

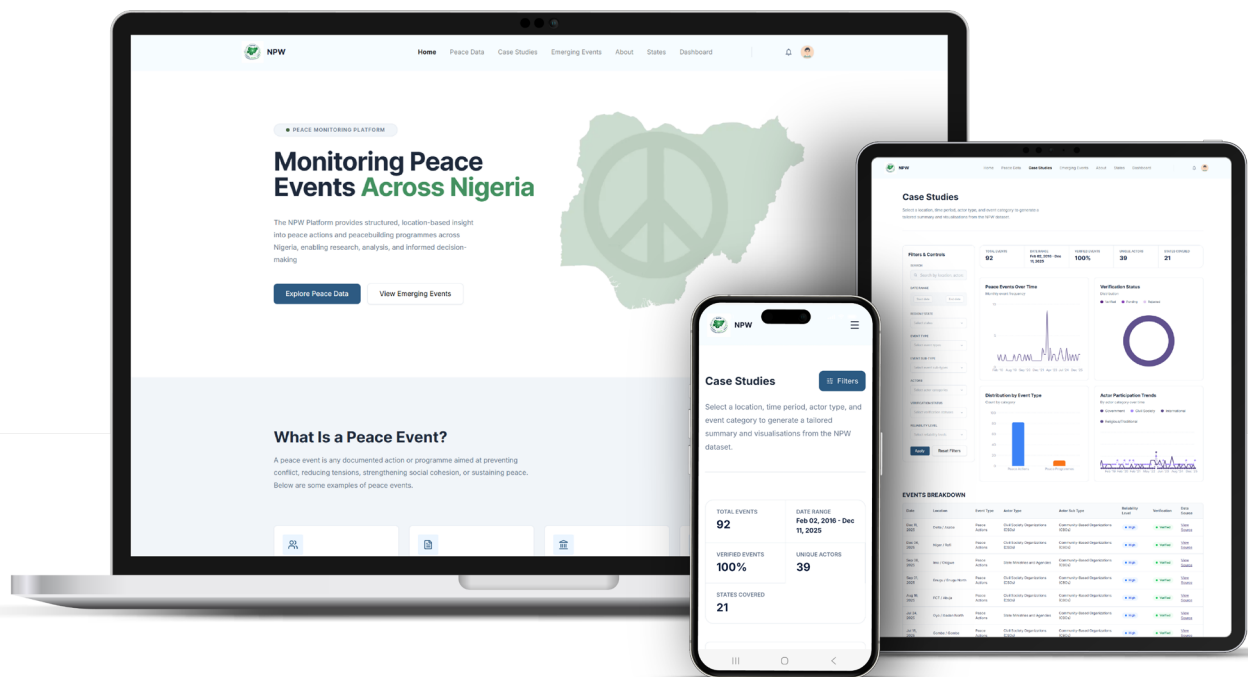


POLICY | BRIEF

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The Nigeria Peace Web A Data Infrastructure for Peacebuilding

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Nigeria Peace Web

Nigeria Peace Actors and Initiatives in Data (NPAID) Project

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Executive Summary

Nigeria's conflict landscape is extensively documented. Violent incidents, armed actors and insecurity trends are routinely tracked through national and international monitoring systems. However, the same cannot be said of the peace landscape. Across the country, community mediators, faith leaders, civil society organisations, traditional authorities, women's networks, youth groups and state peace agencies work daily to prevent violence and manage tensions. Yet there is no national system that systematically documents who is building peace, where these efforts take place, how they operate, and what lessons they generate.

This gap creates a structural imbalance in the evidence base informing peace and security policy. Policymakers, donors and researchers often have detailed visibility of violent events but limited visibility of preventive and peacebuilding activity. As a result, policy attention and funding tend to prioritise crisis response over prevention. At the operational level, organisations struggle to identify existing initiatives, potential partners or lessons from past interventions.

User research conducted with civil society organisations, state peace agencies and researchers across Nigeria confirms this challenge. Peace actors frequently rely on personal networks, costly field visits and fragmented documentation to identify ongoing initiatives. Smaller community-led interventions, often the first responders to local tensions, remain largely invisible beyond their immediate contexts. When projects end, documentation is rarely preserved in accessible repositories, resulting in the loss of institutional knowledge.

The Nigeria Peace Web (NPW) has been developed to address this structural gap. NPW is an open-source digital

platform that aggregates structured data on peace actors, initiatives and peace-related events across Nigeria. By enabling users to search, map and analyse peacebuilding activity by location, actor type, timing and thematic focus, the platform provides a shared national resource for understanding and strengthening preventive peace efforts.

For government institutions, NPW improves situational awareness and planning. For donors, it supports more strategic allocation of resources and reduces duplication. For civil society organisations, it strengthens collaboration and increases the visibility of local initiatives. For researchers, it enables systematic analysis of peacebuilding trends.

Nigeria has invested heavily in understanding violence. Strengthening resilience now requires comparable investment in understanding peace.



Background: The Peace Data Gap

Nigeria's conflict landscape is one of the most extensively mapped in Africa. Violent incidents, armed actors and insecurity trends are systematically recorded and analysed by government institutions, international organisations and research groups.

However, no comparable system exists for documenting peace.

Across Nigeria's states, local government areas (LGAs) and communities, numerous peacebuilding initiatives and activities take place daily. These include mediation committees, community dialogue platforms, early response mechanisms, women-led interventions, youth engagement

initiatives and state peace agencies. Despite their importance, many of these efforts remain undocumented, unaggregated and difficult to access beyond immediate networks.

This imbalance reflects what Séverine Autesserre describes as a 'violence bias' —the tendency of researchers, policymakers and the media to focus disproportionately on conflict and violence, while overlooking the actors and processes that build and sustain peace.

As a result, decision-makers can readily identify where violence occurs but struggle to identify where peace is being built, by whom and through which approaches.

What Peacebuilders Experience

Reliance on Costly Primary Engagement

Peace actors frequently rely on field visits, consultations with community leaders and informal networks to obtain information about local initiatives. While essential, these methods are time-intensive and expensive. Insecurity, poor infrastructure and limited connectivity further constrain access.

Fragmented Secondary Sources

Online searches often produce incomplete or contradictory information. Data is dispersed across NGO reports, academic publications and internal databases, with varying documentation standards. Many initiatives, particularly community-led interventions, are never formally recorded.

Isolation in Practice

Peacebuilding requires coordination across actors and sectors. However, organisations often operate without knowing or engaging with other actors working in their geographic or thematic area. Partnerships frequently depend on personal networks rather than accessible, structured systems.

Loss of Institutional Memory

When projects conclude, documentation is rarely centralized. Lessons, methodologies and relationships frequently disappear with staff turnover or funding cycles. As a result, organisations repeatedly undertake work that has already been done, and the opportunity for other actors to learn from successful approaches is lost.

The Peace Data Gap

Nigeria has strong systems for documenting conflict but lacks comparable infrastructure for documenting peace.

As a result:

- Peace initiatives are difficult to identify and some are overlooked
- Lessons from successful interventions are rarely preserved
- Coordination among actors is weakened
- Prevention receives less strategic attention than crisis response

The consequences are visible in everyday peacebuilding practice:

- Public and policy attention gravitates towards crisis response rather than prevention.
- Organisations duplicate initiatives because they lack visibility of parallel efforts.
- Limited resources are repeatedly spent conducting baseline assessments.
- Informal and indigenous peace mechanisms remain marginal in policy conversations.
- Institutional and sector-wide knowledge is lost when projects end.
- Media and public discourse remains skewed towards conflict and violence

Peacebuilding therefore becomes episodic rather than cumulative, and knowledge remains exclusive and isolated rather than shared.

The Nigeria Peace Web

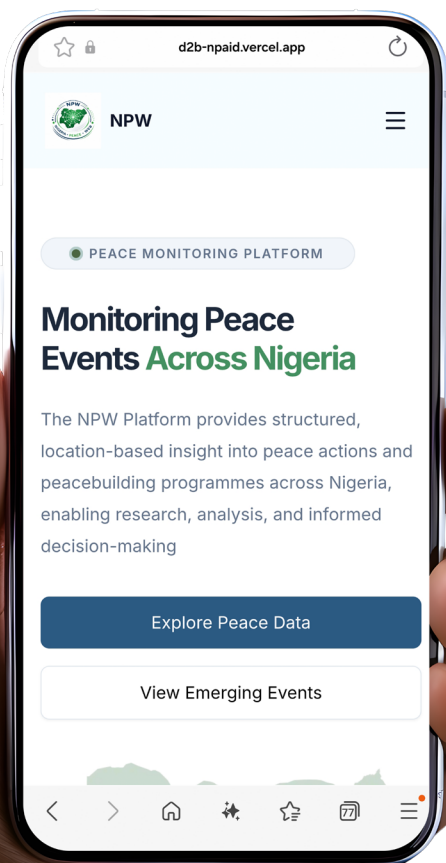
The Nigeria Peace Web (NPW) was developed as a core deliverable of the NPAID project in response to these structural and operational challenges. Now in its pre-launch demonstration phase, the platform represents a national effort to systematically document peace actors and initiatives across Nigeria. Currently focused on the pilot states of Benue, Plateau, Kaduna and Katsina, the Nigeria Peace Web has strong potential for nationwide coverage.

NPW is an open-source, digital repository that aggregates structured information on peacebuilding actors and activities across the country.

The platform operates through a hybrid model combining:

- Automated collection of publicly available information through a data-scraping system
- Manual contributions from organisations and individuals, including documents, reports and multimedia materials

This approach recognises that peacebuilding knowledge is dispersed, relational and often informal. NPW provides a mechanism for aggregating this information in a structured and accessible format.



What Peacebuilders Need

Across user interviews, four consistent needs emerged:

- Visibility of actors and initiatives
- Structured and searchable data
- Credible and verifiable information
- A shared coordination reference point

The platform enables users to:



Access structured profiles of peace actors and initiatives



Filter data by state, LGA, thematic area, actor type and timing



Visualise information through maps and infographics



Download datasets for further analysis and reference



Upload documentation and lessons learned



Identify opportunities for collaboration



Identify impact of peacebuilding interventions on conflict contexts



Identify opportunities for new peacebuilding interventions

Why NPW Matters

For Government Institutions

Effective peace and security policy requires reliable information. NPW enhances situational awareness by mapping peace actors and initiatives across jurisdictions. This allows government institutions to identify opportunities for coordination and incorporate preventive approaches into policy planning.

For Donors and Development Partners

Development partners require credible evidence to guide programme design and funding allocation. NPW supports more strategic decision-making by identifying geographic and thematic gaps, reducing duplication across interventions and improving transparency.

For Civil Society Organisations

For civil society organisations, the platform improves partner identification; strengthens programme design, proposal development and M&E; and increases the visibility of smaller, traditional, local and informal actors. It also preserves lessons learned beyond individual project cycles.

For Researchers and Analysts

NPW provides an accessible database and structured datasets that enable systematic analysis of peacebuilding trends, interventions and outcomes across Nigeria.

NPW does not replace field engagement. Rather, it strengthens it by improving situational awareness and reducing duplication.

Making Peace Visible

The Nigeria Peace Web provides a shared national repository that makes peace efforts:

- Visible
- Connected
- Searchable
- Learnable

Strategic Policy Actions

An interconnected, strengthened peace ecosystem

The long-term effectiveness of the Nigeria Peace Web will depend on sustained engagement across government institutions, civil society organisations and development partners.

■ Institutional Adoption

Federal and state peace institutions can integrate NPW into routine planning, monitoring and reporting processes.

■ Integration into Funding Frameworks

Development partners can encourage systematic documentation by incorporating NPW reporting into grant agreements.

■ Multi-Stakeholder Governance

A cross-sector advisory mechanism can guide standards, address confidentiality concerns and ensure responsiveness to evolving needs.

■ Structured Data Sharing

Government agencies, donors and civil society organisations can contribute non-sensitive data to ensure comprehensive coverage.

■ Investment in Data Integrity

Verification processes, regular updates and user training will be essential to maintaining the credibility of the platform.

Cumulative Knowledge

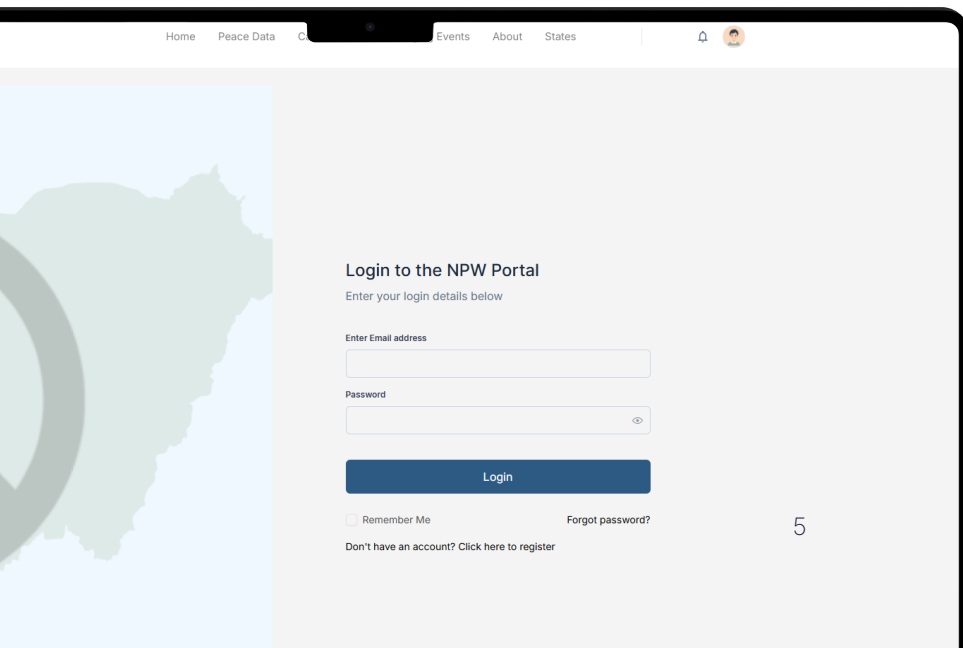
Peacebuilding improves when knowledge is cumulative and interconnected rather than episodic.

NPW enables peace actors to build on existing experience rather than repeatedly starting from scratch.

A Strategic Opportunity

Investing in peace data infrastructure can:

- Reduce duplication across peace initiatives
- Preserve institutional memory
- Improve allocation of scarce resources
- Enhance transparency and accountability
- Strengthen preventive approaches to conflict
- Boost sector-wide collaboration



Conclusion

Nigeria's peacebuilding ecosystem is far more extensive than existing policy discussions and media narratives often acknowledge. Across communities, civil society networks and government institutions, actors are continuously mediating disputes, managing tensions and strengthening local resilience. However, much of this work remains poorly documented and weakly connected.

The Nigeria Peace Web provides a practical response to this long-standing gap. By aggregating information on peace actors and initiatives into a shared digital platform, NPW establishes a national reference point for understanding how peacebuilding is being practised across Nigeria.

This shift matters because effective peacebuilding depends on cumulative learning. When knowledge from past interventions is preserved and accessible, organisations can build on existing experience rather than repeatedly starting from scratch. When actors know who else is working in their geographic or thematic space, collaboration becomes easier and duplication decreases. When policymakers and donors can identify areas where preventive initiatives are already demonstrating promise, resources can be directed more strategically.

However, the long-term value of the Nigeria Peace Web will depend on sustained institutional engagement. Government agencies, development partners, civil society organisations and research institutions will need to contribute data, support verification processes and integrate the platform into routine planning and programming systems. Investment in data quality, user training and governance mechanisms will be essential to maintaining credibility and relevance.

If widely adopted, NPW can help shift peacebuilding practice in Nigeria from fragmented interventions toward coordinated prevention and cumulative learning.

Nigeria has developed sophisticated systems for documenting violence. Building comparable systems for documenting peace is the next step toward strengthening resilience.

Making peace visible is therefore not simply symbolic. It is a strategic investment in the knowledge infrastructure required for more effective and preventive peacebuilding.



About CORN West Africa

CORN West Africa is a peace praxis centre and knowledge platform for academics and practitioners based in institutions in West Africa who are working in the field of peace, security, and political violence.

CORN mobilizes researchers to conduct cutting-edge research on peace, security, violent conflicts, and political violence. CORN translates research findings and knowledge into policy and programmatic solutions for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and conflict management in societies across West Africa.

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