

IFRA – Nigeria Watch – University of Ibadan

Project Invisible Violence

**A Survey of Violence-Related Deaths in Ussa Local Government Area of Taraba State,
2006 – 2014**

By

Mathias Daji Yake¹

¹ Mathias Daji Yake is a Project Officer in Bauchi State for a NGO, FAcE-PaM (Forward in Action for Education, Poverty and Malnutrition). Any errors remain the sole responsibility of the author. Contact: mathiasyake@gmail.com

The 'Invisible Violence' Project

Based in the premises of the French Institute for Research in Africa on the campus of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria Watch is a project that monitors fatal incidents and human security in Nigeria since 1 June 2006. The database compiles violent deaths on a daily basis, including fatalities resulting from accidents. It relies on a thorough reading of the Nigerian press (15 dailies & weeklies) and reports from human rights organisations. The two main objectives are to identify dangerous areas and assess the evolution of violence in the country.

However, violence is not always reported by the media, especially in remote rural areas that are difficult to access. Hence, in the last 8 years, Nigeria Watch has not recorded any report of fatal incidents in some of the 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the Nigerian Federation. There are two possibilities: either these places were very peaceful, or they were not covered by the media. This series of surveys thus investigates 'invisible' violence.

By 1 November 2014, there were still 23 LGAs with no report of fatal incidents in the Nigeria Watch database: Udung Uko and Urue-Offong/Oruko (Akwa Ibom), Kwaya Kusar (Borno), Nafada (Gombe), Auyo, Gagarawa, Kaugama and Yankwashi (Jigawa), Ingawa and Matazu (Katsina), Sakaba (Kebbi), Bassa, Igalamela-Odolu and Mopa-Muro (Kogi), Toto (Nassarawa), Ifedayo (Osun), Gudu and Gwadabaw (Sokoto), Ussa (Taraba), and Karasuwa, Machina, Nguru and Yunusari (Yobe).

Dr. Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos

Professor, French Institute of Geopolitics, University of Paris 8

Research findings:

50 copies of a questionnaire were administered in Ussa LGA in January 2015. Only 45 people responded. 27 respondents noted that there was at least one fatal incident in their local government area, while 18 noted that they were not aware of any. The table below reveals 11 fatal incidents caused by motor accidents, crime, religious issues, cattle grazing and land disputes. Conflicts between herdsmen and farmers had the highest number of fatalities, with 20 deaths reported.

Table 1: Fatal incidents recorded in Ussa LGA (Taraba State), 2005-2015

S/N	DATE OF EVENT	COMMUNITY	CAUSE OF EVENT	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT	NO. OF FATALITIES
1	03/01/2005	Lissan and Rufu	Land issue	Communal clash between Lissan and Rufu	1
2	2007	Lissan	Crime, Motor accident	Clash with the police over the arrest of a man whose car crushed another man to death	1
3	2008	Lissan	Crime	n.d.	2
4	2009	Rufu and Aska	Land issue	Communal clash on land demarcation. Houses were burnt and destroyed	More than 1
5	15/03/2009	Lumbu	Cattle grazing	Herdsmen took their cattle to graze on farmland	2
6	03/10/2013	Kwesati	Cattle grazing	Herdsmen took their cattle to graze on farmland	20
7	2013	Rufu	Religious issue	Christians vs Muslims	10
8	31/12/2014	Ussa	Crime	A drunk man attacked people with a machete, including a 7 months old baby	1
9	26/12/2014	Kufi	Motor accident	A bus and a motorcycle collided	1
10	2014	Aska	Motor accident	Involving a car	1
11	21/01/2015	Kwesati (Ussa)	Motor accident	A moving car lost control and somersaulted	9