

ABSTRACT for the IFRA-IDR Conference on 'Conflict & Violence in Nigeria'

Building Communities: Theatre for Development (TFD) and Participatory Video (PV) as tools in Transformative Education for conflict prevention in Kaduna State

By

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The mediatory processes in resolving conflict and especially of addressing violent outbreaks in Nigeria have been characterized by reactive measures consequent on the outbreaks having occurred, instead of defining pro-active strategies to prevent the violence from taking place. It is clear from the lack of impact that after-conflict committees have had on the eruption of further conflict and violence that a different strategy is required to deal with the issues of conflict and violence in Nigeria.

As a result, most actions are merely palliative and hardly address the core issues that have led to the problems. It is therefore not surprising for violent incidents recur. Kaduna State is a typical example of this. The state has been a hotbed of violent conflicts since 2000 when an attempt was made to introduce shari'a as the official legal and religious system in the State. There have been others such as the one following the 9-11 bombings in the USA in 2001 and Miss World beauty pageant of 2002.

We argue in this paper that the solution to the problem does not lie in committees or compensations; nor is it simply about the preachment of peaceful co-existence and its merits. We argue that while there is need for both of these, a more fundamental approach is to target people's critical thinking processes. We argue that it is through transformative education which targets both young people's and adults' mind about issues of conflict and how they may be forestalled. We also argue that this process, which demands participation, offers opportunities through which both prosecutors of, and persons affected by violent conflicts may suggest policy options to government.

Our paper discusses this approach of transformative education using the creative strategies of drama and participatory video with youth in the two peri-urban settlements of Kabala West and Ungwar Mu'azu in Kaduna State. Our conclusion is that beyond, white papers and compensations to victims, the engagement by youth in constructing and interrogating their realities in drama and on video help to embed concrete lessons that have lasting impact in their individual lives and in their communities.