



## CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES OF NEGOTIAN AND THEIR IMPACTS ON PEACBUILDING AMONG COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTH- EAST IN POST BOKO HARAM CONFLICT

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### **Abstract**

*The persistence of violent conflict in North-East Nigeria has generated profound scholarly interest in understanding the interplay between religion, peacebuilding, and negotiation. This paper examines the impact of Christian principles on conflict negotiation strategies in the region, situating faith-based interventions within the broader landscape of kinetic and non-kinetic responses to the Boko Haram insurgency. Using secondary qualitative sources and guided by conflict transformation and just peace theories, the study interrogates how theological concepts such as forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, and agape love have shaped the moral and practical foundations of peacebuilding. Churches such as the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN – Church of the Brethren), the Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI), and other Christian organizations have developed multidimensional approaches that combine scriptural imperatives with psychosocial and community-based negotiation models. The study argues that while kinetic measures emphasize coercive deterrence and non-kinetic approaches pursue institutional and developmental reforms, Christian principles introduce an ethical and relational dimension that directly addresses trauma, moral injury, and communal alienation. Faith-based negotiation, when anchored in forgiveness and restorative justice, produces outcomes that transcend tactical ceasefires and lead toward durable reconciliation. The research concludes that integrating Christian principles into Nigeria's formal peace architecture offers a normative framework capable of transforming not only structural violence but also the psychological and spiritual wounds underpinning protracted conflict. It therefore recommends a structured synergy between*



*state peace institutions and faith-based actors to consolidate moral legitimacy, social trust, and long-term stability in the North-East.*

*Keywords: Christian principles, Peace building, Negotiation, Conflicts.*

## **1.1 Introduction**

The evolution of armed conflict in North-East Nigeria represents one of the most complex humanitarian and security challenges in contemporary Africa. The North east comprises of Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Taraba, Gombe and Bauchi States, has endured over a decade of violence driven primarily by the Boko Haram insurgency and, more recently, by splinter groups such as the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). It's worth noting that the BAY States (Borno Adamawa and Yobe State) were mostly affected by the activities of NSAGs in the region. The conflict has caused profound social disintegration, economic devastation, and moral trauma, leading to over two million internally displaced persons and widespread humanitarian crises (Adesoji, 2010; Onuoha, 2014). In response, the Nigerian state has relied heavily on kinetic measures that is military offensives, airstrikes, and counterinsurgency operations intended to suppress violent actors and reclaim territorial control. These strategies, while effective in certain security dimensions, have failed to produce sustainable peace because they do not address the underlying causes of violence or the spiritual and psychological fractures within communities (Galtung, 1996; Lederach, 1997).

The limits of kinetic approaches prompted the introduction of non-kinetic mechanisms, including humanitarian assistance, deradicalization programmes, and reconstruction initiatives. Yet, as scholars such as Agbiboa (2013) and Mercy Corps (2016) observe, these interventions often reproduce a technocratic logic of peacebuilding that treats communities as beneficiaries rather than agents of reconciliation. They restore infrastructure without reconstructing relationships, and they provide livelihood support without addressing the deep wounds of mistrust, anger, and spiritual despair that sustain cycles of violence. In this context, religious institutions particularly Christian



churches and their affiliated organizations have emerged as vital mediators of moral and relational repair.

Christianity occupies a unique space in Nigeria's socio-religious landscape. It is both a faith tradition and a social movement capable of mobilizing moral capital for transformation (Katongole, 2011). Within the North-East, the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN – Church of the Brethren) represents a paradigmatic example of a faith community directly impacted by insurgent violence yet committed to the theological vocation of peace. The EYN Peace Programme and affiliated agencies such as the Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI), founded by Dr. Rebecca Dali, have combined doctrinal teachings on forgiveness and reconciliation with trauma healing, psychosocial rehabilitation, and local mediation training (Dali, 2018; EYN, 2021). These initiatives demonstrate how theological resources can be operationalized into structured negotiation strategies capable of transforming violent relationships into peaceful coexistence.

The significance of this study lies in its interrogation of how Christian principles function not merely as abstract moral ideals but as dynamic frameworks guiding concrete negotiation strategies in contexts of protracted violence. Scholars such as Volf (1996), Appleby (2000), and Lederach (1997) have long argued that the integration of spirituality and peacebuilding produces deeper transformation because it attends to moral and affective dimensions of human experience. This perspective challenges the secular bias often embedded in peace and conflict studies, which tends to marginalize the epistemic contributions of religion. By foregrounding Christian principles, this study contributes to a growing corpus of literature that repositions theology as a critical resource for peace praxis in African contexts.

Furthermore, the study juxtaposes faith-based negotiation strategies with both kinetic and non-kinetic state interventions to assess comparative effectiveness. The analysis contends that while the military's kinetic operations achieve immediate deterrence and non-kinetic measures promote reconstruction, Christian negotiation approaches cultivate reconciliation and relational renewal.



This threefold comparison underscores the complementary nature of these strategies rather than their opposition, revealing that sustainable peace requires moral legitimacy and community ownership rooted in shared spiritual values (Lederach, 2003; Okereke, 2021). Conflict remains one of the major impediments to sustainable peace and development in Nigeria, particularly in the North-East region. The area has witnessed decades of violent crises, ranging from communal clashes and ethno-religious disputes to the Boko Haram insurgency that began in 2009. These conflicts have resulted in extensive human and material losses, internal displacement, and severe humanitarian crises. According to reports by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA, 2023), over two million people remain internally displaced in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States due to protracted insecurity. While the Nigerian government has adopted multiple strategies to negotiate peace and manage the conflict, ranging from military (kinetic) operations to non-military (non-kinetic) interventions such as deradicalization and dialogue yet sustainable peace remains elusive. The limitations of these strategies are evident in the continued cycles of violence, community distrust, and the persistence of extremist ideologies. Consequently, scholars and practitioners in peace and conflict studies are challenged to explore alternative moral and ethical frameworks that could complement existing efforts.

Negotiation, a crucial conflict resolution method, has its roots in ancient religious teachings (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009). Religious traditions, such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, have long provided guidance on how to resolve disputes and promote peaceful coexistence (Abu-Nimer, 2003; Gopin, 2000). The principles and values that underlie effective negotiation, such as empathy, active listening, and mutual respect, are deeply rooted in these religious teachings (Fisher et al., 2011).

Christian principles, derived from biblical teachings and the life of Jesus Christ, offer a peacebuilding framework that emphasizes love, forgiveness, justice, reconciliation, and moral transformation. Unlike the military approach, which seeks compliance through force, or the non-kinetic approach, which emphasizes diplomacy and socio-economic solutions, Christian principles aim to transform human relationships and attitudes that sustain conflict. Thus, exploring their



impact on conflict negotiation in North-East Nigeria provides an important lens for understanding faith-based contributions to peacebuilding.

## **2.1 Statement of the Problem**

The protracted conflict in North-East Nigeria has generated a multi-dimensional crisis that transcends the boundaries of military containment. Since the emergence of Boko Haram in 2009, the region has experienced mass killings, destruction of worship centres, abductions, displacement, and social disintegration (Adesoji, 2010; Onuoha, 2014). Despite several state-led military campaigns, including *Operation Lafiya Dole* and *Operation Hadin Kai*, peace has remained elusive. The dominance of kinetic (military) strategies characterized by force, counterinsurgency, and deterrence, has not yielded sustainable stability (Alozieuwa, 2016). These approaches tend to neutralize symptoms of insurgency without addressing the spiritual, moral, and relational foundations of violence. Consequently, each temporary victory achieved on the battlefield often gives way to renewed cycles of hostility and vengeance.

Scholars have observed that the conflict in the North-East is not merely a political or security issue, but a moral and spiritual crisis rooted in distorted ideologies, broken trust, and deep psychological trauma (Agbiboa, 2013; Danjibo, 2012). The ideology of Boko Haram itself is embedded in a misinterpretation of religious teachings that reject modernity, pluralism, and Western education. Thus, military force alone cannot eradicate a worldview; it can only suppress its violent expressions. Non-kinetic state interventions, such as humanitarian relief and deradicalization programmes have attempted to fill this gap, but these too often lack cultural and spiritual resonance with the affected communities (Mercy Corps, 2016). As a result, local populations remain alienated from peace processes, perceiving them as external impositions rather than organic, community-driven initiatives.

Within this vacuum, faith-based organizations, especially churches, have emerged as critical actors in promoting reconciliation and negotiation. The *Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria* (EYN otherwise



known as Church of the Brethren) provides a particularly instructive case. Having suffered immense losses during the insurgency, including the destruction of over 300 church buildings and the displacement of tens of thousands of members, the EYN has nonetheless embodied resilience through forgiveness, reconciliation, and trauma healing programmes (EYN, 2021; Dali, 2018). Its Peace Programme and affiliated Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI) founded by Dr. Rebecca Dali have demonstrated the potential of Christian principles such as love, forgiveness, justice, and hope to transform conflict dynamics into opportunities for relational and social renewal.

However, despite these contributions, there remains a significant gap in academic inquiry concerning how Christian principles concretely shape negotiation strategies in conflict-affected regions like North-East Nigeria. Much of the existing literature on peacebuilding in Nigeria focuses either on state-centric approaches (kinetic and non-kinetic) or on generic community-based initiatives without sufficient theological or ethical analysis (Okereke, 2021; Adetoro & Omiyefa, 2020). Consequently, the moral and spiritual dimensions of negotiation, those that attend to repentance, forgiveness, and the restoration of dignity remain underexplored in mainstream peace studies.

This gap presents both a theoretical and practical problem. Theoretically, there is inadequate understanding of how Christian theology can inform negotiation frameworks capable of transforming violent relationships. Practically, policymakers and peace practitioners lack a structured model for integrating faith-based principles into Nigeria's broader peace architecture. The neglect of these spiritual resources has contributed to the persistence of resentment and vengeance, undermining long-term reconciliation. This study, therefore,

addresses the urgent need to investigate how Christian principles, embodied through church-led initiatives such as EYN's Peace Programme and other faith-based interventions, affect conflict negotiation strategies in North-East Nigeria.



In doing so, it challenges the prevailing dichotomy between religion and peacebuilding by demonstrating that Christian ethics, when operationalized through intentional negotiation practices, provide an indispensable moral foundation for sustainable peace. The study thus interrogates whether a Christian approach to negotiation offers deeper relational transformation compared to purely kinetic or secular non-kinetic models.

### **3.1 Objectives of the Study**

The central aim of this study is to critically examine how Christian principles influence conflict negotiation strategies in North-East Nigeria, with particular attention to the role of churches such as the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN – Church of the Brethren) and affiliated peace initiatives. By situating Christian moral teachings within the broader field of peace and conflict studies, the study seeks to establish the ethical and practical relevance of Christian theology to contemporary negotiation processes in contexts of violent extremism.

In order to achieve this overarching aim, the paper seeks to examine the following specific objectives.

- i. To examine the theological and ethical foundations of Christian principles, such as forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, humility, and love and their relevance to conflict negotiation.
- ii. To identify challenges in applying the principles by churches in North-East Nigeria, particularly the EYN Peace Programme CCEPI and others.
- iii. To evaluate the limitations identified in Christian-based negotiation approaches against strategies employed by state and international actors in resolving violent conflict in the region.
- iv. To propose an integrated model of negotiation that harmonizes Christian moral imperatives with evidence-based peacebuilding strategies for long-term peacebuilding and reconciliation in North-East Nigeria.



## **4.1 Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in descriptive and analytical approaches. The purpose of this design is to enable a deep, interpretive understanding of how Christian principles inform and influence conflict negotiation strategies in North-East Nigeria. The paper relied on desk-based review of related literature and draws from secondary sources including books, journal, articles, church reports, policy documents, and theological writings. These sources collectively provide the empirical and theoretical foundation for interpreting the interaction between Christian ethics and peacebuilding practices.

### **5.1 Sources of Data**

All data utilized in this study are secondary sources. These include: Scholarly publications on religion, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution in Nigeria. Official reports and communiqués from the Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria (EYN) and its Peace Programme. Publications and documentation from Dr. Rebecca Dali’s Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI), which highlight practical church interventions in trauma healing, negotiation, and reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Relevant governmental and non-governmental reports on peacebuilding and reconciliation in the North-East, including those from the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), and international organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Mercy Corps. Theological texts and academic works discussing the moral and ethical dimensions of negotiation from Christian and comparative perspectives. All sources are carefully selected for their scholarly credibility, contextual relevance, and contribution to the discourse on peacebuilding and religious engagement in Nigeria.



## **6.1 Literature Review**

### **6.1.1 Conceptual Issues**

The study of conflict negotiation from a Christian perspective requires a precise conceptual understanding of several interrelated terms which includes among others, conflict, negotiation, Christian principles, and peacebuilding. These concepts form the intellectual scaffolding for the entire research and provide the analytical vocabulary for understanding the balance between theology and conflict transformation in North-East Nigeria.

### **6.1.2 Conflict**

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of human society arising from differences in values, interests, goals, or needs. Scholars such as Burton (1990) define conflict as a struggle between individuals or groups over values, status, power, or scarce resources, where the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals. Galtung (1969) distinguishes between direct, structural, *and* cultural violence, emphasizing that true peace cannot exist without addressing the underlying structures of injustice that sustain hostility. Within the Nigerian context, conflicts often arise from ethnic, religious, and socio-economic inequalities, compounded by weak governance and politicization of identity (Alao, 2012). In North-East Nigeria, these dynamics have been weaponized by extremist ideologies, particularly the Boko Haram movement, which transformed religious grievances into violent insurgency (Adesoji, 2010).

### **6.1.3 Negotiation**

Negotiation, as a method of conflict management, involves dialogue between opposing parties with the aim of reaching a mutually acceptable agreement. It is distinguished from mediation or arbitration by its emphasis on direct participation of the conflicting actors in the decision-making process. Fisher, Ury, and Patton (1991) conceptualize negotiation as a process of principled bargaining, where parties separate people from problems and focus on underlying interests rather



than fixed positions. In contexts of violent conflict, negotiation extends beyond political compromise to include moral and relational transformation. Christian theology contributes uniquely to this process by framing negotiation not as a tactical exercise, but as an expression of forgiveness, repentance, and mutual restoration (Lederach, 1997). Thus, negotiation in Christian peacebuilding transcends diplomacy. It becomes a sacred act of reconciliation grounded in divine justice.

#### **6.1.4 Kinetic and Non-Kinetic Approaches**

Conflict resolution in Nigeria has largely revolved around two broad paradigms: kinetic and non-kinetic approaches. Kinetic strategies refer to the use of force and military intervention to suppress violent groups, often emphasizing deterrence and security stabilization (Alozieuwa, 2016). While such strategies have produced tactical victories, they seldom yield sustainable peace, as they fail to address the ideological and moral roots of violence. Non-kinetic strategies, on the other hand, focus on dialogue, humanitarian response, and socio-economic development, seeking to win hearts and minds (Onuoha, 2014).

#### **6.1.5 Christian Principles**

Christian principles are the ethical and spiritual teachings derived from Scripture and the life of Jesus Christ that guide human relationships and moral decision-making. Key among these principles is love (agape), forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, peace, and humility. Augustine (City of God, Book XIX) posits that peace is the tranquillity of order grounded in love of God and neighbour, similarly, Bonhoeffer (1959) insists that authentic Christian ethics must confront evil with responsible action rather than passive resignation. In the context of conflict negotiation, these principles function as both motivational imperatives and practical methodologies. Forgiveness, for instance, enables parties to break cycles of revenge; reconciliation restores broken relationships; justice ensures fairness; and love sustains the moral commitment to coexistence (Storrar & Morton, 2004).



There are several Christian principles of negotiation which provide a framework for conflict resolution that focuses on restoring relationships rather than simply winning a dispute. Core tenets of this approach include:

**Forgiveness:** Following Christ's example, Christians are urged to forgive others as they have been forgiven. This principle aims to release bitterness and resentment, paving the way for healing, even if full reconciliation is not immediately possible.

**Reconciliation:** The ultimate goal is the restoration of broken relationships and peaceful coexistence. This goes beyond mere conflict resolution to address underlying issues and rebuild trust.

**Humility:** Approaches to conflict should be taken with humility, prioritizing the interests of others and God's glory over personal victory or pride. This includes being willing to listen, admit fault, and seek mutual understanding.

**Peace-making:** Christians are called to be peacemakers. This means actively seeking peace and justice for all parties involved, guided by compassion and grace.

**Truthfulness and Love:** Negotiators are called to speak the truth in love, meaning communication should be honest but gentle, focusing on the issue and not on personal attacks.

**Spiritual guidance:** Prayer is an essential component for seeking wisdom and divine guidance in navigating complex and emotionally charged situations.

In North-East Nigeria, the EYN Church of the Brethren and organizations like CCEPI have operationalized these principles through trauma healing, dialogue facilitation, and humanitarian assistance (Dali, 2018). These interventions represent a theological embodiment of negotiation an attempt to reconcile communities fractured by violence through moral conviction rather than coercive power.

Christian approaches to negotiation can be situated within the non-kinetic paradigm but go further by infusing moral and theological depth into peace processes. While non-kinetic state programmes



often aim for behavioural change, Christian principles target spiritual transformation, addressing trauma, repentance, and restoration of human dignity (Lederach, 2005). This moral dimension makes Christian peacebuilding distinctively holistic, encompassing the physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of conflict. Based on Christian principles, a negotiation approach to the Boko Haram conflict in North East Nigeria, the paper would emphasize forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace over retribution. However, the extreme and non-negotiable nature of Boko Haram's ideology makes this approach highly challenging and its application largely limited to localized, unofficial efforts.

**Challenges in applying Christian principles of negotiation:** There are however, there are impacts and limitations in negotiations with Boko Haram, while Christian principles guide the response of many humanitarians and faith-based groups, applying them directly to negotiate a resolution with Boko Haram is extremely difficult. The processes are characterized by challenges and limitations. For instance, non-negotiable ideology of the NSAGs. Boko Haram adheres to a radical ideology that sees secular Western values as sinful and aims to overthrow the Nigerian state and establish a pure Islamic society. This core belief structure is fundamentally incompatible with the principles of secular governance and is non-negotiable.

Also, distrust and past failures, the Nigerian government has attempted to negotiate with Boko Haram multiple times, but these efforts have consistently failed. Each breakdown in talks further erodes trust, with Boko Haram often using negotiation as a tactic to gain leverage.

Another challenge or limitation is the Factionalism of the NSAGs. The splintering of Boko Haram into factions, such as the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP), makes identifying a credible representative for negotiation nearly impossible. The competing groups often have different motives and hierarchies, complicating any unified peace effort.

Also, perception of weakness is another limitation. For the Nigerian state, dialogue is often viewed as a sign of weakness, and negotiators risk being seen as legitimizing the terrorist group. In contrast, Boko Haram uses the government's perceived weakness to justify and promote its cause to potential recruits.



Similarly, trauma and distrust within communities possess challenge to the process of negotiation. The insurgency has created immense distrust within affected communities, even between Christians and Muslims who previously coexisted. The horrific violence and targeting of civilians make many doubt the possibility of genuine repentance and reintegration, as highlighted by community scepticism of government deradicalization programs.

However, these processes are not without areas of positive impact, despite these systemic challenges, Christian principles have a tangible and positive impact on other aspects of the conflict response. For instance, informal peacebuilding through engagement between different faith groups. Courageous women, both Christian and Muslim, have used informal networks to negotiate directly with Boko Haram fighters for the release of abductees, demonstrating agency and a commitment to reconciliation at the grassroots level.

Similarly, community resilience and humanitarian aid is another sector exploited for negotiation. Christian aid organizations and local churches have provided essential humanitarian support to victims and internally displaced persons (IDPs), rooted in their faith's call to love and serve the vulnerable. This has helped manage the humanitarian crisis in the North East, where essential services have been devastated.

Similarly, another positive impact includes spiritual and emotional support. The church provides spiritual comfort and emotional healing to a traumatized population, helping people grapple with loss and grief. It serves as a source of strength for practicing courage and standing firm in the face of persecution.

Promoting dialogue and coexistence is another approach employed by the church to promote negotiation and peace in the north east. At the local level, Christian leaders engage in dialogue with moderate Muslim leaders to foster peace and counter the extremist narrative. By focusing on shared values and mutual humanity, these efforts help prevent the conflict from devolving into a broader religious war.

### **6.1.6 Peacebuilding**



Peacebuilding refers to long-term efforts aimed at preventing the recurrence of conflict by addressing structural and relational causes of violence. According to Boutros-Ghali (1992), peacebuilding involves actions that strengthen the political, economic, and social foundations of peace. Lederach (1997) extends this notion to include *relationship transformation*, emphasizing that sustainable peace emerges from the restoration of trust and dignity among former enemies. Within Christian thought, peacebuilding is not merely a social endeavor but a divine mandate grounded in the Beatitude: “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God*” (Matthew 5:9). Thus, for Christian actors in the North-East, peacebuilding and negotiation are inseparable from discipleship and witness.

The conceptual terrain of this study demonstrates that Christian principles offer an integrated framework that transcends secular dichotomies of power and persuasion. They reimagine negotiation as a redemptive process grounded in moral transformation rather than tactical compromise.

## 7.1 Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical foundation of this study draws primarily on two interrelated paradigms within peace and conflict studies: Conflict Transformation Theory and Just Peace Theory. Both frameworks offer profound insights into how Christian principles can shape and sustain processes of negotiation, reconciliation, and peacebuilding in deeply divided societies in North-East Nigeria. Together, they provide a holistic model that integrates moral, relational, and structural dimensions of peace.

### 7.1.1 Conflict Transformation Theory

John Paul Lederach’s Conflict Transformation Theory (1995, 1997, 2003) provides the most relevant theoretical foundation for understanding the ethical and relational dynamics of Christian negotiation. Lederach argues that peacebuilding is not merely about managing or resolving conflict



but transforming the very relationships, attitudes, and structures that produce violence. Unlike traditional conflict resolution models that aim for short-term settlement, conflict transformation is concerned with enduring change in patterns of human interaction.

Lederach identifies four dimensions of transformation: personal, relational, structural, and cultural. Each dimension resonates deeply with Christian theology. The personal dimension reflects inner healing and repentance, paralleling the Christian call for conversion and forgiveness (Romans 12:2). The relational dimension emphasizes restoring trust and building reconciliation between former enemies which is central to Christ's teaching of loving one's neighbour and even one's enemy (Matthew 5:44). The structural dimension seeks justice and equity in systems that perpetuate oppression, echoing the biblical concern for social righteousness (Amos 5:24). Finally, the cultural dimension involves affirming values that sustain peaceful coexistence, such as hospitality, community, and dignity, virtues that are integral to African and Christian ethics (Lederach, 2005).

Applying Lederach's framework to North-East Nigeria, churches like EYN and organizations like CCEPI have operationalized conflict transformation through trauma healing, community dialogue, and reconciliation workshops. These interventions recognize that peace cannot emerge solely through military victories or political reforms; rather, it must evolve through transformed relationships rooted in forgiveness and restored humanity. The EYN Peace Programme, for instance, embodies a theology of healing that invites victims and perpetrators alike into processes of acknowledgment, lament, and restoration. This approach reflects Lederach's conviction that sustainable peace grows "from below and from within" (Lederach, 1997), emphasizing grassroots ownership over external imposition.

Furthermore, conflict transformation aligns with the biblical understanding of *shalom*, a Hebrew term denoting holistic peace, encompassing harmony, justice, and completeness. Unlike secular models that often prioritize stability over justice, the Christian vision of *shalom* integrates both, demanding peace with righteousness (Psalm 85:10). Hence, conflict transformation as applied in



Christian contexts moves beyond pragmatic negotiation to spiritual renewal, redefining enemies as potential partners in God’s redemptive plan.

### **7.1.2 Just Peace Theory**

Complementing conflict transformation, Just Peace Theory provides a normative framework for linking peace to moral responsibility and justice. The theory, as articulated by scholars such as Philpott (2012), Appleby (2000), and Stassen (1999), critiques both pacifism and realism by proposing a middle ground that prioritizes peace through justice, reconciliation, and human dignity. It asserts that genuine peace is not merely the absence of violence but the presence of right relationships founded on truth, repentance, and moral accountability.

Just Peace Theory originates from the Christian ethical tradition that informed the *Just War Theory* but redirects its focus from legitimate violence to legitimate peace. Philpott (2012) defines Just Peace as a process that “restores right relationships through practices of mercy, forgiveness, and restorative justice.” This theoretical perspective provides an ethical compass for faith-based peacebuilding, urging negotiators to uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of every person created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

In the North-East Nigerian context, Just Peace Theory helps explain how churches like EYN conceptualize negotiation as both a moral and social process. Their interventions often involve reconciling victims and offenders through confession, forgiveness, and restitution practices that resonate with the Christian doctrine of repentance and grace. The CCEPI trauma healing programme, for example, integrates psychosocial support with moral reflection, encouraging survivors to transcend bitterness through faith and forgiveness. Such practices embody the spirit of Just Peace, transforming justice from retribution into restoration.

Moreover, Just Peace Theory provides a critical contrast to kinetic approaches that rely on coercive force. While kinetic strategies may achieve temporary order, they rarely produce moral



transformation. In contrast, Just Peace emphasizes moral persuasion over compulsion, nurturing empathy and accountability as conditions for sustainable peace. This moral grounding distinguishes Christian negotiation from secular diplomacy, which often privileges expediency over ethics.

### **7.1.3 Synthesis of Theories**

Both Conflict Transformation and Just Peace Theories converge on the principle that peace must be rooted in justice, relationship, and moral renewal. Conflict transformation provides the relational and procedural dimension, how peace is built; Just Peace provides the ethical and teleological dimension, why peace is pursued. Together, they articulate a theology of peace that unites the spiritual with the structural, making faith-based negotiation not merely symbolic but substantively transformative.

In the North-East Nigerian context, this synthesis explains why Christian actors have often succeeded where state interventions have failed. The church's emphasis on repentance, forgiveness, and community rebuilding aligns with Lederach's transformative paradigm, while its moral insistence on justice and dignity reflects Just Peace principles. Thus, Christian principles do not compete with political negotiation frameworks; they enrich them by embedding moral and relational legitimacy.

### **8.1 How Churches in North-East Nigeria Applied Christian Principles in Peacebuilding**

The practical embodiment of Christian principles in conflict negotiation and peacebuilding within North-East Nigeria is most visibly expressed through the activities of the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN – Church of the Brethren) and associated Christian organizations such as the Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI), the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), and the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC). These institutions have not only preached forgiveness and reconciliation but have systematically institutionalized them through



organized peace programmes, trauma healing workshops, and interfaith dialogues. Their work demonstrates that Christian theology, when operationalized in contexts of violence, can become a vital instrument for transforming both hearts and social systems.

### **8.1.1 EYN Church of the Brethren and Peace Engagement**

The EYN Church of the Brethren stands as one of the most affected and yet resilient faith communities in the North-East. Originating from the missionary work of the American Church of the Brethren in the early twentieth century, EYN has historically emphasized pacifism, humility, and service as central tenets of its theology (Falola & Heaton, 2008). During the Boko Haram insurgency, EYN suffered catastrophic loss, Over 300 church buildings destroyed, thousands of members displaced, and many leaders killed or abducted (EYN, 2021). Yet, rather than respond with vengeance, the church interpreted its suffering through a theological lens of redemptive endurance and forgiveness, reflecting Christ’s command to “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

Under the leadership of successive presidents, including Rev. Dr. Samuel Dali, EYN established the Peace Programme, which became a model of faith-based negotiation in Nigeria. The Programme combines biblical teaching with practical peace initiatives such as community mediation, interfaith dialogue, humanitarian relief, and trauma healing. According to EYN (2021), these interventions are guided by the belief that “violence cannot extinguish violence; only love and forgiveness can heal the wounds of hatred.”



EYN's peace initiatives operate at multiple levels. At the grassroots, the church facilitates dialogue sessions between Christian and Muslim communities, emphasizing shared humanity over sectarian identity. At the community level, the church mediates disputes between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities, helping to prevent secondary conflicts over land and resources. At the institutional level, EYN collaborates with national and international partners such as the Mennonite Central Committee and Mission 21 to promote trauma healing and reconciliation education. These efforts have produced measurable transformations in local relationships, enabling displaced persons to reintegrate into their home communities with renewed trust.

### **8.1.2 The Role of CCEPI and Dr. Rebecca Dali**

The Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI), founded by Dr. Rebecca Samuel Dali, represents a critical extension of EYN's peace mission. CCEPI's work exemplifies how Christian compassion translates into structured negotiation and rehabilitation frameworks. The organization provides humanitarian aid, psycho-social support, and capacity-building for widows, orphans, and survivors of insurgency. Beyond relief, CCEPI integrates trauma healing and spiritual counselling into its peacebuilding approach, grounded in biblical teachings on forgiveness and resilience (Dali, 2018).

CCEPI's methodology aligns with Conflict Transformation Theory by addressing both the external and internal dimensions of peace. On one hand, it empowers survivors economically and socially through vocational training and microfinance; on the other, it fosters emotional and spiritual recovery through prayer, group counselling, and community worship. This dual approach recognizes that negotiation is not limited to formal diplomacy between elites but includes the rebuilding of trust and dignity among victims. Dali (2018) argues that without emotional reconciliation, no peace agreement can hold because the "human soul remains wounded." Thus, CCEPI's approach operationalizes the Christian principles of *agape* and *restorative justice* as living expressions of peace.



### **8.1.3 Other Church-Based Peacebuilding Initiatives**

Beyond EYN and CCEPI, other Christian bodies have also contributed significantly to negotiation and peacebuilding in the region. The Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) and the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) have been active in promoting interfaith dialogue and civic advocacy. JDPC, in particular, focuses on community-based mediation, education, and human rights promotion, seeking to strengthen the moral fabric of society through faith-inspired justice (Okereke, 2021).

These organizations operate within the broader framework of non-kinetic peacebuilding, but their distinct contribution lies in their moral orientation. While governmental and international peace programmes often prioritize security stabilization or humanitarian aid, Christian organizations emphasize *moral restoration*, the reconciliation of broken relationships and the redemption of human dignity. Their actions relate with the biblical mandate of 2 Corinthians 5:18, which identifies believers as “ministers of reconciliation.”

Moreover, these church-led initiatives demonstrate a clear contrast with kinetic approaches. Whereas military strategies seek to suppress conflict through coercion, faith-based negotiation transforms conflict through conviction and compassion. This contrast underscores an epistemological shift from power-based to relationship-based peacebuilding. Churches appeal not to fear or force but to conscience and community, inviting offenders to repentance and victims to forgiveness.

### **9.1 Challenges in Church-Led Peace Negotiation**

Despite their transformative potential, church-led negotiations face several challenges. The lack of institutional coordination between faith-based and state actors often limits the scalability of local peace initiatives (Adetoro & Omiyefa, 2020). Additionally, religious bias and mistrust can



hinder interfaith collaboration, especially in communities polarized by extremist violence. Many church programs depend on external funding, which can be unstable and politically constrained. Nevertheless, these challenges do not diminish the moral authority of the church; rather, they reveal the tension between spiritual and political power in fragile contexts.

Scholars such as Appleby (2000) and Philpott (2012) argue that religious actors possess unique capacities for reconciliation precisely because their legitimacy is rooted in moral conviction rather than coercive authority. In North-East Nigeria, churches like EYN have earned credibility by *suffering with their people*, sharing in displacement, loss, and trauma. This moral solidarity strengthens their voice in negotiation processes and gives authenticity to their message of peace.

### 10.1 Comparative Reflection: Christian, Kinetic, and Non-Kinetic Approaches

To critically understand the peacebuilding landscape in North-East Nigeria, it is essential to compare the philosophical, moral, and operational foundations of Christian, kinetic, and non-kinetic approaches. While all three share the goal of restoring peace, their motivations, methodologies, and outcomes differ fundamentally.

Approach	Core Motivation	Methodology	Expected Outcome
Christian Principles	Moral–spiritual transformation grounded in love, forgiveness, and justice	Dialogue, reconciliation, inclusive peacebuilding, humanitarian service	Healing, social cohesion, transformation of relationships
Kinetic (Military)	Restoration of state authority and suppression of violence through force	Armed intervention, intelligence operations, territorial control	Temporary security, deterrence of insurgent activity



<b>Approach</b>	<b>Core</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
<b>Non-Kinetic (Secular)</b>	Socio-economic rehabilitation and deradicalization	Dialogue, education, development, empowerment programs	Reintegration, reduction of extremism, social stability

(Source: Adapted from Lederach, 2005, and contextualized for the North-East Nigerian peacebuilding environment).

This table reveals that while the kinetic approach targets the external symptoms of conflict such as violence and insecurity, Christian and non-kinetic approaches engage deeper layers of human experience, moral transformation, and social justice. When compared to kinetic and non-kinetic approaches, the Christian model of negotiation presents a comprehensive and value-driven framework. Kinetic strategies may deter violence temporarily but often breed resentment and moral fatigue. Non-kinetic state initiatives such as amnesty or deradicalization address surface-level grievances but rarely penetrate the moral consciousness of communities. Christian principles, however, engage both the soul and the structure; they transform individuals from within while simultaneously reconstructing social relationships (Lederach, 2005; Galtung, 1996). This integration of spiritual healing and social reconstruction explains why initiatives by the Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria (EYN) and the Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI) have recorded lasting impact. Their interventions in communities such as Chibok, Gwoza, and Mubi demonstrate that peace is not achieved merely through ceasefires or development projects but through a reordering of moral relationships. The Christian notion of peace (shalom) envisions a reconciled humanity living in justice and love, an ideal that continues to inspire and sustain peace efforts in North-East Nigeria (Adamu, 2024).



## **10.2 Practical ways to apply Christian principles by Borno State and Federal Government of Nigeria**

Conflict is inevitable in human interaction (Bengtson, 2025), but in Borno State where violent extremism, displacement, and religious diversity intersect peacebuilding must be **religiously sensitive, inclusive, and morally grounded**. Both Christianity and Islam emphasize justice, forgiveness, mercy, and community harmony, offering shared values that can guide sustainable peace and social reconstruction.

### **i. Promote Faith-Based Moral Legitimacy and Interreligious Cooperation**

Before implementing peace initiatives, leaders at both the state and federal levels should engage **Christian and Muslim religious councils** in prayerful consultations and joint moral reflections. This aligns with James 1:5, which calls for seeking divine wisdom, and the Qur'an (Al-Imran 3:159), which encourages consultation (shura) in decision-making. In 2021, the EYN leadership in Mubi partnered with local Imams to conduct interfaith peace prayers before launching reconciliation forums, which enhanced community trust. Institutionalizing such collaboration under the **Borno State Peacebuilding Agency (BOSPA)** would strengthen legitimacy and mutual respect.

### **ii. Foster Humility and Service-Oriented Leadership in Governance and Security**

As Proverbs 11:2 teaches, humility brings wisdom, while the Qur'an (Al-Furqan 25:63) praises the servants of God who "walk humbly on the earth." Government and security agencies can embody humility through **conflict sensitivity and servant leadership** training. Initiatives like CCEPI's work with women returnees in Pulka and Muslim Aid's humanitarian support in Maiduguri show that humility-driven engagement can restore community confidence and humanize state operations (Eze, 2022).

### **iii. Strengthen Transparent and Truthful Communication Across Religious Lines**

Ephesians 4:15 and the Qur'an (Al-Hajj 22:30) both emphasize truthfulness.



Transparency in humanitarian distribution, counterterrorism communication, and relief coordination can reduce mistrust among religious communities. The **Borno State Emergency Management Agency (BOSEMA)** should establish interfaith oversight committees to ensure that truth and fairness guide public information and resource allocation.

**iv. Institutionalize Listening Forums for Interfaith Dialogue and Healing**

James 1:19 encourages being “quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger,” while the Qur’an (Ash-Shura 42:40) advocates reconciliation as a noble act. Both the Borno and federal governments should organize **joint Christian–Muslim community listening forums**, especially in reconciliation areas such as Bama, Konduga, and Gwoza. The **EYN Peace Desk** and the **Jama’atu Nasril Islam (JNI)** can co-facilitate such sessions, enabling trauma victims and ex-combatants to share experiences and foster forgiveness (CCEPI, 2023).

**v. Pursue Reconciliation and Restorative Justice Over Retaliation**

Matthew 5:23–24 urges reconciliation before worship, while the Qur’an (Ash-Shura 42:43) honors those who pardon and reconcile. Government efforts such as **Operation Safe Corridor** should incorporate moral renewal through faith-based teachings. Programs in Chibok (EYN) and Maiduguri (JNI Youth Peace Forum) have shown that forgiveness-based reintegration reduces stigma and recidivism among ex-insurgents.

**vi. Encourage Responsible Information Sharing and Counter Hate Speech**

Proverbs 16:28 warns against gossip, and the Qur’an (Al-Hujurat 49:6) cautions believers to verify information. Hate speech and rumor have fueled several local conflicts, including the 2021 Biliri crisis. The **National Orientation Agency (NOA)** should collaborate with church and mosque leaders to run **peace media campaigns** discouraging misinformation and promoting shared moral values.



**vii. Institutionalize Mercy-Based Reintegration and Trauma Healing**  
Colossians 3:13 teaches forgiveness as Christ forgave, while the Qur'an (An-Nur 24:22) calls believers to forgive and overlook faults. Reintegration programs should therefore combine **psychosocial support with spiritual healing**, using models from both faith traditions. EYN's trauma healing workshops in Adamawa and the **Al-Bayan Islamic Foundation's peace counselling sessions** in Maiduguri can serve as templates for inclusive moral rehabilitation.

The comparative reflection reveals that an inclusive religious framework drawing from both **Christian and Islamic ethics of forgiveness, justice, and mercy** can strengthen peacebuilding efforts in Borno State. By integrating these faith-based principles into governance, security operations, and community reintegration, both the **Borno State Government** and the **Federal Government of Nigeria** can promote a peace that is not only politically stable but also spiritually rooted and socially sustainable across religious boundaries.

### 11.1 Summary of Findings

This study has examined the impact of Christian principles on conflict negotiation strategies in North-East Nigeria, focusing particularly on the role of the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN – Church of the Brethren) and other faith-based organizations such as the Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI). Drawing upon theological frameworks, peacebuilding theories, and empirical documentation, the paper has demonstrated that Christian institutions have been central actors in transforming conflict narratives, mediating reconciliation, and fostering sustainable peace in one of Nigeria's most violent regions.

The findings indicate that the Christian approach to negotiation differs substantially from both kinetic and non-kinetic state strategies. Whereas the kinetic approach, often represented by military intervention, emphasizes control and suppression of violence, and the non-kinetic approach emphasizes political dialogue and humanitarian aid, the Christian approach focuses on



*transforming the human heart and restoring moral relationships.* This difference underscores a fundamental shift from coercive to reconciliatory peacebuilding, one that recognizes that peace without forgiveness remains fragile, and reconciliation without justice remains incomplete (Lederach, 2005).

A key finding of this research is that Christian principles such as forgiveness, love, repentance, and restorative justice are not abstract ideals but practical instruments of negotiation and transformation. These principles, deeply embedded in Scripture such as Matthew 5:9 (“Blessed are the peacemakers”) and Romans 12:18 (“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men”), have informed concrete peacebuilding actions by churches. The activities of EYN, for instance, show how theological convictions can be translated into institutional frameworks that reconcile communities and rebuild lives after violence.

Another major finding is that the EYN Peace Programme represents a unique form of faith-based negotiation that combines biblical ethics with community mediation. EYN’s efforts in trauma healing, dialogue facilitation, and interfaith engagement demonstrate that negotiation grounded in moral integrity and compassion can succeed where political or military interventions fail. The Programme’s inclusion of both perpetrators and victims in reconciliation processes reflects a deep commitment to the Christian vision of restorative peace, where justice seeks not to punish but to heal.

The study also found that CCEPI, under the leadership of Dr. Rebecca Dali, complements EYN’s mission by addressing the psychosocial and economic dimensions of peace. CCEPI’s emphasis on trauma recovery, empowerment of widows and orphans, and community reintegration aligns with John Paul Lederach’s (1997) idea of “peacebuilding from below” a process that nurtures long-term transformation by restoring dignity to those most affected by conflict. Through faith-based counselling and vocational initiatives, CCEPI embodies the principle of holistic peace (*shalom*), which integrates the spiritual, emotional, and material well-being of survivors.



Furthermore, the findings reveal that churches in North-East Nigeria have filled critical gaps left by the state and international agencies. Their proximity to local communities and moral credibility enables them to act as mediators in contexts where state legitimacy is contested. While governmental peace frameworks often lack the moral and relational capital needed to transform hostilities, churches leverage their moral authority and shared suffering with victims to build trust and legitimacy (Philpott, 2012). This dynamic affirms that peacebuilding is not merely a political or diplomatic exercise but a profoundly moral and spiritual enterprise.

However, the findings also underscore persistent challenges. Church-led peacebuilding efforts often struggle with inadequate funding, limited coordination with state actors, and security risks to field workers. Moreover, deep-rooted mistrust between Christian and Muslim communities continues to impede interfaith collaboration, despite the churches' persistent emphasis on dialogue. Yet, these challenges have not diminished the resilience of faith-based actors; instead, they have reinforced the churches' commitment to peace as both a divine calling and a human responsibility.

In synthesis, the study concludes that Christian principles, when contextualized and operationalized through institutional frameworks like EYN and CCEPI, offer a transformative model of negotiation and peacebuilding in North-East Nigeria. This model is distinguished by its emphasis on reconciliation rather than retaliation, moral renewal rather than coercive deterrence, and holistic healing rather than political expediency. The Christian vision of peace thus emerges not as an alternative to secular negotiation strategies but as a necessary moral complement capable of addressing the spiritual and relational dimensions of conflict those conventional methods often overlook.

## **12.1 Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **12.1.1 Conclusion**



This study has explored the influence of Christian principles on conflict negotiation strategies in North-East Nigeria, emphasizing the theological, ethical, and practical dimensions of faith-based peacebuilding. Using the case of the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN) and allied initiatives such as Dr. Rebecca Dali's Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI), it has demonstrated that Christian engagement in negotiation goes beyond spiritual rhetoric, it represents a dynamic, contextually grounded, and morally transformative approach to restoring peace in a region scarred by violent insurgency.

The research concludes that Christian principles function as transformative moral resources that redefine the logic of negotiation from coercion to reconciliation. In contrast to the kinetic approach, which prioritizes military suppression, and the non-kinetic approach, which emphasizes political dialogue and development incentives, the Christian approach integrates forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation into the heart of negotiation processes. This faith-based approach is rooted in biblical imperatives such as Matthew 5:44 ("Love your enemies, bless those who curse you") and 2 Corinthians 5:18 ("God... has given us the ministry of reconciliation"), which offer a moral vision capable of transforming enmity into restored community.

The study further establishes that the EYN Peace Programme provides an institutional embodiment of Christian negotiation strategies. Through initiatives in trauma healing, mediation training, interfaith dialogue, and community reintegration, the programme demonstrates how theological convictions can be operationalized to address practical conflict realities. Similarly, CCEPI's humanitarian and psychosocial interventions reveal that peace is inseparable from social justice and human dignity. These efforts collectively illustrate that the Christian church, when faithful to its mission, becomes a potent instrument of transformation in contexts of violence.

Moreover, the research highlights that the moral authority of the church derived from its suffering, integrity, and proximity to victims, gives it a unique legitimacy in peace processes. Unlike state-led negotiations, which often lack moral depth, church-led negotiations derive credibility from lived witness and ethical consistency. This moral capital allows Christian negotiators to engage



even with perpetrators, fostering repentance and healing rather than revenge or exclusion. The Christian concept of peace (*shalom*) thus emerges as both spiritual and structural, seeking not only the cessation of violence but the restoration of just relationships, trust, and communal harmony.

Nevertheless, the study recognizes several challenges limiting the impact of Christian peace initiatives. These include financial constraints, inadequate coordination among faith-based organizations, political marginalization of religious peace actors, and persistent interfaith tensions. Yet, despite these obstacles, the resilience of churches such as EYN and CCEPI proves that faith remains a vital force for moral regeneration and social reconstruction in the aftermath of conflict. Their experiences affirm that effective negotiation in Nigeria's complex environment requires more than technical expertise it requires spiritual vision, moral courage, and cultural empathy.

In sum, the research concludes that Christian principles have not only influenced but transformed the character and outcome of negotiation strategies in North-East Nigeria. They offer a relational, ethical, and holistic alternative that complements and enriches secular models of peacebuilding. The Christian church's unique contribution lies in its power to heal memories, rebuild moral trust, and foster reconciliation dimensions of peace that conventional military or political approaches alone cannot achieve.

### **12.1.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and analysis, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen faith-based contributions to peacebuilding and negotiation in North-East Nigeria, with particular focus on Borno State and the role of the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN):

#### **i. Integration of Faith-Based Perspectives into Official Peace Frameworks:**



The Borno State Government and the Federal Government of Nigeria should institutionalize collaboration with faith-based organizations such as the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN) and the Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiatives (CCEPI) within state and national peacebuilding structures. This integration can be achieved through formal inclusion of faith-based representatives in the Borno State Peacebuilding Agency, the National Peace Committee, and local government peace platforms. Faith-based organizations' community trust and moral influence should complement governmental and security-led efforts to foster reconciliation and rehabilitation.

**ii. Capacity Building in Theological and Peace Education:**

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and theological institutions in Borno State should partner with the Federal Ministry of Education and the National Universities Commission (NUC) to incorporate peace theology, ethics of negotiation, and trauma healing into seminary curricula. This will prepare clergy and Christian leaders to act as community mediators who combine spiritual discernment with practical peacebuilding competencies, especially in rural and post-conflict communities across the North-East.

**iii. Sustainable Funding for Faith-Based Peace Initiatives:**

The Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning, in collaboration with the Borno State Government, should allocate specific grants or counterpart funding lines to support long-term faith-based peacebuilding programmes. CAN should also establish a Peace and Development Endowment Fund to sustain local reconciliation and trauma healing initiatives. Dependence on emergency or donor-driven support should be replaced with locally managed and government-supported financial mechanisms.

**iv. Strengthened Interfaith Collaboration:**

The Borno State Inter-Religious Council (BIRC), jointly coordinated by CAN and the Borno State Islamic Council, should be revitalized and adequately funded by the state government to



promote continuous dialogue, joint community service, and peace education in schools. Both the Federal Government and Borno State Government should support joint Christian–Muslim youth programmes that reinforce nonviolence, mutual respect, and shared citizenship.

**v. Documentation and Knowledge Sharing:**

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in partnership with EYN and CCEPI should establish a Faith and Peace Documentation Centre in Maiduguri to archive testimonies, case studies, and lessons learned from local peacebuilding efforts. The Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation should collaborate in disseminating these materials to shape national narratives on faith and reconciliation. Proper documentation will also serve as a valuable reference for policymakers and scholars.

**vi. Policy Advocacy Rooted in Moral Authority:**

The National and Borno State chapters of CAN should use their moral influence to advocate for transparent governance, justice for victims of insurgency, and accountability in humanitarian interventions. They should collaborate with the National Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations to ensure that post-conflict reconstruction policies address the root causes of violence such as corruption, inequality, and marginalization.

**vii. Partnership with Trauma and Mental Health Experts:**

The Borno State Ministry of Health, in collaboration with CAN, EYN, and humanitarian partners, should integrate faith-based trauma healing with clinical mental health services in displaced persons' camps and affected communities. Churches should work alongside trained psychologists and counsellors to ensure holistic recovery addressing both the spiritual and psychological needs of survivors.



**viii. Encouraging Youth and Women’s Participation in Peace Processes:**

The Borno State Government, in partnership with CAN and the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, should ensure the inclusion of women and youth in peace negotiation teams, community dialogue committees, and local security forums. Churches should intentionally create mentorship and leadership programmes to empower these groups as agents of peace, recognizing their transformative roles in rebuilding trust and social cohesion.

The experience of North-East Nigeria demonstrates that peace transcends the cessation of violence; it demands justice, compassion, and reconciliation. When Christian principles guide negotiation and governance, peace becomes a ministry of restoration rather than a mere political compromise. The enduring work of the EYN and CCEPI proves that faith-inspired action, when supported by government policy and interfaith cooperation, can sustain peace beyond the fragility of political settlements. Thus, the Christian church in Borno State continues to serve as both a moral compass and a living laboratory of hope for Nigeria and the wider world.

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