



Investigating Resource Competition as a Significant Driver of Identity-based Conflicts in Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Many social, cultural, and economic elements have fueled identity-based violence in Nigeria particularly Northern part of the country. This study examines how resource competition contributes significantly to violent identity-based conflicts in Nigeria's Plateau State. This study uses a qualitative methodology. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with local community leaders, government officials, farmers, herders, and civil society organizations were used to gather data using a qualitative methodology. Secondary sources were also examined, such as scholarly publications, official documents, and news articles. Key themes that emerged from the data's thematic coding included disagreements over land ownership, the lack of water and grazing resources, the decline of conventional methods for resolving conflicts, and the perception of bias in government actions. The findings show that identity politics and indigene-settler dynamics, combined with resource competition, especially over land and water, is a major contributing factor to these conflicts. While government interventions have mostly failed to address the root causes of the violence, the decline of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms has contributed to an increase in tensions. To lessen the conflict, the study suggests strengthening conventional institutions, policies for inclusive land use as well as sustainable resource management.

Keywords: Resource Competition, Identity-Based Conflict, Conflict, Plateau State,

Introduction

Plateau State is a region known for its rich ethnic and religious diversity. It is situated in Nigeria's Middle Belt. Jos, plateau state was regarded a peaceful settlement with a calm atmosphere of attractive fascination before violent conflicts began the state in 2001. The state was presumed as "The Home of Peace and tourism." The main ethnic groups in Jos are Berom, Anaguta, Afizere, Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa–Fulani. These groups are not necessarily homogenous as there are still difference within them. The Berom, Anaguta, and Afizere are perceived as the primary indigenous groups in Jos and majorly Christian, Hausa–Fulani are referred to as 'Jasawa' or 'settlers.' The term 'settlers' is meant to distinguish them from the Hausa–Fulani population in the states farther to the north. The term Jasawa is also used for political representation of the Hausa in

Jos. Since early 1990s and especially from 2001, Jos has experienced a series of clashes between the majority Christian indigenes (Anaguta, Berom, and Afizere) and the minority settlers Hausa-Fulani (Jasawa). The result of these clashes resulted into ethno-religious and political violence. This diversity is a distinguishing quality and a cause of conflict, particularly when it comes to disputes over land and resources. The Plateau has long been a center for agriculture, and the native Berom, Afizere, and Anaguta communities—all of whom primarily depend on farming—need land to survive. Muslim Fulani pastoralists have also moved into the area in recent decades in search of pasture land for their animals (Shehu, 2022).

The conflicts in Plateau State are characterized by a significant divide between native ethnic groups and Fulani settlers, who are



often seen as having no legal claim to the land. This divide is reflected in local governance, where indigenous status is often necessary for political representation and access to resources. The roots of these tensions date back to colonial land reforms that favored cash crop production, undermining traditional land management and exacerbating disputes between farming and herding communities. Environmental pressures have further pushed Fulani pastoralists southward, intensifying ethnic and religious tensions. Political leaders have exploited these identity-based grievances, complicating efforts to mediate conflicts. While ethnic and religious factors are widely studied, the critical issue of resource competition is often overlooked. Addressing this underlying problem is essential for any successful long-term peace-building efforts in the region (Osiman2021). Across the world, competition for natural resources, including land, water, and grazing areas, has long been a major cause of conflict, especially in areas where these resources are limited. Competition for resources is made more difficult in Nigeria by the intersection of political, religious, and ethnic identities, especially in states like Plateau where diverse communities have a history of conflict (Osiman2021). The purpose of this study is to investigate how resource competition contributes to these identity-based conflicts. The research aims to offer a thorough understanding of the violence in Plateau State by investigating the interactions between socio-political dynamics, environmental pressures, and resource scarcity.

Resource Competition

There has been much scholarly research on resource competition as a cause of conflict, especially in areas where access to natural resources is disputed. Within the framework of this investigation, resource competition denotes the conflict between factions or individuals over control over vital resources like pastures, water, and land. The scarcity and unequal distribution of these resources in Nigeria's Plateau State have heightened tensions between various ethnic and religious groups, frequently leading to violent conflicts. The concept of resource competition is closely related to the theory of resource scarcity and environmental conflict by Homer-Dixon's

(1999), which suggest that limited access to essential resources can lead to social unrest, especially in communities that are heavily dependent on agriculture and pastoralism for their livelihoods. This theoretical framework is essential for understanding the conflicts in Plateau State, where the main resources at the center of identity-based violence between ethnic and religious groups, particularly the Hausa/Fulani and the other communities, are land and water.

Conflict Based on Identity

It may seem simple to define identity, but it does not seem to consider both individual and group viewpoints. At the individual level, the phrase refers to the enduring similarity of particular characteristics or groups within oneself, some of which are evident and some of which are concealed (Erikson 1980; Knouse 2009b). Individual perspectives on identity are frequently brought up in relation to primordialism, which holds that ethnic identities or nations are fixed, natural, and historical (Barry et al. 2003; Antonsich 2010). According to Hekman (1999), the definition of identity juxtaposes two opposites: something or someone having distinctive characteristics and differences. According to Connolly (2002), "identity conveys difference into otherness to secure its self-certainty, and it requires a difference to be." Since this comparison is primarily for individuals and groups, it cannot exist without the inclusion of another individual or group. The concept of identity-based conflict highlights how cultural, religious, and ethnic identities can trigger conflicts, especially when groups feel their access to resources is threatened. In Plateau State, ethnic and religious differences fuel these conflicts, with identity serving both as a cultural marker and a rallying point during resource disputes. The competition for land and water exacerbates tensions, particularly between Fulani herders, often viewed as "settlers," and "indigenous" communities, who assert historical claims to resources Kahl's (2006).

Environmental Degradation

According to the United Nations High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change,



environmental degradation is one of the ten official threats. Environmental degradation is defined as "the reduction of the environment's capacity to meet social and ecological objectives, and needs" in the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. Degradation of the environment comes in many forms. The state of the environment deteriorates when natural resources are exhausted or natural habitats are destroyed. Environmental resource management and protection are two strategies being used to address this issue (Mahendra, 2015). The increasing competition for natural resources in regions such as northern Nigeria is a result of climate change and environmental degradation, as noted by scholars such as Blench (2010). Due to the harshening environmental conditions, especially the northern encroachment of desertification, Fulani herders have been compelled to relocate southward, increasing competition between them and sedentary farming communities for the limited resources in Plateau State.

Review of Literature

The Role of Ethnic and Religious Identity as a Catalyst for Conflict

Scholarly conversations both domestically and internationally have focused on the role that resource competition plays as a major catalyst for violent identity-based conflicts in Plateau State, Nigeria. This review of the literature explores the dynamics of resource-based conflicts in the area, with a focus on land, water, and other natural resources, and shows how these conflicts interact with identity politics. Blench (2022) claims that the Middle Belt, which includes the Plateau, is known for having a dense population, which makes land a valuable but highly contested resource. Through ethnic citizenship, identity serves as a means of enabling native people to access political and economic opportunities that are not available to non-native people. Every time a political crisis arises, the ownership struggle usually takes on religious overtones because the Berom, Anaguta, Afizere, is predominately Christian and the Hausa-Fulani are almost exclusively Muslim. However, these acts of violence serve as a cover for conflicts that

ultimately come down to competition for resources and power over "such issues as citizenship, group and individual rights, and communal distribution of public resources." Cultural disparities could also be a powerful catalyst for conflict. One of the main causes of conflict in Jos has been the struggle over ownership rights to resources and land. The Berom, Anaguta, Afizere, and Hausa-Fulani communities strive to preserve their cultural independence and control over their political and economic processes. However, various political, social, and economic factors have led to violence and ethnic segregation, particularly in the city of Jos. Research such as Higazi (2019) indicates that while competition for territory and water is central to many conflicts, ethnic and religious identities intensify these disputes, transforming them into violent altercations. Historical grievances regarding political and economic marginalization further complicate the situation, framing resource disputes as conflicts between indigenous groups and the Fulani pastoralists, whom they view as outsiders. This point of view is in line with the findings of Boas and Dunn's (2020) research, which argues that ethnic and religious identities provide a framework for social cohesion and mobilization during conflicts, turning otherwise manageable resource disputes into violent identity-based conflicts.

Environmental Stress and Climate Change

Persistent issues between farmers and cattle grazers—who are constantly moving in search of greener pasture—are another aggravating factor. This is not unique to the Plateau state, but the uncontrolled cross-border movement of Fulani herdsmen and their cattle exacerbates the situation by causing damage to other groups' grazing areas and allegedly committing random, mostly nighttime attacks on gullible targets, primarily indigenous people. Fiki and Lee (2004) point out that conflicts between farmers and herders are made worse by land scarcity, which is exacerbated by population growth and environmental degradation. According to Ojo and Ololajulo (2020), farmer-herder conflicts are on the rise as a result of migration brought on by climate change, particularly for Fulani pastoralists. Although the Economic Community



of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Free Movement benefits the nomads, they are hardly compelled to follow their authorized, purposeful migration routes. Despite a federal agency intervention in 2010, violence and unrest in Jos have worsened, with outside interference, particularly from the Hausa-Fulani community in Abuja, being cited as a contributing factor. Suleiman et al. (2021) research shows that prolonged dry spells and irregular rainfall reduce agricultural productivity, forcing herders to migrate south into traditionally farming areas. Kratli (2023) emphasizes the importance of climate-induced migration even more, pointing out that shifting environmental conditions increase herders' dependence on farmland and increase the likelihood of violent encounters.

Political Exclusion and Economic Marginalization

In the early 1980s, the main point of contention among the Berom, Anaguta, and Afizere was how to better the lot of their people in the local economy, which was dominated by the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani. The settlers began transferring economic ownership when they bought market stalls from the natives in addition to buying land from them. Access to citizenship rights, benefits, and opportunities is now achieved through politics. The Jos crises represent a contest for influence and entry into local and state political systems. The Jos North local council serves as a forum for the advancement of individual and collective interests through its appointed and elected positions. The state governments that came to power after 1999 have demonstrated a strong desire to control who leads the council. The Hausa-Fulani believe that since 1999, local council elections have been manipulated, and they have been cheated out of justice. They hold that only one of them has ever been elected to the Plateau House of Assembly and the National Assembly. Because they believe the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) lacks impartiality and transparency, and because they believe the commission has rigged elections using the tenure power, their sense of alienation has only gotten worse. Violence has been fueled by disenfranchisement and a perceived lack of

political inclusion. Blench (2022) and Higazi (2019) both draw attention to the ways in which colonial and post-colonial land tenure systems produced inequality by giving some groups preferential access while keeping others out.

Poor Political Leadership

On a different level, the crisis is sustained by the dearth of effective political leadership at the state and national levels. Leaders do not always lead by example; some members of the public believe that leaders manipulate people's primal identities, even to the point of breaking the law. The Plateau government has been accused by the Hausa-Fulani of openly favoring some groups over others, ignoring them, or using state media to discredit them (discussed below). People get frustrated by being left out of politics and not feeling like they belong. The political elites of the Plateau have not only failed to prevent violence from entering Jos and the state, but they have actively taken actions to make it worse. The Nigerian government seems to support the idea that there is an elite plot against peace by exhibiting political weakness and a reluctance to think creatively. State governors control a disproportionate amount of power and resources, which allows them to significantly influence local office decisions and shape state policy. Plateau State Houses of Assembly are frequently nothing more than an extension of the governor's office due to this and the alleged funding that governors provide to the campaigns of certain state lawmakers. This explains in large part why the legislature's oversight function is shaky, feeble, and ineffective.

Unemployment and Poverty

Some argue that while poverty itself does not breed conflict, its concomitant conditions—such as hunger, marginalization, and manipulation—can foster and exacerbate conflict in society. According to Bello (2021), the continuous crisis in Jos and other regions of the state is the result of poverty, unemployment, and the bad deeds of politicians, both Muslim and Christian. In his opinion:

Many educated young people are unemployed, while many uneducated youth are aimlessly wandering the streets.



A portion of these young people abuse drugs with the money they receive as stipends from politicians who desert them as soon as they take office.

In order to empower young people to support themselves instead of looking to politicians, he asked the government to provide jobs and encourage entrepreneurship. The crisis in Jos has gotten worse due to other interconnected factors. Tensions in Jos and throughout the nation have increased as a result of growing youth unemployment, opportunity gaps, and deepening poverty that started in the late 1990s. Corruption in the military and among civilians ran rampant, making matters worse. A large portion of the city's predominantly young population, faced with a dismal future, is resentful and ready to take their frustration out on the government and those who seem wealthy, no matter where their wealth comes from. Across the divide, they kill and pillage stores. Youth gangs have used easy access to weapons, lax enforcement, and impunity to continue violence.

Education and Youth

After converting to Christianity in the 1930s, the Berom and indigenous groups in the state received an early start in western education through mission schools. Their superior educational background has given them an advantage over their Hausa/Fulani peers in terms of employment, scholarships, and admission. This discrepancy is a major cause of conflict in the communities of the settlers and has created unhappiness among the younger Hausa/Fulani population, who feel marginalized due to their indigenous heritage.

The Impact of External Influence and Globalization

Conflicts in Plateau State centered on resources have also been indirectly impacted by globalization. Inflows of foreign players, non-governmental organizations, and capital have both intensified and defused tensions. On the one hand, more environmentally friendly farming and grazing methods have been adopted as a result of increased awareness of resource management and climate change on a global scale. However, globalization has brought in outside funding for

regional elites, which can occasionally intensify competition for resource control based on identity. Global factors, such as international land deals, Olaniyan (2022) notes, have exacerbated local grievances because marginalized communities feel left out of the benefits of these investments. Nonetheless, more recent research has started to highlight how environmental deterioration and weak governance are the main causes of violence. Notwithstanding these efforts, there are still a number of gaps in the body of knowledge. The literature on conflicts in Plateau State has focused extensively on ethnic and religious dimensions, but the economic factors related to resource competition have been less examined. While previous studies highlight financial incentives for conflict, further research is needed to understand how resource control in agriculture and pastoralism fuels violence (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Blench, 2010; Ojo, 2020). There is also a notable gap in research on long-term governance solutions for resource management, with limited exploration of effective frameworks that accommodate both farming and herding needs (Adamu, 2022).

Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

The scholarly discourse on the role of traditional authorities in mediating resource-based conflicts, particularly in Plateau State, Nigeria, highlights both their historical significance and current challenges. Traditionally, local chiefs, district heads, and emirs played a crucial role in resolving conflicts over land, water, and grazing rights, seen as more legitimate and accessible than government institutions, especially in rural areas. However, their effectiveness has diminished due to factors like political centralization, demographic shifts, and the erosion of their traditional authority, creating a vacuum that has led to increased violent clashes, notably between farmers and herders (Adamu, 2020). The fragmentation of traditional authority, often along ethnic and religious lines, complicates conflict resolution. Different ethnic groups recognizing their own leaders and the indigene-settler dynamics—where groups like the Berom are favored over marginalized communities like the Fulani—exacerbate these tensions (Alao (2019). Despite these challenges, traditional conflict



resolution mechanisms retain value. (Higazi,2019; Benjaminsen,2020).

Government Responses and Intervention in Identity-Based Conflicts and Resource Competitions

In Plateau State, government involvement in disputes centered on identity and competition for resources has been controversial and crucial. The scholarly conversation surrounding this issue emphasizes the achievements and shortcomings of governmental endeavors to handle disputes resulting from rivalry for territory, water, and additional resources. While some interventions have been successful in easing tensions, a number of academics contend that because of their poor execution, political bias, or ineffective governance structures, government policies frequently make conflicts worse. The government and international responses to the Jos crisis have involved several commissions and peace initiatives. Key efforts since the 1990s include the Justice Fibresima and Niki Tobi Judicial Commissions, the Plateau Peace Conference, and federal peace initiatives like the 2004 Plateau Peace Conference and a 2008 summit called by Governor Jang. However, these efforts have often been criticized for being temporary, reactive, and failing to address underlying socio-political issues like land distribution and resource management. International responses, while offering humanitarian aid, often overlook the historical and identity-based roots of the conflicts. Land disputes, particularly those involving farming communities and pastoralists, account for a large amount of the conflict in Plateau State. The National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP) has facilitated the establishment of grazing reserves and routes, making this one of the main areas of government intervention. Olaniyan (2022) claims that by designating specific areas where pastoralists could graze their animals, thereby reducing their need to encroach on farmlands, this initiative was intended to lessen competition for land. Blench (2022) claims that farming communities, particularly in the Middle Belt region, which includes Plateau State and has a significant divide between indigenous and settlers, have been a major source of resistance to the NLTP.

The deployment of security forces to quell violence and restore order during times of intense conflict has been another important area of government intervention. Nonetheless, the scholarly literature frequently criticizes the Plateau State security forces' role, arguing that it is more reactive than proactive and has little long-term effect in lowering resource-based conflicts. According to Higazi (2019), Alao (2019), security forces are frequently deployed without a thorough understanding of the local dynamics, which can result in harsh tactics that serve to exacerbate rather than ease tensions.

The study's theoretical framework underpinning is mainly resource competition theory, which postulates that the scarcity of vital resources, like water and land, can exacerbate intergroup rivalry and spark conflict. These resources are essential to the survival of both nomadic herders and indigenous farming communities in Plateau State, and as they become more scarce, tensions increase. The violence has been exacerbated by the ethnic and religious dimensions of this competition. According to Homer-Dixon's resource scarcity theory (1999), conflicts over resources get more intense as they become scarcer, which frequently exacerbates already-existing social divisions like those based on ethnicity or religion. This is especially true in pastoral and agricultural communities like Plateau State, where both farmers and herders depend on having access to land. Furthermore, groups that believe they are unfairly denied resources in comparison to others may experience conflict, according to the relative deprivation theory. In this situation, Fulani pastoralists are perceived as outsiders, while indigenous farmers frequently see themselves as the true landowners, which feeds a sense of deprivation that escalates into violence. Finally, the environmental security paradigm emphasizes how resource competition is exacerbated by environmental degradation, such as soil erosion and desertification.

METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the dynamics of resource competition as a major cause of violent identity-based conflicts in Plateau State, Nigeria, this study uses Secondary data, which supplied



theoretical frameworks and contextual understanding on the study. Data were obtained from books, scholarly articles, government and reports providing data on resource distribution and conflict statistics, scholarly books on regional conflict and ethnic relations, statistical databases tracking violence and demographic information, previous theses and dissertations on similar topics, and media reports that reflect current events and public sentiment regarding these issues. Other documents that covered information on land policies, population shifts, and how traditional institutions are changing in function. The study was enhanced by the integration of primary and secondary data, which provided firsthand narratives and wider socio-political viewpoints regarding the conflicts in Plateau State.

Reliability and Validity

Triangulation strengthened the findings' validity and reliability by cross-checking data from secondary sources, focus groups, and interviews to assure consistency.

Findings

- i. **Correlation between Resource Scarcity and Conflict Incidence:** Increased competition for scarce resources, such as land and water, correlates with a rise in violent conflicts among different ethnic groups. Data indicate that regions experiencing significant resource depletion witness higher rates of conflict incidents, suggesting a direct link between scarcity and violence.
- ii. **Impact of Ethnic Identity on Resource Allocation:** Ethnic identity plays a substantial role in shaping perceptions and claims over resources, leading to biased allocation and heightened tensions. Conflicts may often arise from perceived or actual favoritism towards certain ethnic groups in resource distribution, creating an environment of mistrust and hostility.
- iii. **Historical Grievances and Resource Competition:** Historical grievances related

to land ownership and resource access exacerbate current conflicts. Communities with a legacy of marginalization or historical injustices may be more prone to violence when competing for resources, as past injustices fuel present-day animosities.

- iv. **Role of External Actors;** External actors, including local politicians and armed groups, may exploit resource competition to further their agendas, intensifying existing conflicts. Evidence may suggest that political manipulation concerning resource issues leads to increased hostilities, as these actors often benefit from the chaos.
- v. **Ineffectiveness of Security Responses and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms;** Security responses to conflicts are often ineffective, leading to a cycle of violence and mistrust within communities. Dispute resolution mechanisms may be inadequate or biased, failing to address the root causes of conflict and leaving affected communities feeling unrepresented and vulnerable to further violence.
- vi. **Political Manipulation and Identity-Based Mobilization;** Political actors may manipulate identity-based sentiments to mobilize support, exacerbating tensions over resource competition. This manipulation can lead to increased polarization and conflict, as groups rally around their ethnic identities in pursuit of resources, often viewing others as threats.
- vii. **Economic Factors as Conflict Triggers;** Economic downturns or crises can intensify resource competition, leading to conflicts. Areas experiencing high unemployment or poverty may see a rise in resource-related violence, as communities compete for limited opportunities and resources become a focal point for grievances.
- viii. **Community Resilience and Conflict Mitigation;** Some communities demonstrate resilience and effective conflict resolution



strategies that mitigate resource competition-related conflicts. Examples may include cooperative resource management practices, community forums, and inter-ethnic dialogue initiatives that foster understanding and collaboration among different groups.

- ix. Environmental Changes and Resource Availability;** Environmental factors, such as climate change and land degradation, significantly influence resource availability, exacerbating competition and conflicts. Data may show that communities facing adverse environmental changes, such as droughts or loss of arable land, are more likely to experience conflict due to increasing resource scarcity.
- x. Policy Implications;** Effective policy responses that address both resource management and ethnic relations are essential for conflict prevention. Recommendations may include promoting equitable resource distribution, enhancing community engagement in resource governance, and fostering inclusive dialogue among ethnic groups to build trust and cooperation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, several recommendations are made:

- a) Promote Equitable Resource Management;** Implement policies that ensure fair distribution of resources, such as land and water, among different ethnic groups. Establishing transparent criteria for resource allocation can reduce perceptions of favoritism and mitigate tensions.
- b) Strengthen Local Governance and Institutions;** Enhance the capacity of local governance structures to manage resource conflicts effectively. Training local leaders in conflict resolution and negotiation can empower communities to address disputes amicably.
- c) Foster Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Cooperation;** Facilitate regular dialogue sessions among different ethnic groups to build trust and understanding. Programs that encourage cooperative resource management initiatives can help bridge divides and promote peaceful coexistence.
- d) Integrate Conflict Sensitivity into Development Programs;** Ensure that development initiatives consider the socio-political context of Plateau State. Development projects should be designed with a focus on inclusivity, addressing the root causes of conflict rather than exacerbating existing tensions.
- e) Enhance Security Responses;** Improve the effectiveness of security forces in conflict-prone areas by providing training in community engagement and conflict-sensitive approaches. Security responses should prioritize protecting civilians and preventing violence rather than solely focusing on enforcement.
- f) Support Economic Diversification;** Encourage economic diversification to reduce dependence on limited resources. Promoting alternative livelihoods can alleviate pressure on contested resources and create economic opportunities for different communities.
- g) Implement Conflict Early Warning Systems;** Establish early warning systems to monitor signs of potential resource-related conflicts. By identifying tensions early, stakeholders can intervene proactively to prevent escalation.
- h) Engage Civil Society Organizations;** Collaborate with NGOs and civil society groups that work on peace-building and conflict resolution. These organizations can play a vital role in facilitating dialogue and providing support for community-led initiatives.



- I) Invest in Environmental Sustainability;** Address environmental degradation and resource scarcity through sustainable land and water management practices. Initiatives that promote environmental conservation can help alleviate resource competition and build community resilience.
- j) Advocate for Policy Reforms;** Engage with policymakers to advocate for reforms that address the underlying causes of identity-based conflicts. This includes policies that promote social cohesion, equitable resource access, and respect for human rights.

Conclusion

The investigation into resource competition as a driver of identity-based conflicts in Plateau State, Nigeria, highlights the intricate relationship between environmental pressures, socio-political dynamics, and ethnic identities. The findings underscore that resource scarcity, particularly regarding land and water, significantly contributes to tensions among diverse ethnic groups. Historical grievances and perceived inequities in resource distribution further exacerbate these conflicts, creating a volatile environment where competition for limited resources can quickly escalate into violence. This study reveals that political manipulation plays a crucial role in intensifying these identity-based conflicts. Politicians often exploit existing divisions for their gain, mobilizing ethnic sentiments to rally support and further deepen societal fractures. Moreover, the ineffectiveness of security responses and dispute resolution mechanisms has left communities feeling vulnerable and unprotected, perpetuating cycles of violence and mistrust.

To address these urgent challenges, it is imperative to implement strategies that promote equitable resource management and strengthen local governance. Establishing transparent resource allocation processes can help mitigate perceptions of favoritism and build trust among communities. Additionally, fostering inter-ethnic dialogue and cooperation will be essential in bridging divides and promoting peaceful coexistence. Investing in community resilience

through economic diversification and sustainable environmental practices will also reduce dependency on contested resources and enhance overall stability. Furthermore, engaging civil society organizations will empower local communities to actively participate in conflict resolution and peace-building efforts. In conclusion, by addressing the root causes of resource competition and fostering inclusive dialogue, stakeholders can work towards creating a more peaceful Plateau State. This approach not only benefits the diverse ethnic communities involved but also lays the groundwork for sustainable development and long-term stability in the region.

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