

# J-K GADZAMA LLP

## NEWSLETTER

A Publication of J-K Gadzama LLP: Vol. 43, April - June, 2024



L-R: Hon. Justice Olukayode Ariwoola, GCON, Chief Justice of Nigeria; Hon. Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, JCA, President of the Court of Appeal; Hon. Justice Abdu Aboki, JSC (Rtd) and Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, OFR, MFR, SAN during Call to Bar Ceremonies on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at the Body of Benchers Complex Institution and Research District FCC, Phase 111, Abuja.

# Editorial

In this edition of our Quarterly Newsletter is an article by our Founding Principal Partner on the topic “Education under attack in Nigeria: Effectiveness of the Government’s Approach”. The article discusses the attacks on education in Nigeria and the attendant consequences of such attacks over the years. It further examines the effectiveness of the Nigerian Government’s approach to attacks on education in Nigeria and outlines strategic recommendations for curbing such attacks.

We have a range of exciting and informative features that are sure to captivate our readers. Our Photo Speak section brings you a visual narrative of some of our recent events, while our Legal Humor section is guaranteed to put a smile on your face. We also have exciting news from the firm, including updates on our upcoming events and a profile of our staff members who work tirelessly to provide our clients with the highest quality legal services. As always, we are committed to providing quality and informative content that educates and entertains our readers. We hope you enjoy reading this edition of our Quarterly Newsletter.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future content. As usual, previous editions of our newsletter can be accessed at: <https://jkgadzamallp.com/publications/newsletters>.

Chidera Mgbe - Editor

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# EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK IN NIGERIA: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH

By



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

*“Education is an absolute necessity, not just for the children themselves but also for global peace, stability and prosperity for all. Schools should be treated as sanctuaries and that it is our common responsibility to ensure that every child has access to an education, even at times of conflict.”*

- **Ms. Virginia Gamba**

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict during Arria Formula Meeting on the issue of attacks on schools in October 2017.

The targeted attacks on schools globally, being a direct contravention of international humanitarian law, was recognized as a growing concern by the United Nations Security Council Resolution, 1612 which re-echoed that “attacks against schools represent a grave violation against children and are a violation of children’s right to education”; thus causing irreparable damage to the education of the children, especially in the aspect of “children access to school and their learning outcomes - and to teachers lives”. While incident reports at the global scene are too numerous to mention, significant pattern of attacks have been perpetrated and some countries heavily affected with documented reports. Nigeria is not left out in this trend.<sup>1</sup>

It is no longer news that our dear country has, for more than a decade and counting, been bedevilled by security challenges in the form of insurgency, banditry, kidnapping and other violent crimes; leaving a huge impact on education. The myriad attacks on education in Nigeria have had attendant consequences on the nation. Though the Nigerian government and relevant stakeholders have made considerable effort to combat the menace, the situation has not sufficiently improved and there remains room for enhanced strategy and proper implementation of relevant policies.

## 2.0 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE TERM “EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK”

According to the *Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attacks (GCPEA)*, attacks on education can be defined as any intentional threat or use of force—carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, or religious reasons—against students, educators, and education institutions.<sup>2</sup> *Human Rights Watch* defines “attacks on education” as encompassing

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<sup>1</sup> Emmanuel Uzuegbu-Wilson, ‘A Critical Review of Attacks on Schools in Nigeria: Lessons Learned’ (SSRN, 30 September 2019), Page 4 <[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3456225](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3456225)> accessed 26 February 2024.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Attacks on Education and Education Clusters’ (Global Education Cluster, 2022) <<https://www.educationcluster.net/attacks-education-and-education-clusters#:~:text=The%20Global%20Coalition%20to%20Protect,educators%2C%20and%20education%20institutions.%22>> accessed 21 February 2024.

the full range of violations that place children at risk and deny them access to education. This includes attacks on school infrastructure and on teachers and students; the occupation and use of schools by the police and military; harassment and threats against teachers, parents, and students; and the recruitment of children from schools to become soldiers.<sup>3</sup>

According to the United Nations, places of education should be safe havens for children, students and education personnel. However, all too often they, and the places wherein they learn, become either direct targets or collateral damage in conflict-affected contexts. Attacks on education can have serious, long-term physical and psychological repercussions for students and teachers. Attacks can suspend teaching and learning, lead to a significant increase in dropout rates and prevent students from accessing their right to quality education.<sup>4</sup>

In May 28, 2020, the United Nations General Assembly declared September 9 as the International Day to Protect Education from Attack. Recognizing the importance of raising awareness of the dire need to preserve education and protect it from attack, UNESCO and UNICEF were designated to serve as co-facilitators for the yearly observance of this Day and calls upon stakeholders to keep this issue at the top of the international agenda and duly act to alleviate the plight of students affected by armed conflicts. The observance of this International Day serves as an annual platform to amplify advocacy and galvanize action for the protection of education and sustainable peace for all.<sup>5</sup>

### **3.0 ATTACKS ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA AND ATTENDANT CONSEQUENCES**

For many years, education has been under attack in Nigeria. Teachers, school children and students have been killed or wounded. Schools have either been burned or seriously damaged and others have been forced to close. Thousands of children have been forced out of schools across communities in Yobe, Kaduna, Adamawa and Borno States. Many teachers have been forced to flee, for their safety, to other states. The highest number of attacks was in Borno State in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. According to the Nigeria Teachers' Union, more than 1,000 teachers have been forced to flee from some areas in the Northern part of Nigeria since 2012.

This is the handiwork of the Islamist armed group known as Jamā'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lādda'awatih wal Jihad (People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad), commonly referred to as Boko Haram, which translates to "Western education is

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<sup>3</sup> Bede Sheppard, 'Attacks on Education' (Human Rights Watch, 2009) <[<sup>4</sup> 'International Day to protect Education from Attack, September 9' \(United Nations, <<https://www.un.org/en/observances/protect-education-day>> accessed 21 February 2024.](https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/attacks-education#:~:text=In%20environments%20of%20violence%20and,deny%20them%20access%20to%20edu%20cation.> accessed 21 February 2024.</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

<sup>5</sup> 'International Day to Protect Education from Attack – September 9' (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) <<https://www.unesco.org/en/days/protect-education-attack>> accessed 22 February 2024.

forbidden.” Individuals or groups alleging to be members of Boko Haram have claimed responsibility for bombings and gun attacks across Northern and Central Nigeria since July 2009. The group has killed Muslim and Christian clerics and worshippers, politicians, journalists, lawyers, police personnel and soldiers, and has claimed to be responsible for attacks on churches, prisons, police stations, school buildings, offices of newspapers and the United Nations.

The attacks on schools constitute serious violations of international law including the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic and Social Rights under the Regional Human Rights Standards, including the African Charter for Human and Peoples Rights and the Nigerian Constitution. The government of Nigeria is obliged under international human rights law to ensure the right of everyone to education.<sup>6</sup>

In Nigeria, there have been several recorded attacks on education, including, but not limited to, the following:<sup>7</sup>

- 2009 – Success International Private School, Maiduguri, Borno State: six classrooms and a school office destroyed.
- 2010 – Yerwa Primary School, Maiduguri, Borno State: 36 classrooms set ablaze.
- 2012– Government Senior Secondary School, Daura, Yobe State: two blocks of six classrooms, principal's office, books, and certificates set on fire.
- 2013 – College of Agriculture in Gujba, Yobe State: 40 students killed.
- 2014 – Federal Government College Buni Yadi, Yobe State: 59 students killed.
- 2014 – Government Science Secondary School, Potiskum, Yobe State: 33 students killed.
- 2014 – Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State: 279 girls were abducted, 57 escaped, 103 were released following negotiations, four escaped/were found.
- 2015 – College of Administrative and Business Studies, Potiskum, Yobe State: suicide bomb detonated, students killed and injured.
- 2018 – Government Girls Science and Technical College, Dapchi town of Yobe State: 110 girls abducted. 105 released.
- The University of Maiduguri has been repeatedly targeted.

Some other recorded attacks on education include:

- December 2020 – no fewer than 300 students of Government Science Secondary School in Kankara, Katsina state, were kidnapped by armed men who stormed the school. The students were released after spending six nights with their abductors.

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<sup>6</sup> ‘Education under Attack in Nigeria’ (Amnesty International, 2024)

<<https://www.amnestyusa.org/updates/education-under-attack-in-nigeria/>> accessed 21 February 2024.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Review of Legal Framework for the Protection of Education Institutions from Attack in Nigeria’ (Education in Emergencies Working Group Nigeria) <<https://education.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Review-of-the-Legal-Framework-for-the-Protection-of-Education-Institution.pdf>> accessed 21 February 2024.

- February 2021 – bandits kidnapped 27 students at Government Science Secondary School in Kagara, Niger state. The students spent 10 days in the hands of their abductors before they were released. In the same month of February, armed men stormed Girls Secondary School in Jangebe, Zamfara state, and abducted 279 of the students. The nation also witnessed attacks on the College of Forestry Mechanization and the Green Field University, both in Kaduna state.

This list is not exhaustive and the common factor in all is that persons who are bent on enthroning ignorance have been consistent in attacking schools in Nigeria.<sup>8</sup>

Attacks on education harm students, educators, and education systems. It is clear that attacks on learners, educators, and educational institutions have significant short- and long-term consequences. Some of the dire consequences of these attacks are as follows:<sup>9</sup>

- a) Attacks on education have the potential to increase student dropout and teacher attrition; lead to extended school and university closures; diminish the quality of education; and cause physical and psychological harm to those affected.
- b) Attacks also compromise schools' capacity to protect students from social risks, which leaves learners more vulnerable to sexual and other forms of exploitation, recruitment as child labourers or child soldiers, or early marriage and pregnancy.
- c) Attacks on higher education undermine research and teaching, and often result in self-censorship and "brain drain." More broadly, attacks on higher education may affect access to and the quality of education at all levels, as a trained teaching force and high-quality teaching materials are dependent on higher education.
- d) All forms of attack on education can result in significant financial costs for governments, contribute to state fragility, and impede social development.
- e) Conflict and crisis, including attacks on education, often exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and social exclusion and reinforce discriminatory norms and social practices. Minority groups, learners with disabilities, girls and women are more likely to be disproportionately affected by attacks on education. When insecurity increases or a school is occupied by armed forces or armed groups, families typically are more reluctant to continue to send girls to school than boys, for reasons including fear of sexual harassment and violence.

<sup>8</sup> Shielding Education From Attacks' (Leadership News) <<https://leadership.ng/shielding-education-from-attacks/>> accessed 26 February 2024.

<sup>9</sup> 'Education under Attack 2018' (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2018) <[https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/documents\\_eua\\_2018\\_full.pdf](https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/documents_eua_2018_full.pdf)> accessed 21 February 2024.

- f) Attacks on education have devastating immediate and lifelong physical and psychosocial consequences for both male and female survivors, including ones that are distinct to each gender. This suggests that when keeping children safe increases the cost of education for families—for example, when parents have to pay for transportation to a more distant school if the local school is destroyed—those with limited finances may prioritize educating boys.
- g) Education is critical for gender equality, and for social and economic recovery from conflict and crisis. Therefore, reduced access to education has significant social consequences for all children, damaging their future outcomes as well as those of society as a whole. Education is widely recognized as being key to a range of other social, economic, and political rights, which attacks on education can take away from girls, boys, women, and men. These include health outcomes, as well as livelihood opportunities or participation in political processes.

#### **4.0 THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT’S APPROACH TO ATTACKS ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA AND EFFECTIVENESS SO FAR**

Measurable steps towards curbing attacks on education have been made by the Nigerian Government, some of which are highlighted below:

##### **A. Ratification of the Safe Schools Declaration**

In 2015, the governments of Norway and Argentina led a process among United Nations (UN) Member States to develop the Safe Schools Declaration, an inter- governmental political agreement dedicated to protecting education in armed conflict. In 2019, Nigeria ratified the Safe Schools Declaration and became a signatory.<sup>10</sup>

The Safe Schools Declaration outlines a set of commitments to strengthen the protection of education from attack and restrict use of schools and universities for military purposes. It seeks to ensure the continuity of safe education during armed conflict. The Declaration builds a community of nations committed to respecting the civilian nature of schools and developing and sharing examples of good practices for protecting schools and universities during armed conflict. It offers guidance on concrete measures that armed forces and armed non-state actors can take to deter military use of educational facilities, to reduce the risk of attack, and to mitigate the impact of attacks and military use when they do occur.

Countries also commit to collect, or facilitate the collection of, data on attacks on education; investigate and prosecute war crimes involving education; and provide assistance to victims. By endorsing the Declaration, States also commit to restoring access to safe education and to

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<sup>10</sup> ‘The Safe Schools Declaration’ (Government of Norway, 22 May 2023) <[https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/development-cooperation/safeschools\\_declaration/id2460245/](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/development-cooperation/safeschools_declaration/id2460245/)> accessed 21 February 2024.

developing education systems that are conflict- sensitive and promote respect between social or ethnic groups. The Safe Schools Declaration is a framework for collaboration and exchange, and endorsing countries meet on a regular basis to review implementation of the Declaration.<sup>11</sup>

Nigeria’s ratification of the Safe Schools Declaration was to ensure that implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration is a government commitment with legal backing. The process of domestic ratification was led by the Education in Emergencies Working Group in Nigeria, which is co-led by the Federal Ministry of Education, UNICEF and Save the Children and consists of over 50 active local and international NGOs, government agencies and departments. As part of implementing the Declaration, Nigeria’s armed forces have ordered military teachers to stop openly carrying weapons in schools.<sup>12</sup>

### **B. National Policies by the Federal Ministry of Education**

Following Nigeria’s ratification of the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD), the Federal Ministry of Education developed a Plan of Action 2018-2020 to mainstream SSD laws and policies in Nigeria. As part of the action plan, the **National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools with Its Implementing Guidelines** were developed in 2020. This policy is intended to provide policy guidance; set a standard for implementing comprehensive school safety plans; and provide prevention and response mechanisms at national, state, local government and school levels.<sup>13</sup>

To further facilitate holistic implementation of the SSD laws and policies in Nigeria, it was necessary to set clear benchmarks and provide tools for the certification of schools and learning centres as safe for educational pursuits. Thus, the Minimum Standards on Safe Schools was developed in 2021. These standards are comprehensive tools that bare the minimum qualities and practices that schools must adhere to in order to keep learners, school users and schools safe, secure and violence free.<sup>14</sup>

### **C. Establishment of the National Safe Schools Response Coordination Centre**

The National Safe School Response Coordination Centre (NSSRCC) is a Critical Component of the Implementation Strategy of the Safe School Programme in Nigeria established on February 13, 2023 for advocacy, sensitization and capacity building. The establishment of the centre at the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) Headquarters is in demonstration of the government’s resolve to address the serious challenges of school attacks and their

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<sup>11</sup> ‘The Safe Schools Declaration’ (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2024) <<https://ssd.protectingeducation.org/>> accessed 21 February 2024.

<sup>12</sup> ‘Safe Schools Declaration News #5’ (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 18 December 2019) <<https://protectingeducation.org/news/safe-schools-declaration-news-5/>> accessed 22 February 2024.

<sup>13</sup> ‘National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools with Its Implementing Guidelines’ (Federal Ministry of Education, 2021) < <https://education.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/National-Policy-on-SSVFSN.pdf>> accessed 21 February 2024.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Minimum Standards on Safe Schools’ (Federal Ministry of Education, 2021) <<https://education.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Minimum-Standards-for-Safe-Schools.pdf>> accessed 26 February 2024.

consequences that have thrown a large number of children out of school in Nigeria. The centre is saddled with the responsibility of coordinating responses to school violence and attacks using a whole-of-society approach. This collaborative approach is aimed at bringing every relevant stakeholder on board while attempting to provide protection for schools and host communities. All agencies, government and non- governmental organizations, international and local institutions are therefore invited to support the centre to realize the mission of providing safety for schools and host communities in order to guarantee a seamless learning process in Nigeria.<sup>15</sup>

#### **D. Hosting of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the Safe Schools Declaration**

The 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the Safe Schools Declaration took place in Abuja, Nigeria, from 25–27 October 2021. It was hosted by the Government of Nigeria, together with the Governments of Argentina, Norway, and Spain, as well as the African Union Commission and the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. Over the course of the three-day conference, 400 delegates from 27 States and 1,936 delegates from 124 States attended in-person and virtually, respectively. They comprised members of international organisations, Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Justice, as well as civil society and academia.

The deliberations included discussions on how the Guidelines have been used by states and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations to better protect education and save lives; how the SSD, by keeping schools safe, can be a tool to prevent other forms of grave violations, such as sexual violence and recruitment; ways in which education has been protected from attack in the Sahel Region and the gendered impact of attacks; actions governments can take to better achieve accountability for attacks on education and justice for survivors; and the experiences and challenges faced by Ministries of Defence in preventing and responding to attacks on education.<sup>16</sup>

The recommendations from this conference abound and include:<sup>17</sup>

- Ensuring that child protection advisers are part of military and peacekeeping operations to strengthen protections and prevent violations against children.
- Increasing the funding for education in conflict-affected areas.
- Putting accountability mechanisms in place within military structures to ensure there are consequences for violations.
- Completing investigations and fair trials of perpetrators of attacks on education.

<sup>15</sup> 'Safe Schools Strategy' (National Safe Schools Response Coordination Centre, 2022) <<https://nssrcc.gov.ng/safe-school-strategy/>> accessed 21 February 2024.

<sup>16</sup> 'Outcome Report On The Abuja Conference On The Safe Schools Declaration, 2021' <[https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/Abuja-Conference-Report\\_EN.pdf](https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/Abuja-Conference-Report_EN.pdf)> accessed 26 February 2024.

<sup>17</sup> His Excellency, Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister Of Foreign Affairs, 'Conclusions And Recommendations Of The Fourth International Conference On The Safe Schools Declaration' (15 July 2021) <<https://education.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Conclusions-and-Recommendations-of-the-4th-Safe-School-Declaration-Conference.pdf>> accessed 26 February 2024.

- Amending military doctrine to restrict the use of schools and universities by military forces; and
- Advance planning by the military and security agencies to avoid use of schools and universities.

#### **E. Moves to set up a Presidential Steering Committee for Nigeria’s Safe Schools Project**

In its determination to enhance the coordination of the Safe Schools project to ensure that key stakeholders work cohesively within a unified framework, the Federal Government declared its intention to set up a Presidential Steering Committee for Nigeria’s Safe Schools Project to be inaugurated after the November 2023 Ministerial Retreat in Abuja. The goal is to promote stronger synergy, optimise resource allocation, and ensure a more effective coordinated implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD). This was announced by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), George Akume, in a goodwill message delivered at a one-day National Summit on Safe Schools with the theme, “Tackling identified threats in Nigeria.”<sup>18</sup>

#### **F. Funding of Safe-School Project in High-Risk States of the Federation**

The National Coordinator of the Safe Schools Initiative under the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Halima Illiya, disclosed during a press briefing in August 2023, that the ₦144.8bn Safe Schools Initiative is expected to begin in eighteen (18) very high-risk states, covering at least 48 schools in each state. The National Coordinator noted that schools in the country have struggled with persistent attacks by extremists, bandits, and kidnappers, which compelled the government to launch the Safe Schools Initiative.

Towards financing and implementing this programme, the former Finance Minister, Dr. Zainab Ahmed, approved the setting up of the Financing Safe Schools Unit and a technical committee was formed. This committee is composed of members from the Ministry of Education, Nigerian Governors Forum, Nigerian Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Department of States Services, and Defence Headquarters. The committee was tasked with developing a national plan for financing Safe Schools, and the plan provides funding requirements for the initiative.

The National Plan on Financing Safe Schools was developed and launched in December 2022. The National Plan will be implemented between 2023-2026, with a total investment size of N144.8bn. The funding of the initiative will be provided by the federal, state, and local governments, alongside multilateral agencies, foreign governments, businesses, and philanthropists, among others.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Vin Olijji, ‘Nigeria To Inaugurate Presidential Steering Committee On Safe Schools’ (Voice of Nigeria, 3 November 2023) <<https://von.gov.ng/nigeria-to-inaugurate-presidential-steering-committee-on-safe-schools/>> accessed 26 February 2024.

<sup>19</sup> Sami Tunji, ‘Insecurity: FG begins N145bn safe-school project in 18 states’ (Punch Newspaper, 18 August 2023) <<https://punchng.com/insecurity-fg-begins-n145bn-safe-school-project-in-18-states/>> accessed 26 February 2024.

## 5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURBING ATTACKS ON EDUCATION

According to the World Bank, the increase in violent attacks in and around schools will not be solved overnight but recognizing the magnitude of the problem is the first step. Governments can build schools with the most modern infrastructure, equip them with the best books and learning materials, and train teachers with the best pedagogical techniques. However, little progress will be made in education if children cannot attend schools because they fear what might happen if they do. Addressing the problem from multiple angles can be difficult, but the reward is very high, a region where all children can attend school safely and learn without fear.<sup>20</sup>

The World Bank's Education Strategy for Western and Central Africa (2022-2025), which is under development, puts a strong focus on tackling attacks to educational facilities, understanding that the effects on education caused by violence and conflict have long-lasting consequences for children, youth, and the region. Two sets of interventions are worth highlighting:

- I) Interventions to prevent conflict and violence through the education system. After-school programs that engage children or empower youth by providing critical life skills can reduce violence and prevent engagement with extremist organizations. The use of cognitive-behavioural therapy has proven efficient at reducing violence and increasing retention in school. School curricula can be designed to challenge cultural norms that promote violence. In general, expanding access to secondary, tertiary, and vocational education and providing job opportunities is key to reduce the probability of youth being recruited by extremist organizations. Also, in higher education, developing programs on conflict studies can become an important tool to understand the dynamics of violence and conflict more thoroughly.
- II) Interventions to continue service delivery in fragile and violent contexts. The strategy highlights the importance of ensuring safety in and around schools by developing early warning systems and comprehensive security plans beyond mere perimetral fencing. It also entails solid data collection systems that can identify schools at risk. In cases where formal education cannot continue in schools, alternative education service delivery such as pop-up schools, learning circles that operate off-site from the formal "mother schools" are proving effective. Expanding remote learning to create resilience against disruptions created by violence can provide a substitute to mitigate the damage of school closures. Some organizations have been using Interactive Voice Recording to make remote learning more dynamic and obtain real-time feedback from students and parents. Many of these

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<sup>20</sup> Martin E. De Simon et al, 'How can we protect education from attack? A focus on Western and Central Africa' (World Bank Blogs, 10 September 2021) < <https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/how-can-we-protect-education-attack-focus-western-and-central-africa> > accessed 26 February 2024.

interventions have been scaled up and shown effective during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Nigeria, following the ratification of the Safe Schools Declaration and the establishment of the various initiatives outlined above, it is clear that our country does not lack programs, initiatives and policies but we must prioritize efficient implementation. The Government's abundant brilliant schemes will be of little benefit without dexterous execution.

Scholars have reeled out insightful recommendations, for the Federal, State and Local Governments and Security Agencies, for ending attacks on schools in Nigeria, some of which are outlined below:

**Recommendations for the Federal Government of Nigeria:**

- Prioritize funding and expand the Safe Schools Declaration implementation to the whole country, considering the spread in attacks on schools.
- Create Emergency response centres across the states for training and re- training for learners and teachers on safety and early warning signs.
- Outrightly close boarding facilities in most vulnerable schools located in rural communities with no security posts.
- Direct National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to raise awareness on drug and substance abuse addiction treatment and rehabilitation services.
- Create opportunity for youth employment, poverty alleviation, social welfare and social inclusion programmes for the most vulnerable.
- Provide psychosocial support and mental health assessment and treatment for learners, teachers and parents with a plan that incorporates a continuum of care.
- Ensure open arrest and prosecution of insurgents and bandits to serve as deterrence.
- Conduct a nationwide awareness to counter violent religious extremism and negative social norms change.

**Recommendations for the States and Local Governments:**

- Ensure Implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration and guidelines at the community and school levels.
- Provide perimeter fence for all schools, urban and rural with safe escape passages for learners.
- Increased investments in prevention of attacks on education.
- Outrightly close boarding facilities in most vulnerable schools located in rural communities with no security posts.
- Increase sensitization against drug and substance abuse addiction, treatment, and rehabilitation.
- Creation of youth employment opportunities, poverty alleviation, social welfare and social inclusion programmes that benefits the most vulnerable.

- Make provision of psychosocial support services for learners, teachers and parents.
- Provide psychological and mental health assessment and treatment for victims of attacks on education.
- Increase provision of education teaching and learning materials to encourage learners to return and remain in schools and to improve welfare teachers.
- Provision of skills acquisition and agricultural entrepreneurship training in schools to engage graduate youths.
- Engage in Advocacy for enhancing community ownership of schools and elimination of negative social norms change.

#### **Recommendations for Security Agencies:**

- Increase number of personnels posted to patrol school roads and schools communities.
- Support Provision of civilian-manned security posts near school premises and nearby outposts together with regular security patrols along school routes.
- Establish school safety and emergency support centres with communication equipment to security officials and selected teaching/ administrative personnel of schools.
- Organize Emergency response training and retraining for learners, teachers and civilian security personnel.
- Patrol isolated forests (ungoverned spaces) to prevent their use by bandits and insurgents.<sup>21</sup>

#### **6.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

It is sad to note that Nigeria has an intolerably high number of out-of-school children, with insecurity and the attendant attacks on schools being one of the factors contributing to the steady rise in the number. The nation has continued to witness series of school attacks and abduction.<sup>22</sup>

To reverse this trend, government and relevant stakeholders must realize that safety from attacks and development of education in Nigeria are dependent on the collective efforts of the various stakeholders in supporting safe school initiatives directed towards providing conducive and safe environment for our educational institutions and also rebuilding schools that have been attacked. This can be achieved through effective collaboration of all critical stakeholders towards addressing the underlying factors that led to the onslaught orchestrated by the Boko Haram insurgent group and other armed criminal groups.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ikuwuta Musa Badar, 'Education Under Attack in Nigeria', Pages 10-11 (Save the Children Nigeria, 2023) <<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/education-under-attack-in-nigeria/>> accessed 21 February 2024.

<sup>22</sup> Shielding Education From Attacks' (Leadership News) < <https://leadership.ng/shielding-education- from-attacks/>> accessed 26 February 2024.

<sup>23</sup> Emmanuel Uzuegbu-Wilson, 'A Critical Review of Attacks on Schools in Nigeria: Lessons Learned' (SSRN, 30 September 2019) <[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3456225](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3456225)> accessed 26 February 2024.

With dedicated and concerted efforts by all concerned, it is hoped that these increasingly frequent attacks on education in Nigeria would drastically reduce and an end will be brought to the vicious cycle of human rights abuses occasioned by such attacks.

I conclude with the words of Mohamud Mohamed Hassan, Save the Children's Interim Director of the Pan Africa Office and African Union Representative, thus:

***“Across Africa, children are being killed on the way to school, they are being terrorized at school, and their schools are being bombed. Even when a child is able to get to school, he or she is often in real danger. Many children attend in spite of the risks, but no child should have to face that choice.”***

Thank you.

## PHOTO SPEAK



L-R: Hon. Justice Dlukayode Ariwoola, GCON, Chief Justice of Nigeria; Hon. Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, JCA, President of the Court of Appeal; Hon. Justice Abdu Aboki, JSC (Rtd) and Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, OFR, MFR, SAN



Group picture of Life Benchers and Benchers at the First Term Traditional Dinner of the Nigerian Law School, Bwari Campus held on Tuesday, 23rd April, 2024 under the Chairmanship of Asiwaju A.S. Awomolo, SAN



Chairman, Body of Benchers' Mentoring Committee, Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN making remarks at a gathering of the Body of Benchers, flanked by Hon. Justice Umaru Abdullahi PCA (Rtd); Hon. Justice Mary Peter-Odili, JSC; Chief Adegboyega Awomolo, SAN; Hon. Justice Mahmud Mohammed, CON, GCON and Daniel Tela, Secretary, Body of Benchers



L-R: Ibrahim Eddy Mark, Daniel Tela, Secretary, Body of Benchers and Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN



Lamar Joe-Kyari Gadzama at the Delos 10 Year Anniversary Breakfast during the Paris Arbitration Week Matthew Rushton-SBD Consultant



L-R: Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama, Aminu Basha (Director Litigation Department, FCTA); Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN; Gaduya Gamiya Bawa (Solicitor General, FCTA) and Yusuf Bolaji Abdulrahman (Senior Counsel, Legal Services Secretariat, FCTA)



400 Level Law Students of Baze University, Abuja with some of the Partners and Associates of J-K Gadzama LLP during the students' visit to the firm



Mr. Mohammed Monguno, Senior Partner, J-K Gadzama LLP, speaking to 400 Level Law Students of Baze University, Abuja during the students visit to the firm



## WORDS ON MARBLE

Each man has to find out why he was created, has to find out how do I achieve my purpose . At the end of creation, how do I make a positive impact on my age, on my nation, on my family. If you do that, you are living a footprint for those coming behind to follow.

**- Justice Chukwudifu Oputa**

The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom. For in all the states of created beings, capable of laws where there is no law, there is no freedom.

**- John Lock.**

No man is above the law and no man is below it; nor do we ask any man's permission when we ask him to obey it. Obedience to the law is demanded as a right; not asked as a favor.

**- Theodore Roosevelt**

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor, catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

**- Mark Twain**

Extend to each person, no matter how trivial the contact, all the care and kindness and understanding and love that you can muster, and do it with no thought of any reward. Your life will never be the same.

**- OG Mandino**

## NEWS

## FROM THE FIRM

- Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN, Chairman of the Body of Benchers' Mentoring Committee congratulated and welcomed the new wigs to the largest Bar in Africa and highlighted that the second edition of the Body of Benchers Mentoring Program for all Young Lawyers has been scheduled to commence from June 1, 2024 till November 30, 2024.
- Rachel Ayorinde, Anyakora Araka, Mark Asu-Obi, Thelma Chukwuani-Okafor, Maduka Chimezie and Busayo Bakare joined the Firm as Junior Associates for their National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Programme. The Firm wishes them a fruitful stay.
- The Firm has recently promoted Lamar Joe-Kyari Gadzama and Chidera Mgbe to the position of Junior Partners. The firm wishes them the best in their new position.

# UPCOMING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

9th Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa JSC, (Rtd) Professional Training  
and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers, April, 2024

14th Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) Annual Conference,  
22 -25 May, 2024, Marrakesh, Morocco

8th International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Africa Conference on  
International Arbitration, 29 - 31 May, 2024, Nairobi, Kenya

Nigerian Law Society Annual General Conference, July, 2024, Ibadan, Oyo State

Annual Conference of the African Bar Association, 27 – 31 October, 2024,  
Livingstone, Republic of Zambia

Nigerian Bar Association Annual General Conference,  
August, 2024, Lagos, Nigeria

17th J-K Gadzama LLP Public Annual Lecture, October, 2024

5th African Arbitration Association Annual International Arbitration  
Conference, 10 - 12 October, 2024, Douala, Cameroun

International Bar Association (IBA) Annual Conference,  
15 - 20 September, 2024, Mexico City

Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (C.Arb.) Nigeria Branch Annual Conference  
and Gala Nite, 6 - 8 November, 2024, Abuja, Nigeria

# OUR PEOPLE

## PARTNERS

1. Joe-Kyari Gadzama, OFR, MFR, SAN, FNIALS, FICMC, DipICArb, FNICArb, FCIArb, C.Arb.  
Founding Principal Partner
2. Mohammed Monguno, ACIArb  
Senior Partner/Fmr. Attorney General of Borno State
3. Darlington Onyekwere, ACIArb  
Partner
4. Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama, LL.M (Warwick), MCIArb., MICMC  
Partner
5. Jerry Ombugadu Musa, LL.M, CDRS  
Junior Partner
6. Oluniyi Adediji, ACTI, ABR  
Junior Partner
7. Agbo Mark Chidi, MCIArb.  
Junior Partner
8. Lamar Joe-Kyari Gadzama, ACIArb., AICMC  
Junior Partner
9. Chidera Mgbe  
Junior Partner

## SENIOR ASSOCIATES

1. John Echezona Unachukwu
2. Rashidat Banke Obamojore

## VISITING ASSOCIATE

Ignatius Ozoilo, Pg. Dip., LL.M

## ASSOCIATES

1. Sarah Jeta Atumga
2. Adegbemiso A. Olasubomi, ACIArb, ABR
3. Onyekachi Agbonma Eluwa
4. Khadijah Muhammad Abubakar
5. Hajara M. S. Sorondinki
6. Simon Tabji Baltai

## JUNIOR ASSOCIATES

1. Asiya Saddique Shehu
2. Anyakora Araka
3. Racheal Ayorinde
4. Mark Asu-Obi
5. Thelma Chukwuani-Okafor
6. Maduka Chimezie
7. Busayo Bakare

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Israel Izuchukwu Chieke

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Hon. Justice Alfa Modibbo Belgore, CJN (RTD), GCON  
(Former Chief Justice of Nigeria)

Hon. Justice George A. Oguntade, J.S.C (RTD), CON.

## SENIOR CONSULTANT

Prof. Paul Idornigie, SAN, PhD, FCIS, FCIArb, C.Arb

# JICAM

JANADA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ARBITRATION & MEDIATION



Janada International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation (JICAM) was established in 2015. It is a dispute resolution centre in Abuja, designed to promote a suitable forum for the resolution of domestic and international disputes. It is fully equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. The rules and guidelines for JICAM accommodate both *ad hoc* and institutional arbitration.

## OUR SERVICES

1. Appointing Authority
2. Fund Managers
3. Hearings
4. Secretarial/Administrative Services
5. Case Management
6. Video Conferencing (Cisco Webex/Zoom, etc.)
7. Transcription
8. Recording Services  
(360 Systems' New Instant Replay2, Networked Digital Audio, 1000 Audio Cuts at your fingertips, Instant Sound Effect, Instant Music)

## CONTACT US

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## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a neutral venue for the resolution of both Domestic and International disputes; and encourage the settlement of disputes from Corporate, Domestic, International Trade, Investment and other Transactions.

## VISION

To become the world's leading client-centric independent and efficient Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre.

## OUR FACILITIES

1. Hearing Rooms
2. Conference/Seminar Hall
3. Arbitrators' Retiring Room
4. Claimants'/Respondents' Meeting Rooms
5. Waiting Room/Lounge
6. Food Court (The Dome)
7. Library/Resource Room
8. Individual HP pro display desktop for Tribunal Secretary/Registrar
9. Wireless tabletop microphones
10. Interactive Digital Display Screen
11. Projector Screen
12. Shelving units
13. High Speed Internet Connection/WiFi
14. 18-Seater Bus
15. 24-Hours CCTV
16. Spacious car park with security



## VOX POPULI FOUNDATION

### Who are we?

The Vox Populi Foundation for Leadership was founded in the year 2010 and was incorporated in the year 2012 by its founder Chief J-K Gadzama OFR, MFR, SAN, FNIALS, FCI Arb. (UK) (of Lincolns Inn, Barrister/Life Bencher/CEDR Accredited Mediator). The Foundation is a Non-Profit making institution formed to deepen the understanding of democracy by carrying out structured programmes that promote positive leadership qualities and ideals in the society. This is because we believe that a society can only evolve when the people have the opportunity to contribute to the process of governance and have a voice in the creation of policies and laws that affect them as a people.

### How do we do this?

We sincerely believe the best way to achieve this goal is to pursue initiatives that look at proffering solutions to the issues that interfere with governance. We look at utilizing the immense manpower of youths and able bodied people who are hungry to bring about a change in their society through direct engagement with society in a volunteer signup process, which is one of the mechanisms we intend to employ to secure citizens participation. This process of inclusion we believe will foster and build a common front that will enable people to improve on their understanding of what leadership connotes in their everyday lives and reinforce their commitment towards creating a better society.

### Governance

Created with gifts by its founder Chief J-K Gadzama, the foundation is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization, with its own Board. The trustees of the foundation set policies and delegate authority to the Director General and senior staff for the foundation's operations. Zonal volunteer Heads in the 6 geo-political zones explore opportunities to pursue the foundation's goals and formulate strategies for action.

### Location

The Foundation is headquartered in Abuja. It conducts its activities through an increasing pool of volunteers from across the country.



## VOX POPULI FOUNDATION

**ADDRESS:** 1st Floor, Plot 1805, Damaturu Crescent  
by Kobo Way, Off Ahmadu Bello Way, Adjacent to Garki International  
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Telephone: +234 (0) 815 656 5619

### *Our Vision*

*to promote, protect and safeguard the tenets and ideals of democracy  
leadership & good governance in our society.*

### *What is Our Goal?!*

*to encourage citizens to participate in governance &  
support a platform that will inspire proactive leadership  
that will drive the  
free flow of democratic ideals and social justice.*

Sign-up to Join and receive our e-mail Newsletter  
and Special Notifications  
Your information will be kept confidential and used  
solely for our communications

#### Required Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ @

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completing the information sheet, you can detach and send to our address above or you can email us on

[info@voxpathulifoundation.org](mailto:info@voxpathulifoundation.org)

for further enquiries, call us on

+234 (0) 8156565619 and +234 (0) 8091320558

follow us on <http://facebook.com/voxpathulifoundation>

&

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This publication among many other articles and  
news from the firm are accessible online on the office website.

    J-K GADZAMA LLP

**DISCLAIMER:** The information contained in this Newsletter is not  
legal advice. Please consult a lawyer for legal assistance

