as well local and international non-government organizations to find lasting solutions to the problem in Plateau. The first initiative, the Justice Fiberesima Commission of Inquiry Report into Jos Riots of April 1994 attempted to put an end to the question of the ownership of Jos. Refusal of the state and federal government to sanction or punish people indicted by the Commission led to sporadic violence, which culminated in the September 7, 2001 (Danfulani, 2006).


Apart from the administrative panels of enquiry and military approach to addressing the conflict, both government and civil societies within and outside the state have introduced several communication interventions aimed at promoting dialogue, non-violent ways of conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence among warring factions in the state. One of such was the Plateau Peace Summit, convened by the then state governor, Joshua Dariye, between July and August, 2002. Participants at the summit, while emphasizing the need for patience, tolerance and forgiveness, tried to address the indigene/settler question through two key recommendations:
a) **Other Nigerians who reside in Plateau State should not violate the hospitality of their hosts.** They should respect and integrate into the norms and culture of the people.

b) Attempts by communities to uproot and exterminate others from their midst will create further mistrust, hatred and violence. This should be resisted, and *visitors should be tolerated* (Best 2007, p. 90).

However, rather than addressing the problem, these recommendations would seem to have further alienated the Jasawa (Hausa-Fulani) community whose agitation for acceptance were rebuffed by indigenous communities in the state. A six-month state of emergency period also had the administrator General Chris Alli, Rtd, organize yet another peace conference which was widely attended by all ethnic and religious groups in the state and other ethnic groups from different parts of the country residing in the state (Danfulani 2006, 9). Participants at that conference mandated the Local Government authorities in the state to issue residence certificates members of the Muslim-Hausa community in Jos. The resolutions of the conference were thus rejected by the Jasawa community whose agitations to be recognized as indigenes of the state were rebuffed by other ethnic groups in the state (Ostein, 2009. p.16).

While efforts at resolving the conflict have been stalled due to the lack of political will by both the state and federal governments to implement recommendations of the various Judicial Commissions of Inquiry, interventions by NGOs have also not been sustainable due to lack of follow-up plans:

Furthermore, the interventions failed to segregate the various actors into clusters, and deal with each before having a final big forum within which the different outcomes will be harmonized. Lumping every group into one, in the name of conflict transformation proved counterproductive (Best 2007, p. 98).

The inability of the government and NGOs to isolate contending issues and identify and the roles played by the key players in the crisis, especially young people may have affected successful implementation of interventions. The Plateau Peace Summit acknowledged this problem when it suggested that the “government creates a deliberate youth policy to cater for the restiveness for the youth and engage them in positive things, thus keeping them away from those who would otherwise employ them for violence” (Best, 2007, p.90). It is instructive that more than 10 years since the Plateau Peace Summit, the state does have in place a youth policy. A policy is no doubt important for since the youth do not only constitute half of the total population in the state, they are most affected by the crisis.

To this end, the study examined the role that young people played in the Plateau state with a view to answering the following research questions:

1. Why are young people involved in the ethno-religious conflict in Plateau state?
2. What roles have young people played in the peace building process?

Data Collection

Data was collected using twenty unstructured in-depth with young people between the ages of 18 and 30 years. Participants, which were resident in Jos city suggested study locations they felt comfortable and safe, bearing in mind the fact that residential areas in Jos, the Plateau State capital are today is such that residential areas are segregated along religious lines.

For this study, 3 focus group discussions were conducted with each group consisting of 10-15 people. Two group discussions were conducted differently with Muslim and Christian youth, while the third group consisted of young people drawn from the two religious’ groups. The groups were divided to allow for a more open discussion between peers. The process did not only make them comfortable enough to express themselves, it also allowed for a rich interaction and information sharing between participants. Study participants were recruited using purposeful sampling and a snowball approach was applied when the
researcher asked each participant to recommend another person that might be able to articulate views about the issues.

**Ethical Consideration**
Ohio University Institutional Review Board gave ethical approval for the research. The participants provided informed consent before participating in the study. The participants provided information voluntarily and were assured of the confidentiality and privacy of information. Participants also had the choice to not to answer questions they felt uncomfortable with and withdraw at any time during the interviews. Pseudonyms were therefore used to identify participants and all identifiers have been eliminated as much as possible.

**Data Analysis: Inductive and Deductive Approaches**
Data analysis was conducted using both the inductive and deductive approaches approach. The inductive approach, “primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher (Thomas 2006, p. 238), while the deductive analysis, “set out to test whether data are consistent with prior assumptions, theories, or hypotheses identified or constructed by an investigator” (Thomas 2006, 238). Audio-recorded in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and analyzed along with the essays. Data analysis began with a deductive approach, where prior to the coding process, I established a coding framework using the theoretical framework and findings from the fieldwork. The second step was the inductive approach that followed a systematic process; I read a few transcripts and allowed another independent coder to read a subsample of the transcripts. Further comparisons and discussions made it possible for me to either change or maintain the initial coding framework. The process was also used to develop patterns, which were conceptualized into four major themes presented below.

**Findings**
Three major themes were identified; (i) perceived marginalization; (ii). exclusion of youths in decision-making; (iv) youths as peace vanguards

(i). Perceived Marginalization

Although there was a consensus among participants that the conflict is influenced by religious, economic and political factors, Muslim participants broadly endorsed the idea that the conflict was triggered by what they perceived as discriminatory policies of both Plateau state government and local authorities at Jos North Local Government Council, aimed at politically and economically marginalizing the Hausa-Muslim community resident in the state:

**Participant one:**
“Certain government policies have contributed immensely to fueling crisis. You see, we expect a responsible government to be fair and just in terms of administration, in terms of distribution of amenities but if a government becomes on sided, it does nothing but to create tension and chaos among the public” (Abubakar, Age 26).

**Participant two:**
“I do not think it is a crime to ask for certain rights. We, the Hausa people we have suffered so much. Our forefathers have labored for this state and our parents and us the children are denied our rights…look at me, I was born here in Jos and spent all 25 years my life, I think I should have every right that indigenes of the state have, yet I don’t” (Idris, Age 25).

**Participant three:**
“We have nowhere else to go to. Give us something and give us a sense of belonging. As much as I don’t support the violence and much as our people by the indigenes and some our people killed
the other group, I will say we have a legitimate demand because our great grandparents were born here, this is the only home we have, the only place we know” (Sadiya, Age 18).

The issue of marginalization was a recurrent one in the focus group discussions and interviews and both sides remain passionate about what they consider their rights as either “indigenes” or ‘non-indigenes.’ Discussions on this topic created some tensions, particularly during the joint FG sessions with Muslims and Christians. It could clearly be observed that while both sides tried to maintain some level of cordiality, emotions ran high and voices were raised when they disagreed about whether Muslim settlers and indeed other settlers from different parts of the country were entitled to the same rights as indigenes of the state. Non-Muslim participants however argued that what has come to be known globally as the ‘Jos crisis’ has a broader Islamic agenda against Christians in Plateau state. For James, Philip and Fom, some youth organization leaders, the Jos crisis is basically a jihad agenda of the Muslim North:

**Participant Four**

“The wild ambition of Sarduana of Sokoto, Late Sir Ahmadu Bello to deliver the whole of Northern Nigeria to Islam was not successful due to the strong resistance that the people of Jos put up. This was the beginning of the problem of Christians in Jos. A verdict of guilty was pronounced on the city and the people. At his death, the responsibility of carrying out this judgment was passed on to next generations, this will continue till the last Christian in Jos city is executed and Christianity stamped out for the emergence of Islam” (James, Age 29).

**Participant Five**

“This conflict in my thinking is religion. I think all the things are excuses to fight Jihad. Why do they burn churches and kill Christians will slight provocation? Why? Any small thing killing! Also, the whole wahala always begins from the mosques. Why? Check that” (Fom, Age 25).

(ii). Exclusion from Decision-Making

Most study participants reported that youths in the state have been sidelined and excluded from peace building initiatives of the state government. Most said rather than see youth as partners and stakeholders in the peace building process, the government has not only excluded them but also introduced policies that are further igniting the crisis. While advising that government takes urgent steps to address the problem of unemployment, some respondents also suggest rather than spending a lot of money on security, funds be channeled towards youth development in the state as a more preventive measure. This according to them will create situations where the youth will be productively engaged, thus reducing their vulnerability towards being mobilized to perpetuate violence in the state

**Participant Six**

“Youths have not benefited from government. Soon it will be time for elections, that is the time they will ask, where are the youth? We are the ones that go to the most remote areas to campaign for them, we run on our legs following them while they drive in cars, we sweat while they enjoy the comfort of their luxurious cars, what do we get at the end of the day? A mere 500 naira!” (Dennis, Age 24)

**Participant Seven**

“We have been a part of the several government tribunals and it is the same. All talk and no action. There is no follow-up at all. When Pharaoh asked Joseph to interpret the dream, he did not stop at that, he also asked Joseph to administer the land! We are ignored, yet we are stakeholders, like I read somewhere, we are the invisible stakeholders, yet our voices have been silenced” (Maureen, Age 28)

While some of the youth leaders acknowledged the role of some non-governmental organizations working with youth in the state, some argued the impact of their projects are not felt by most of the youth in the state. Mohammed, Philip, Grace and Hassan are youth leaders:
Participant Eight
“We are lucky to have had support from many organizations, most especially, the Kaduna based interfaith mediation group, the NGO working in peace building” (Mohammed, Age 30)

Participant Nine
“You know NGOs who want to capitalize on the situation. They are bringing us to dialogue yet they are asking us to pay money to participate” (Philip, Age 27).

Participant Ten
“For us, the Christian youths because I don’t know if the Muslims are being engaged in any way, almost all these NGOs have left us out. Well, maybe they believe our views are not important or that we do not exist. I have nothing to say in this regard” (Grace, Age 25).

Participant Eleven
“Somebody needs to come with a powerful training to remove that kind of mindset of vengeance in the youths, but nobody is investing. Instead what we have is relief materials, go and collect rice, after eating the rice, will that remove the torture and the pain? People are not investing in the future of the youths. All they do is collect money from neighboring countries, blankets and food” (Hassan, Age 28).

(III). Working Together to Promote Peace
Most of the study participants agreed that youths in the state are the most critical stakeholders in the peace building process as hired perpetrators and victims of the conflict. Some of them also say the large numbers of youths in the state are assets whose energies could be harnessed and made productive for the benefit of Plateau state. Even though the participants feel young people have not been carried along by other stakeholders, they are, through the various religious youth groups collaborating and mobilizing the youth to adopt non-violence ways of resolving their differences. For example, Mohammed reported that their organization has carried out series of projects and training sessions to reorient the youth and (re) build their confidence:

“As a religious youth leader, my organization has championed several peace building activities, mostly geared towards societal reorientation. We were able to fish motorcycle riders, the most volatile youths and engage them in our campaigns. We were amazed at their level of contributions and determination to make a change. Most interestingly is their view that that for the first time, they were being treated not as numbers, not as nuisance to society but as people with dignity” (Mohammed, Age 30).

Focus group discussants, particularly advocated the need for constant dialogue and communication between youths of different religions and ethnic groups. The sense of camaraderie when they answered this question was visible, compared to when the discussion began. For example, when Muslims and non-Muslims met in one of the groups, the tension and uneasiness among participants could be felt at the beginning of discussion. Although they greeted each other politely, the participants did not interact. Except when they argued on some issues, most of them seemed to be very cautious when they spoke. As discussions progressed, it became evident that they shared the same opinion about the youth needed to do to promote peace on the Plateau. Most of them say that youths have the capacity to influence one another and they suggested that youth organizations work together to mobilize and promote peaceful coexistence among youths in the state. Some of the youth leaders reported that religious youth organizations are currently working together to promote peaceful coexistence among the teeming youth population in the state. They are however optimistic that continuous dialogue among youths could correct misconceptions and promote tolerance among adherents of the two religions. Three leaders, Philip, Mohammed and Precious gave more information about the Christian-Muslim youth initiative:
"We met several levels and decided that we will tell ourselves the truth, we must be ready to agree and accept our faults. We must identify our differences and agree to accept such. These are the things we must begin to tell ourselves” (Philip, Age 27).

“We have agreed at several meetings that there has to be opening and closing prayer from the two religions, Islam and Christianity. We have started collaborating by attending each other’s meetings in what we call exchange visits” (Mohammed, Age 30)

“Whenever there is a meeting of the Jama’atu Nasril Islam, they invite us and when we have meetings, we invite the Muslims. We have also agreed that if we are celebrating anything, the two religions will witness and able a part of both celebrations. We want to be able to officiate in Muslim activities and they should also be able to officiate in our activities too” (Precious, Age 26).

**Discussion**

This paper has explored the views and experiences of young people with armed conflict in Plateau state, Nigeria. Through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with young people and youth leaders in the state, the paper has been able to highlight what young people identify as causes of the conflict, why some of them are involved, the impact the conflict has had on young people and what they are doing as critical stakeholders to contribute to conflict transformation and peace building initiatives in the state.

From documented data used in this research and findings drawn from respondents and participants of this study, the paper identifies some fundamental issues, which remain central to the conflict, especially as it affects youths in the state:

One, in line with the grievance model of conflict, youth engagement in the Jos crisis can be traced to grievances about perceived economic and political marginalization against some communities in the state. Although the conflict has been defined by many as religious, the problem as expressed by respondents of the study can be traced to flawed constitutional provisions that created the “indigene/settler” dichotomy, which has been manipulated by the political elites in the country to marginalize and exclude minorities.

Two, tied closely to grievances are the growing youth population in Plateau state and its impact on the conflict. It is instructive to note that youth constitute about more than 20 percent of the population in Plateau State. A 2003 UNFPA document puts the percentage of the youth population at 50 percent of 3.5 million people in the state. The situation in Plateau state is aggravated by poverty, scarce economic resources and especially, high unemployment rate among youths. Although a fundamental recommendation of the Plateau Peace Summit was the creation of a youth policy, the inability of the state government to create clear economic and educational agenda for youth engagement makes young people vulnerable to those who “employ them for violence” (Best, 2007, p.90).

Three, it is evident from the interviews and focus group discussions that young people feel excluded from decision-making especially by the state government. The lack of participation has not provided them a channel to express their grievances, aspirations and needs. Like some participants suggested, their opinions about the conflict and each other are shaped mainly shaped by politicians, religious and traditional leaders in the state, who have been accused of sponsoring or escalating the conflict. The exclusion of youths has led to an almost non-existent social and political interaction between the youth and older people in the society, except when the youth are mobilized to serve as political thugs during election time.

Four, there exists poor communication between young people on one hand, and between youth people and the government on the other hand. First, the communication line between youth of different religious groups was hampered by the conflict. The negative perceptions that the so-called ‘indigene/Christian and non-indigene Muslims’ in the state have against each other have increased the circle of attacks, revenge and
reprisal killings among the youth. Findings of the research reveal that the youth are not only used to perpetuate the crisis, but also instigated against one another, leading to a total breakdown of communication among them. This hinders them from working together to stop the violence. Similarly, the lack of communication between youth and the state government has created mistrust about the sincerity of government towards peace building. Based on the data collected, youth leaders do not appreciate the effort of government so far and this can be linked to the lack of open communication and channels for such engagement.

Five, despite these challenges, young people in the state are committed to working together to promote peace. There exists a poor or almost non-existent structure and coherent policy in place for youth development in Plateau State. The lack of youth policy makes productive youth engagement almost impossible.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In view of issues raised above, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. There is a need to promote dialogue and mutual understanding between the largely youth population in Plateau state, with a view to promoting peace and by extension, reducing the spate of recurring crisis in the state. This becomes imperative because what youth in the state require in the immediate is rallying point for the different ethnic and religious groups. This stems from the understanding that while the structural issue remains constitutional problems that can only addressed at the federal level, youths in the state require a platform where they can meet, close the existing gaps and dialogue with one another. The recommendation is for the creation of youth-centered, and youth specific program that will provide a platform for youths to dialogue and work together to promote the ideals of peaceful coexistence among the teeming youth population in the state.

2. It is important to have increased youth participation in the peace process. As victims of the violence and hired perpetrators, they more than any other group in the state have a high stake in the conflict. The paper therefore recommends putting in place activities that will promotion of intergenerational interactions and relations. This will not only motivate and give them a sense of responsibility but will integrate them into both civic and political processes in the state. This intergenerational relationship will also help in developing positive youth dynamics and promoting open and healthy communication between them and adults in the society and within themselves.

3. There is a need to improve the living conditions of youths in the State by building their capacities for economic empowerment. One of the major problems that resonated throughout this study is the high rate of unemployment and scarce economic opportunities. The recommendation is that skills acquisition centers be put in place to provide teaching and instruction on different economic ventures for youth while the government put in place a small and medium scale entrepreneurial scheme that will provide funding to youth.

4. Finally, it is important that the Plateau State government and other stakeholders in the state work together to put in place a strategic youth policy document. This document is not only timely but also necessary due in view of the obvious gaps challenges youths in the state are faced with. It is also very important to ensure ethnic, religious and socio-cultural youth groups in the state are carried along through the entire process, from initiation to implementation.
References


