

PARTICIPATORY Video training in progress

# Kaduna: When cinematography became cool tool

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**I**N an effort to distract youths from indulging in crime and violence, young adults resident in Kabala West (predominantly Christian) and Ungwar Mu'azu (predominantly Muslim) under the auspices of Partnership for Development Youth Association of Kabala West and Al-Ihsan Youth Development Association of Ungwar Muazu, have been engaged in a series of training exercises which part of a project based on the relationship is between masculinity and violence.

Through interviews, focus group discussions and drama workshop, the youths were able to answer and unearth issues which principally disseminated the questions arising from researches carried out.

The groups were also exposed to another avenue, participatory video, apart from drama through which they could disseminate issues in their communities. According to the organisers, "This will be in addition to drama and is particularly crucial since it can be used as a powerful means of advocacy and it could come in handy especially to political leaders who might otherwise not want to come and watch a piece of drama to know of any issues the community might want to put across." They added that, it was in continuation of creating a bonding between the youths of the two communities to further the

objectives of the project. "A principal reason for bringing the youths together is to create an understanding between them such that in situations of future conflict between the two communities, the youths could avert it or at least avoid being used."

The training which lasted four days: the first two days was the training proper, the third day was shooting and the final day community dissemination with the

professional medium that only experts use. Much more critically, it is an easy and most powerful and convincing way of putting across our community's problem to the authorities and opinion leaders. In other words it is one of the most powerful tools of advocacy where the problems of the community could be articulated to political leaders. Before now, allusions were made to the cheapness of current video technology

time. The preview pointed the flaws of the picture in terms of giving too much of less headroom and viewing room and the background of the pictures.

On the benefits of the training session, Ibrahim Mustapha said, "For me, this is like a dream that I have never imagined. Even though I have not gone more than primary school, this is an opportunity for me to do something with my hand. I find it easy because it is practical. I have learnt the uses and intrigues of a camera. I now know how to record and know the different shots to take and for what purpose. Above all, I now have a skill I can put to use when this project has ended."

A major component of their activities was for them to decide which issue was going to form the thematic thrust of the video project among all the issues captured from the research phase through the drama and dissemination. Youths from both communities decided on bad roads network in Kabala West and those from Ungwar Muazu settled for water problem in Ungwar Muazu.

Once the issues were decided the groups were asked to go back and do proper storyboard to reflect how they wanted the issues captured in the video in a minimum of fifteen minutes and maximum of fifteen minutes. This was given like a take home assignment for the groups to report with

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groups calling their community leaders and members together to watch the issues they had tackled in the video, while start with the rudiments, they went through topics to knowing the camera, Telling a story with the camera, Framing your shots, Types of shots and their uses, Story board, Planning shoots and logistics, Shooting and Public viewing.

The youths who showed enthusiasm for the program expressed their excitement. Mohammed Haliru said, "We have been taught that participatory video essentially demystifies the video technology as a

and how informal video was being used to send reports to established media houses like "I report" on CNN and Aljazeera and other established media outfits. With the training sessions, all these are clearer to us."

As the participants were given tasks to practice at every stage of learning, it was interesting to see them challenge each other's knowledge as they posed questions to one another. Interestingly, they went out and came back with almost steady and flawless pictures; very much unlike beginners or people that were been introduced to the camera for the first

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during the second day of training. It was fascinating to see how both groups put head together forgetting whatever difference existed amongst them.

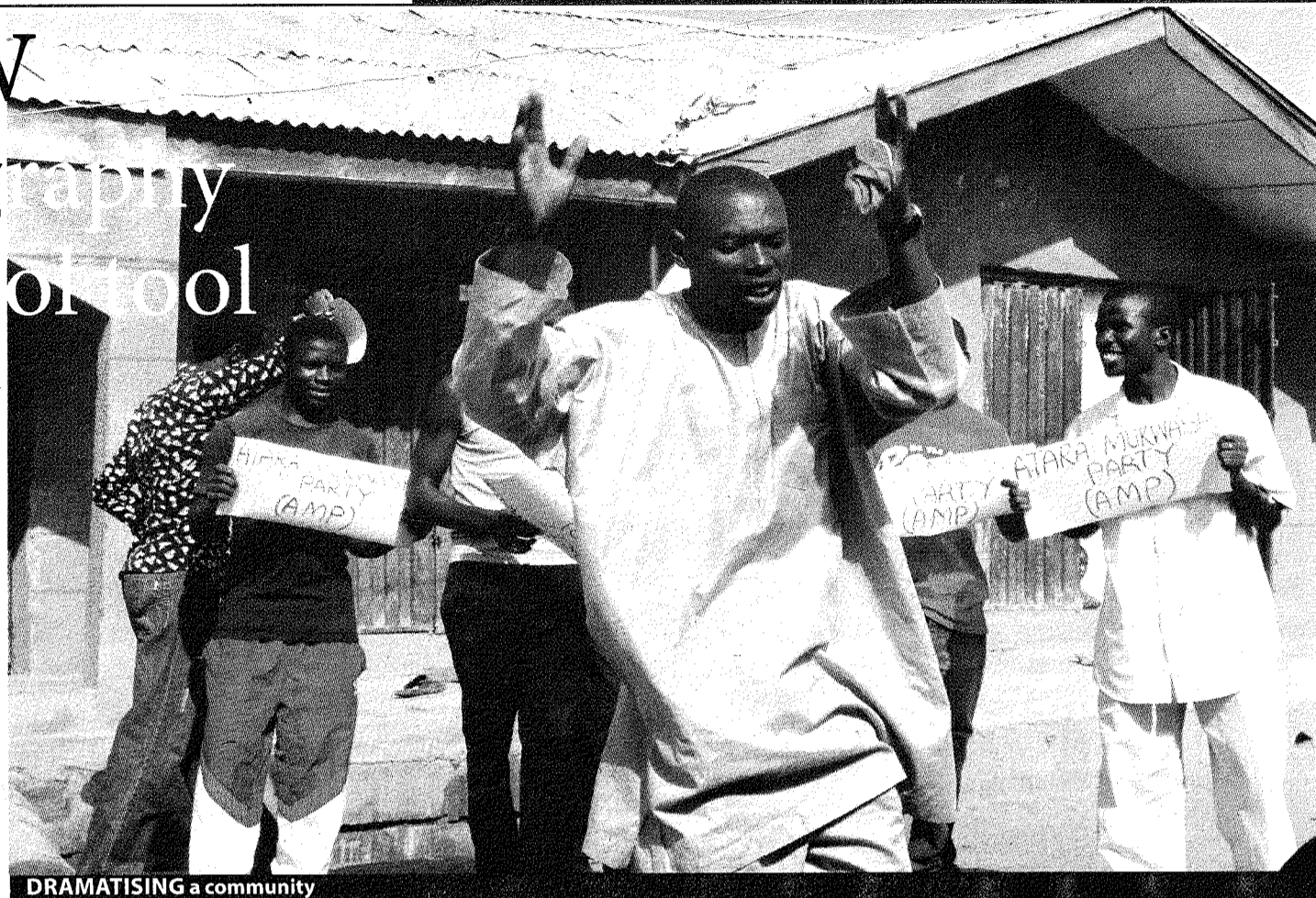
In the heat of their brainstorming one thing was salient - the fact that they wanted to give and exist in an environment that worked and was beneficial and sensitive to them.

As they set out to show their presentations to the larger communities, the Chief, his cabinet and other community leaders were in attendance. It turned out to be an exciting experience as the community was held spellbound at the Ham Hall (Jaba Hall) for twenty minutes due to the terrible nature of the roads in Kabala West.

The video turned out all the more interesting thanks to the heavy downpour which came well timed and emphasized the message. Viewers were able to see for themselves the problems of the roads with live pictures of cars navigating the difficult terrain and cars and motor bikes getting stuck in the muddy roads. The picture of residents in the rain trying to push cars that had got naturally stocked in muddy roads was moving and most community members lamented that that was their fate.

After the screening, one of the community leaders expressed gratitude to the project team on behalf of the community for opening the eyes of the community members to a new method of advocacy where they can now graphically bring home images of the problems to leaders who visit them at elections and run away after.

On his part, the Chief (Dakace) reiterated his gratitude to the organizers



DRAMATISING a community

for choosing his community and expressed happiness at the different skills that the youths were acquiring through the project. He wondered what will happen to the

to the authorities concerned who are in the position to address the issues of bad road in the community. The Chief thanked the team and said his community will continue

viewing of the Ungwar Muazu footage which took place at a popular football viewing Centre just opposite the Primary school at Ungwar Muazu junction. The midday screening turned out to be an advantage as some of the youths who came for the early lunch kick-off of the English Premiership match between Chelsea and Liverpool watched the short 'film' before the match.

Though the Hakimi was said to be indisposed, his representative expressed gratitude to the project team and hoped that the youths will be assisted to push the issues covered in the video further than the community.

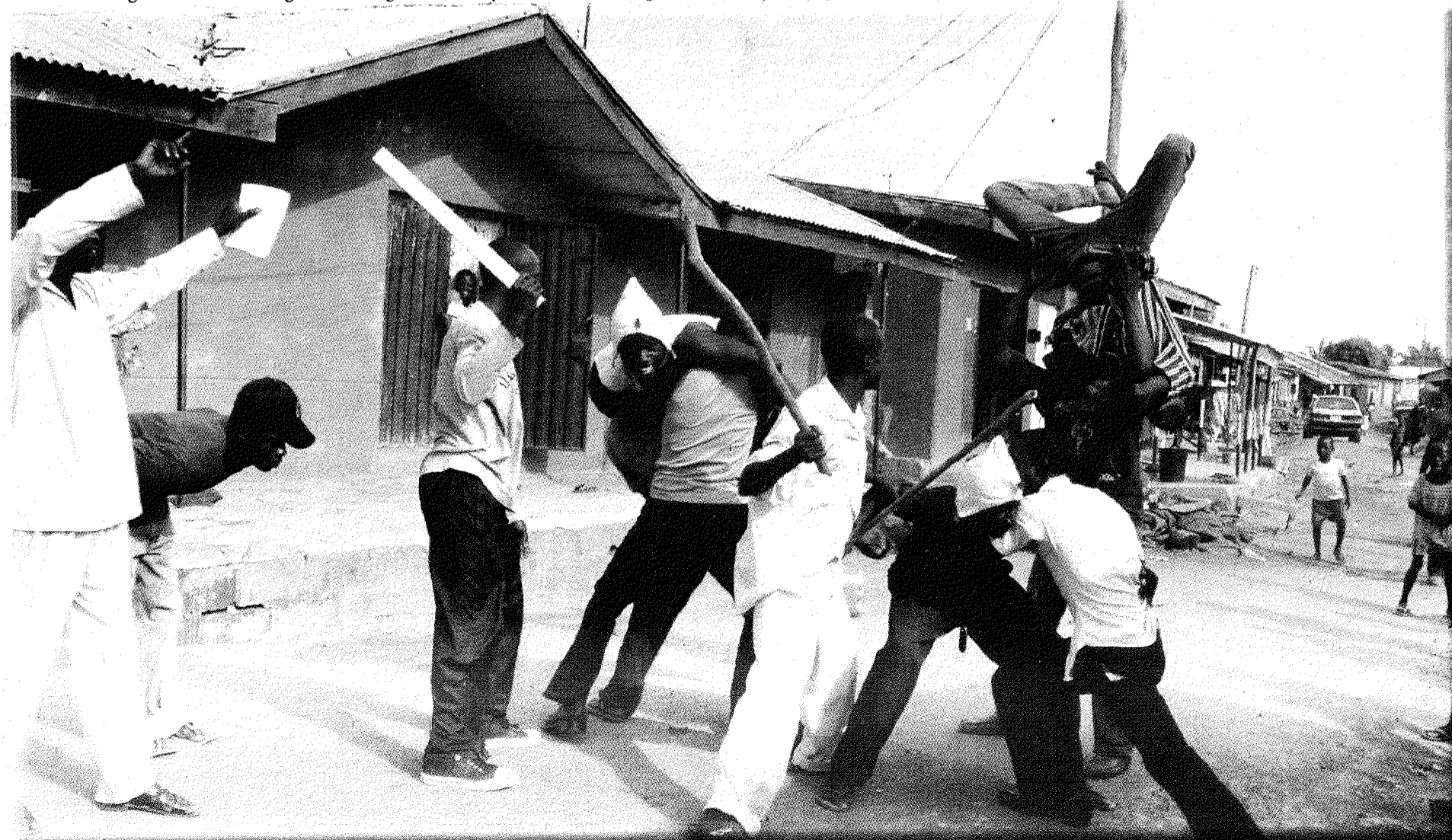
It is hoped that these pronouncement will go beyond the four walls of the viewing centre and actually efforts will be made to tackle the issues raised.

Through interviews, focus group discussions and drama workshop, the youths were able to answer and unearth issues which principally disseminated the questions arising from researches carried out

video. The facilitators then told him that the organizers will step down the DVD by burning it on CD so that the group as a registered entity could decide and present it

to explore peaceful means of getting across to those in authority to tackle problems beyond them.

Having just the same impact, was the



THE youths were able to express the dangers of violence through drama sketches