

## **Muslim Peace Network (MPN) Three-Year Report: 2021-2023**

### *Creating a Culture of Peaceful Coexistence and Building Bridges of Understanding*

#### **Introduction:**

In the heart of Kaduna State, Nigeria, where diversity meets the challenge of coexistence, the Muslim Peace Network (MPN) has emerged as a beacon of hope and harmony. With unwavering commitment, MPN has embarked on a remarkable journey to cultivate a culture of peaceful coexistence, bridge the divides of prejudice, and sow the seeds of understanding among a tapestry of diverse communities. This report serves as a window into the inspiring narrative of our efforts, documenting the significant activities undertaken by MPN from 2021 to 2023.

As we delve into the pages of this report, we invite you to join us on a voyage of discovery and transformation. It is a journey that traverses the challenging landscapes of faith, culture, and tradition, forging bonds of unity and solidarity. At every turn, we have been met with the generous spirit of our partners, the unwavering support of our donors, and the tireless dedication of our supporters, all of whom have breathed life into our vision and made these initiatives not just possible but immensely impactful.

Through the following pages, we will recount our stories of fostering peace in schools, bridging religious and interfaith gaps, empowering the youth, and creating a brighter future for Kaduna State. Together, we celebrate the triumph of dialogue over discord, compassion over conflict, and unity over division.

We invite you to explore the chapters that follow, which chronicle the tangible successes and enduring impact of MPN's tireless work in fostering a culture of peaceful coexistence. Our gratitude knows no bounds, and our commitment remains unshaken as we continue to work towards building a more harmonious, united, and peaceful Kaduna State of Nigeria.

#### **Year 2021: Fostering Peaceful Coexistence among Secondary School Students**

*Venue:* Malka International School, Kaduna

*Beneficiaries:* Secondary School Youths (Males & Females)

*Date:* Year 2021 (Individual)

In 2021, the Muslim Peace Network (MPN) embarked on a transformative journey to instill a culture of peaceful coexistence among the secondary school students of Kaduna. The setting for this change was Malka International School, where hundreds of young minds converged to learn, grow, and ultimately become the future leaders of their communities.

MPN's project was rooted in the belief that the path to a harmonious society begins with our youth, the inheritors of our world. In Kaduna, a diverse state characterized by a rich tapestry of cultures, religions, and traditions, fostering understanding and respect among its youth was a critical undertaking. This project aimed not only to mitigate conflicts but to plant the seeds of empathy, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue.

At Malka International School, the magic began to unfold through interactive sessions and engaging workshops. These sessions were carefully designed to break down barriers,

challenge stereotypes, and encourage open dialogue. Students, regardless of their background, were invited to share their thoughts, beliefs, and concerns, providing a safe space for the exchange of ideas.



Malka Academy Students

One of the most remarkable aspects of this initiative was its ability to bridge gaps and facilitate meaningful connections. Students, once separated by their differences, began to recognize the shared values and aspirations that bound them together. They found common ground in the universal desire for peace, understanding, and prosperity.

The results of this project were both tangible and intangible. Tangibly, it brought forth a more harmonious environment within these schools, one where students learned to appreciate and respect their differences, where friendships were forged, and where diversity was celebrated. Intangibly, it sowed the seeds of change in the hearts and minds of these young individuals. It instilled in them the belief that peace could prevail, even in the face of adversity.

As these students graduated and moved forward in their lives, the lessons learned during the MPN project continued to influence their choices and actions. The impact of these formative experiences rippled through Kaduna State, contributing to a more inclusive and harmonious society.

The Year 2021 initiative at Malka International School stands as a testament to the power of education, dialogue, and understanding. It is a reminder that transformation can occur, even in the most challenging environments, when we invest in our youth and believe in the possibility of peace.

### **Year 2022: Expanding the Culture of Peaceful Coexistence**

*Venue:* Rare Gem Academy, Kaduna

*Beneficiaries:* Secondary School Youths (Males & Females)

*Date:* Year 2022 (Individual)

In the spirit of continuity and the unwavering commitment to nurturing a culture of peaceful coexistence, the Muslim Peace Network (MPN) embarked on another remarkable chapter of its mission in the year 2022. Building upon the successes of the previous year, MPN's dedication to fostering unity, understanding, and tolerance remained undiminished.

The stage for this pivotal endeavor was the Rare Gem Academy in Kaduna, where a fresh group of secondary school students awaited the transformative experiences that had become synonymous with MPN's initiatives. The project aimed to further expand the culture of peaceful coexistence among the youth, emphasizing the values of unity, respect, and understanding.



During the interaction session

While 2021 had set the precedent, 2022 was about reaching a wider audience, casting a broader net of influence, and instilling these essential values into the hearts and minds of a new generation of Kaduna's future leaders. Rare Gem Academy, an educational institution that shares MPN's commitment to holistic development, provided an ideal setting for this vital mission.



Rare Gem International School Students.

The project's objectives were clear: to create a space where secondary school students could engage in open dialogue, they could express their beliefs and perspectives freely, and where they could learn from one another's experiences. These interactive sessions and workshops were carefully designed to foster an atmosphere of inclusivity, where every student's voice was not only heard but valued.

Just as in the previous year, the results were both tangible and intangible. On the surface, the project succeeded in creating an environment where the students, irrespective of their backgrounds, could coexist peacefully. Friendships were forged, and bridges were built between individuals who might have otherwise remained strangers.

Yet, it was beneath the surface that the true transformation occurred. The values of unity, respect, and understanding began to take root within the hearts of these young individuals. They realized that their differences were not obstacles but opportunities to learn and grow.

This project was a testament to the idea that the seeds of tolerance and acceptance, once planted, could flourish and thrive in even the most diverse and complex of environments.

As we look ahead, it is clear that the work of MPN, in collaboration with institutions like Rare Gem Academy, continues to shape a brighter and more harmonious future for Kaduna State. The impact of these initiatives extends beyond the walls of schools and into the communities, where the youth who have benefitted from MPN's vision are poised to become ambassadors of peace and understanding.

### **Year 2021-2023: Community Initiatives in Collaboration with Rotary Club of Kaduna District 9125**

*Venue:* Hotel Seventeen, Kaduna

*Beneficiaries:* Youths & Women

*Date:* Year 2021, 2022, and 2023

In the pursuit of a harmonious and united Kaduna State, the Muslim Peace Network (MPN) embarked on a strategic partnership with the Rotary Club of Kaduna District 9125 in 2021. Together, these two organizations set forth on a mission to execute an annual program, the impact of which would resonate for years to come. The program's core focus was to promote peace among the Muslim and Christian communities in Kaduna State, fostering dialogue, cooperation, and understanding.



UNICEF official speaks on peaceful co-existence in our society. Rotary Club President during the interaction.

Hotel Seventeen, located in the heart of Kaduna, became the epicenter of these transformational community initiatives. It was here that a diverse gathering of individuals, representing different faiths, cultures, and traditions, converged with a shared purpose: to build bridges and strengthen the bonds that tie their communities together.

The beneficiaries of these initiatives extended to both the youth and women, recognizing their pivotal roles as the backbone of any society. This inclusive approach aimed to create lasting change that would ripple through all strata of the community.

Throughout the years 2021, 2022, and 2023, these annual programs acted as catalysts for peace, serving as platforms where dialogue and understanding were nurtured. The initiatives brought together individuals who, for too long, had been separated by misunderstandings, misconceptions, and mistrust. Within the walls of Hotel Seventeen, these barriers began to

crumble, and the common humanity that bound these communities together started to shine through.

Through interactive discussions, workshops, and collaborative projects, attendees discovered the shared values, hopes, and aspirations that transcended religious and cultural boundaries. The result was the blossoming of a sense of unity and shared purpose among these communities. The partnership between MPN and the Rotary Club of Kaduna District 9125 proved that sustained success could be achieved through ongoing collaboration and that the quest for peace and harmony was not a one-time endeavor but a commitment to be renewed year after year.

As we look back on these years, it is evident that the Hotel Seventeen gatherings were not just meetings; they were milestones in the journey toward unity and understanding. They were the embodiment of the belief that dialogue, cooperation, and shared experiences can bridge gaps, mend divides, and lead to a brighter, more peaceful Kaduna State.

The continued success of this partnership serves as a reminder that when communities come together with a shared vision of peace and harmony, the possibilities are endless. The enduring impact of these annual programs is a testament to the power of collaboration and the potential for transformation in even the most complex and diverse of environments.

### **Year 2023: Religious Teachers Training and Sensitization**

*Venue:* Mold Treasury, Kaduna

*Beneficiaries:* Youths & Women

*Date:* Year 2023

The year 2023 bore witness to a significant milestone in the ongoing mission of the Muslim Peace Network (MPN) to promote peace and understanding in Kaduna State. The stage for this remarkable initiative was set at the Mold Treasury, a place where valuable insights and knowledge would be shared, and where the seeds of change would be sown.

This pivotal endeavor was made possible through the generous funding provided by the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP). The goal was clear: to equip religious teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge to prevent extremism in schools. It was a targeted effort to empower those at the forefront of religious education with the skills to identify and mitigate extremist influences, thereby contributing to the creation of a safer, more inclusive educational environment in Kaduna.

Religious teachers play a crucial role in shaping the hearts and minds of young learners, and their influence extends far beyond the classroom. Recognizing this, MPN sought to create a transformative program that would not only educate but also inspire religious leaders to become agents of peace and understanding.

The training program was carefully designed to be comprehensive and engaging, offering insights into the intricate dynamics of extremism, as well as strategies to counter its influence. Participants were exposed to a range of topics, from recognizing early signs of extremism to promoting dialogue and tolerance within their communities.

By providing religious teachers with the knowledge and tools they needed to prevent extremism, MPN aimed to create a ripple effect, where the impact of this initiative would extend beyond the classroom and into the community. These teachers, armed with the skills to recognize and counter extremist influences, could foster a more inclusive and harmonious environment within their schools and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The year 2023 initiative at Mold Treasury was a testament to the belief that education can be a powerful weapon against extremism. By investing in the capacity-building of religious teachers, MPN and COFP embarked on a journey that held the promise of safer, more inclusive schools and, by extension, a more peaceful Kaduna State.

The impact of this program, with its focus on training and sensitization, was not just limited to the immediate beneficiaries but had the potential to influence the wider community. It was a demonstration of the power of knowledge and the ability of individuals to become change agents in the pursuit of a more harmonious society. As the program concluded, it left behind a legacy of empowerment, where religious leaders were armed not with weapons, but with wisdom, to safeguard the future of Kaduna.

### **Year 2023: Stakeholders Meeting for Almajiri Children**

*Venue:* Hotel Seventeen, Kaduna

*Beneficiaries:* Stakeholders, including Youths, Women, Religious Leaders, Traditional Leaders, and Security Agencies

*Date:* Year 2023

In the year 2023, the Muslim Peace Network (MPN) in partnership with the Women and Children's Rights and Empowerment Foundation (WCREF) orchestrated an event of profound significance. This stakeholders' meeting, convened at the esteemed Hotel Seventeen in Kaduna, was far more than a mere gathering; it was a crucible for change, a crucible for hope.

The focus of this gathering was clear: the Almajiri children, a group of vulnerable youth who often find themselves marginalized and overlooked in Kaduna. The Almajiri children, representing a segment of the community that yearned for a better future, became the heartbeat of this initiative.

Bringing together stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, this meeting was a testament to the power of collaboration and the potential for change when individuals and organizations unite in pursuit of a common goal. The beneficiaries of this initiative extended far beyond the Almajiri children themselves. They encompassed a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including youth representatives, women, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and security agencies.

The meeting was not just about discussing the challenges faced by the Almajiri children but also about finding sustainable and inclusive livelihood opportunities for them. It was about rewriting the narrative for these young souls and creating pathways to a brighter future.

Through dialogue and partnerships, the stakeholders embarked on a collective mission to provide these marginalized children with a chance for growth, development, and, ultimately, a more peaceful and prosperous life. It was a demonstration of what could be achieved when

the community, civil society, and local authorities came together to address pressing social issues.

The significance of this meeting transcended its immediate impact; it was a symbol of hope, illustrating that even the most complex societal challenges could be addressed through cooperation and collective effort. By focusing on the Almajiri children, MPN and WCREF emphasized that every child, regardless of their background, deserved the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive.

As the discussions concluded and plans were set in motion, the stakeholders left the meeting with a renewed sense of purpose. The initiative marked the beginning of a journey, one that held the promise of a more inclusive and harmonious Kaduna. It was a reminder that when diverse voices come together with a shared vision, they have the power to reshape the trajectory of their community and create a brighter future for all.

### **Funding:**

The success of the Muslim Peace Network's initiatives from 2021 to 2023 would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our generous partners and donors. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who have invested in our vision, making a significant impact in Kaduna State:

- **Rotary Club of Kaduna District 9125:** Their steadfast support has been instrumental in fostering peace among the Muslim and Christian communities, creating dialogue, cooperation, and understanding in Kaduna State.
- **Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP):** Their generous funding in 2023 enabled the vital training and sensitization of religious teachers, equipping them with the tools and knowledge necessary to prevent extremism in schools and promote a safer and more inclusive educational environment.
- **Women and Children's Rights and Empowerment Foundation (WCREF):** Their collaboration in 2023 for the stakeholders' meeting marked a crucial step in exploring sustainable and inclusive livelihood opportunities for Almajiri children. Your support has contributed significantly to peace and development in the region.

Their contributions have not only made a difference in the lives of those directly involved but have also sown the seeds of a more harmonious and united Kaduna State. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to our cause, and we look forward to continued collaboration in the journey towards a more peaceful future. Together, we can build a stronger, more inclusive, and more peaceful Kaduna State.

These initiatives have had several significant impacts:

1. **Fostering Peaceful Coexistence among Secondary School Students (Year 2021 and 2022):** These initiatives aimed to promote tolerance, empathy, and interfaith dialogue among secondary school students. The impacts include creating a more harmonious environment within schools, where students learn to appreciate and respect their differences. The long-term impact is the cultivation of a generation that values peace, understanding, and unity, contributing to a more peaceful society.

2. **Community Initiatives in Collaboration with Rotary Club (Year 2021-2023):** These annual programs have provided a platform for dialogue, cooperation, and understanding between Muslim and Christian communities in Kaduna State. The impact is a growing sense of unity and shared purpose among these communities. The sustained success of this partnership demonstrates the importance of ongoing collaboration in promoting peace and harmony.
3. **Religious Teachers Training and Sensitization (Year 2023):** This initiative focused on equipping religious teachers with the tools and knowledge to prevent extremism in schools. The impact is the creation of a safer and more inclusive educational environment. Religious teachers, armed with the skills to recognize and counter extremist influences, become agents of peace, contributing to a more harmonious educational system.
4. **Stakeholders Meeting for Almajiri Children (Year 2023):** The meeting aimed to explore sustainable and inclusive livelihood opportunities for Almajiri children, a vulnerable group in Kaduna. The impact is the creation of pathways to a brighter future for these marginalized children, fostering inclusion and contributing to peace and development in the region.

Overall, these initiatives have contributed to building bridges of understanding, fostering peaceful coexistence, and creating a more harmonious and united Kaduna State. They demonstrate the transformative power of education, dialogue, collaboration, and community engagement in addressing complex societal challenges and working towards a more peaceful future.



Invited speaker talks about the important of security in our community



MPN Official

The Muslim Peace Network stands as a beacon of hope and commitment to the ideals of peaceful coexistence, dialogue, and understanding in the diverse landscape of Kaduna State. The initiatives undertaken from 2021 to 2023 have demonstrated the tangible impact that collective efforts can have in bringing communities together and nurturing a more harmonious society.

We offer our deepest gratitude to our donors and partners whose unwavering support has breathed life into our vision and allowed us to manifest our mission into reality. Your

generosity has been the driving force behind the positive transformations witnessed in Kaduna State.

As we look ahead, our resolve remains unshaken, and our dedication to our mission is unwavering. We extend an open invitation to all those who share our vision of a more peaceful, united, and inclusive Kaduna State. We invite you to join us in this noble endeavor, and together, we can build a stronger, more harmonious, and more peaceful future for Kaduna State in Nigeria. The journey towards peace is an ongoing one, and with your support, we can continue to make a difference, one step at a time.