



COFP

Book of Ambassadors

Transforming Communities Through Dialogue Negotiation:

The COFP Fellowship Experience

Editors

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COFP Fellowship: A Call to Action
From Dialogue to Action



Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace
(COFP)

COFP Book of Ambassadors

COFP Fellowship Program on
Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation & Mediation

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Foreword

The vision of a peaceful, inclusive, and progressive Africa resonates deeply within every African's heart. However, this dream is often challenged by the prevalence of violent conflicts across the continent. Sometimes, these conflicts stem from complex ethnic, religious, communal, poor governance and political divides. The reality is that fostering peace in deeply divided societies like those in Africa is a monumental task, however, we must courageously face it. Achieving lasting peace demands efforts from all quarters while managing communal conflicts effectively to ensure safety and promote human development is a task that requires collective action and sustained efforts. Since governments have a critical role in this endeavour, the involvement of citizens, faith-based organizations, and civil society is just as essential. It is through collaboration at all levels that real, sustainable peace can be built.

Recent global efforts, such as the meeting between Pope Francis and Grand Sheikh Ahmad Al Tayeb of Al Azhar, provide valuable hope. The joint statements made on human fraternity and the subsequent creation of a council dedicated to this cause signal the possibility of overcoming the challenges posed by our differences. One organization at the forefront of this campaign is the COFP Foundation. The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) Fellowship Program stands as a beacon of hope and transformation, promoting interreligious dialogue, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding across the continent of Africa.

The Foundation has been a catalyst for community transformation and peace through its annual COFP Fellowship Program. This program has provided a unique platform for religious leaders and peace advocates from various religious, cultural and even political backgrounds to come together, discuss, and promote peace and security. The Fellowship program recognizes and celebrates the contributions of individuals from all cultures, religions, and beliefs, focusing on common values that can unite diverse communities in pursuit of peace. These individuals are empowered with the knowledge, skills, and networks necessary to address the challenges ahead. They are equipped to lead interfaith, intercultural, and peacebuilding initiatives that will contribute to the development of peaceful societies across Africa.

Through COFP Fellowship program, Fellows have come to recognize the transformative power of interfaith collaboration in combating violent extremism disguised as religious ideology. They stand as peacebuilders, ready to challenge the forces of division and conflict within their communities and beyond. As they step into the world at the end of the Fellowship program, they are urged to use their expertise to foster peace wherever they go. They are called to work for peace and justice, applying their skills, talents, and newfound knowledge in creating lasting change.

The journey toward a peaceful and inclusive Africa is neither swift nor easy, but with unwavering commitment, shared responsibility, and collective action, it is undoubtedly achievable. Let the COFP Fellowship program continue to serve as both an inspiration and a call to action, reminding us all that sustainable peace begins with our willingness to listen, engage, and build together.

+John Cardinal Onaiyekan (CON)

President and Founder, COFP Foundation
Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja

Preface

Building peace in an environment marked by ethnic strife, poor governance, terrorism, and insecurity is both a collective commitment and a fundamental responsibility of government. The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) remains steadfast in engaging faith leaders and community actors across the continent to bridge divisions and foster inclusive societies that promote peace. It is evident that government efforts alone cannot achieve sustainable peace without the active involvement of civil society, faith-based organizations, and community groups. Therefore, strengthening citizen participation, enhancing community resilience, ensuring security, and promoting peace narratives that counter hate speech, mistrust, and stereotypes remain at the core of our mission.

This unwavering commitment to lasting peace and sustainable development has always been the foundation of our peacebuilding initiatives. Since its inception in 2018, the COFP Fellowship Program has provided a safe and dynamic platform to address contemporary challenges, particularly violent extremism, by fostering meaningful relationships and dialogue amid complex societal dynamics. This has reinforced our resolve to advance interfaith relations, empower communities, and cultivate a culture of peace.

The COFP Fellowship Program has become a cornerstone of leadership development, equipping, training, and inspiring individuals to take proactive roles within their communities. It instills a sense of civic responsibility, encouraging Fellows to lead reconciliation and peace initiatives that drive community development. In recognition of its impact, the program expanded to international Fellowship in 2021, broadening its reach and scope across Africa and strengthening its Pan-African identity with a global solidarity approach. The Fellowship is structured into three modules/sessions, allowing participants to convene quarterly for an intensive one-week, in-class physical training over the course of a year. What makes the COFP Fellowship unique is its contextual relevance; designed, implemented, and continuously refined by Africans for African communities.

To date, the Fellowship has successfully trained over 325 individuals across 16 African nations, fostering a network of change-makers committed to building a more peaceful and inclusive society. As we look ahead, COFP remains dedicated to expanding this transformative initiative, ensuring that peacebuilding efforts resonate across borders and generations, shaping a future where unity, dialogue, and coexistence prevail.

Agatha Chikelue Sr. DMMM
Executive Director
Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace

Acknowledgement

The success and impacts recorded by the COFP Fellowship program would not have been possible without the continuous support and contributions of numerous individuals and organizations. We extend our deepest gratitude to our funders and partners, including the Conrad Hilton Foundation (CHF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), GHR Foundation, German Federal Foreign Office, Mensen met een missie (MM), Veritas University of Nigeria, the Institute for Peace & Conflict Resolution (IPCR), Nile University of Nigeria (NUON), and the Islamic Education Trust (IET), Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, (TBI), among others for their steadfast commitment to peacebuilding and leadership development in Africa.

We sincerely appreciate the dedication of our funders, partners, organizations, community actors, and Fellows whose passion and efforts continue to drive meaningful change. Special thanks to the COFP team for their invaluable contributions in shaping and sustaining this initiative.

Finally, we acknowledge the resilience and commitment of all those working tirelessly to foster peace, reconciliation, and social cohesion. Your dedication inspires hope for a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Rev. Fr. Boniface Neibo

Deputy Executive Director,
Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace

Introduction

Agatha Chikelue (Sr.) DMMM

The quest for peace has always been at the heart of human civilization, yet in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa conflict, mistrust, and division continue to challenge our collective aspirations for harmony and progress. Time and again, history has shown that sustainable peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, dialogue, and mutual respect among diverse communities.

It was against this backdrop that the vision for the COFP Fellowship Program was born. Recognizing the urgent need for proactive and strategic peacebuilding efforts, the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) sought to create a transformative platform where faith leaders, community actors, and change-makers could come together to foster unity, counter violent extremism, and address the root causes of conflict.

The inspiration for this program stems from a profound belief that religion is force for good if well utilized and that peace is possible when individuals are empowered to become catalysts for change in their own communities. Across Africa, tensions fueled by ethnic, religious, and socio-political divisions have too often led to violence, yet history also proves that reconciliation is possible when people of goodwill commit to dialogue, understanding, and cooperation.

The COFP Fellowship was designed to be more than just a training initiative, it is a movement. It is a call to action for emerging leaders to step forward with courage, armed with knowledge, skills, and networks to promote peace, bridge divides, and strengthen the social fabric of their communities. Through this program, Fellows are not only equipped with theoretical insights but are also given practical tools to navigate the complexities of mediation, conflict resolution, and interfaith dialogue in real-world contexts.

At its core, the COFP Fellowship embodies the conviction that peace is a shared responsibility, one that requires commitment, collaboration, and an unwavering dedication to building societies rooted in tolerance, justice, and coexistence. As this journey unfolds, each Fellow becomes a testament to the power of interfaith and intercultural collaboration, proving that a peaceful Africa is not just an ideal, but a tangible reality we can collectively achieve.

The chapters in this book have consistently demonstrated that interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation, and mediation are essential tools in tackling contemporary global challenges. As the world grapples with religious tensions, social divisions, and violent extremism, our Fellows are equipped to serve as ambassadors for peace, ensuring that dialogue transcends words and translates into practical, impactful action. Lessons from their experiences underscore the great potential of interfaith dialogue and action.

As Africa continues to traverse the complexities of peace and security, the role of dedicated individuals and organizations in fostering understanding, dialogue, and collaboration remains indispensable. The COFP Fellowship Program stands as a beacon of hope, equipping a new generation of leaders with the tools to bridge divides and champion the cause of peace.

Chapter One

2023/2024



**COFP
FELLOWS**



Class of 2024



Sustaining Momentum: Shaping the Next Generation of Peacebuilders 2023/2024 Cohort

The 2023/2024 COFP Fellowship Program, marking its 6th year with the Class of 2024, began in July 2023 by welcoming 50 Fellows. While the majority hailed from Nigeria, seven Fellows from other African nations joined the cohort, reinforcing the program's commitment to inclusivity and cross-regional engagement. These Fellows come from various Christian and Muslim sects/denominations across Nigeria and Africa, creating a rich tapestry of religious and cultural diversity. Throughout a rigorous, immersive, and participatory one-year Fellowship, they completed the required 150 credit hours of study at the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace and implemented meaningful peace projects in their communities.

On May 4, 2024, they received Certificates in “Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation” by COFP Foundation in collaboration with Veritas University of Nigeria (VUNA) and Nile University of Nigeria (NUN). This graduation not only marks an academic achievement but also formally inducts them into the COFP Africa Network of Peacebuilders (CANEP), ensuring continued engagement, knowledge exchange, and collaborative peacebuilding efforts across the continent.

With the training received through the Fellowship, the expectation is clear. Fellows must take proactive steps in translating knowledge into action, recognizing that sustainable peace requires dedicated actors who foster dialogue, counter violent extremism, and work tirelessly for social cohesion. This is the hallmark of being a COFP Fellow.

Zarah Ahmad Yusuf

Zarah Ahmad Yusuf is a Muslim from Yobe state. She is a veterinarian by profession and specializes in disease control from animal to human. She obtained Master's degree in Veterinary Epidemiology from Ahmadu Bello University, (ABU), Zaria. She is the founder and Executive Director of Portrait of Lake Child Initiative, an NGO concerned with children living across Lake Chad region of Africa.



Personal Reflection **At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP fellowship program has impacted me a lot, it has increased my knowledge on inter-religious dialogue fosters understanding, tolerance, and empathy among diverse faith traditions, especially the Abrahamic religions by promoting peaceful coexistence.” ~~ **Zarah**



Ruth Anthony Orji

Ruth-Anthony Orji belongs to the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy (DMMM) congregation and hails from Ebonyi State. She serves as a Catholic doctrine instructor at St. Maria Goretti Girls Secondary School in Orlu, Imo state.

Personal Reflection **At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“Gratitude fills my heart for the enriching experience I've had as a member of the COFP Fellowship. This program has significantly broadened my understanding of religion, particularly highlighting the shared heritage among adherents of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as Abrahamic people. Through this Fellowship, I've come to appreciate the common origins and shared beliefs in the afterlife judgment among these diverse faiths.” ~~ **Ruth**

Panden, Peter Emmanuel

Peter Emmanuel, is from Mwaghvua, Mangu LGA of Plateau State. He is a devout Christian and a member of the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN). He lectures at the Federal College of Education, Pankshin, and holds a Master's in Conflict, Security, and Development Studies from the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna.

Personal Reflection **At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP Fellowship stood out as a very unique opportunity for me. I have been thoroughly refreshed in my mind and rebuilt in my body by the training, and I am ready to ensure peace in my workplace and society as a whole.” ~~ **Peter**



Ejura Ebiloma Akubo

Ejura Ebiloma is a community health practitioner and a Catholic sister of the congregation of the Augustinian Sisters of the Mercy of Jesus from Kogi State. She is the Vocation Directress and Novice Mistress of the Congregation.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship experience has been all-encompassing for me. It taught me respect for people of other religions, the art of communication, conflict management, de-escalation, and resolution. Equally, it emphasized the importance of living in harmony with others regardless of their religious beliefs. Inspired by the hummingbird, I learned that even small efforts can make a significant impact on peacebuilding in my community and beyond.” ~ **Ejura**



Isa, Almusawi Umar

Al-Musawi Isa Umar is a Shi'a Muslim from Adamawa State. He is a public Relations Officer at the International Human Rights Movement (IHRM), Adamawa State Office & and also the Public Relations Officer 1 of the Muslim Council of Adamawa State, Gombi. He holds a Master's degree and is currently a Ph.D. student in Hausa Culture at Taraba State University, Jalingo.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP fellowship program has been a transformative journey that has deepened my sense of purpose and commitment to making a difference. As a participant in the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) fellowship program, I have been deeply impacted and the program has provided me with invaluable opportunities for growth and learning. Through interactions with mentors, peers, and experts in the field, I have gained new perspectives, and honed my skills in various areas. Engaging in discussions and collaborative projects with individuals from different backgrounds has broadened my understanding of global issues and also enriched my appreciation of cultural differences.” ~ **Al-Musawi**



Anthony John Abah

Anthony John is a Catholic from Benue State. He is the Manager of News and Current Affairs at Catholic Television (CTV). He holds a BSc in Mass Communication from Benue State University, Makurdi.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Attending the COFP Fellowship program has expanded my understanding of Dialogue, Peaceful Co-existence, and Meditation. Upon completing the first and second modules, my perception of Muslims underwent a positive transformation. Previously, I viewed Muslims as a violent group, but after learning about the principles and basics of Islam, I realize that extremism stems from ignorance and a lack of knowledge about the Islamic faith. My single story of associating Muslims with terrorism has now changed; I now perceive them through a lens of shared humanity. The Fellowship has made me a better Christian and taught me to demonstrate love towards all men.” ~ **Anthony**



Gofwen Wika

Gofwen Wika is a Catholic from Plateau State. He is a Deputy Director, of the News and Current Affairs Department of the Plateau State Radio and Television Corporation/ Media for Social Change and Development (MSCD) and a Fellow of the Institute of Information Management. Wika earned a Master's degree in Mass Communication from the National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN).

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My participation in the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) can be described as a 'transformative journey' that has changed my perception of the word 'peace.' It has equally reshaped my knowledge and ignited my passion for the promotion of interreligious dialogue as a panacea for engendering peaceful communal living.” ~ Wika



Ndeng Akongnwi Ayumbi

Sister Ndeng Akongnwi Ayumbi belongs to the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus. She is a Cameroonian born in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Presently, she is the Coordinator of the Justice and Peace Commission, Diocese of Kumba. She holds a Bachelor's in Sociology and Anthropology and a Diploma in Women and Gender Studies and has lots of experience working with vulnerable girls, Prisoners, and the less privileged in society.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Presently, I appreciate other people more and look beyond our differences. This program has also equipped me with leadership skills in mediation and dialogue which I need each day at my place of work. As an individual, I now try to be at peace with myself to radiate that peace to others because I cannot give what I do not have. Thanks to the COFP Fellowship program.” ~ Ndeng



Nnaji Lucy Onyinyechukwu

Sister Nnaji Lucy is a religious Sister from the congregation of Sisters of Jesus the Good Shepherd, Abakaliki Diocese in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. She holds a BSc in Biochemistry and currently works at Sascon International School, Abuja as a Special Students tutor.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The program has influenced me so much. So far, I have learned what peace is all about and how I can spread this peace wherever I find myself. I have unlearned the negative impressions I had concerning other religions and I have learned from this program that every religion is unique and none is better than the other. It has been a wonderful experience.” ~ Lucy



Daret Timothy Paul

Daret Timothy Paul is a Christian and a member of the COCIN church from Plateau State. He is the Program Manager of Hygiene Promotion and Community Engagement at the Catholic Relief Services (CRS). He holds a Ph.D. in Public Health from International University, Bamenda, Cameroon.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with the COFP Fellowship Program has been nothing short of transformative, empowering me to become an agent of change and a champion for peace. From classroom to community, this journey has reaffirmed my belief in the power of grassroots activism and the resilience of the human spirit in overcoming even the most formidable challenges.” ~~ **Timothy**



Uzonna Rosemary Ngozi

Uzonna Rosemary Ngozi is from Anambra State and a religious sister from the congregation of Sisters of the Compassionate Heart of Christ. She works at the Federal Government College, Keffi, and obtained a B.A (Ed) in English Language from Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience in the COFP Fellowship program so far has been wonderful. It allowed me to understand what peace is all about, how to embrace and initiate peace in my immediate environment and community at large, and how to dialogue and value other people despite their tribe and religion. It allowed me to understand the danger of a single story and the need to listen to all sides before concluding. I'm grateful to God for the opportunity to be part of this Program. long live COFP.” ~~ **Rosemary**

Abdulrasheed Isah Zubairu

Isah Zubairu Abdulrasheed is a Muslim from Sokoto State. He is the Project Officer/ Component Lead of Governance and Peacebuilding at the Catholic Relief Services (CRS). He holds a BSc in Computer Science from Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Participating in the COFP Fellowship program has significantly impacted my personal and professional growth. It has broadened my perspective, deepened my expertise in specific areas, and facilitated connections with like-minded individuals. The Fellowship has afforded me invaluable networking opportunities, enabling me to forge connections with peers, experts, and mentors, which I anticipate will lead to fruitful collaborations, mentorship, and future career prospects.” ~~ **Zubairu**



Dada Florence Obed

Dada Obed Florence is an ECWA Christian from Niger State. She is the National Treasurer of the Women Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN), a Trustee at Magdala Unity Foundation and Nigerian Women of Faith Network respectively. She obtained a Master's degree in Christian Education from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria.



Persona I Reflection **At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“My time in the COFP Fellowship has been truly incredible! I joined not long after losing my husband, and being part of this community has been a source of solace. The Fellows, now dear friends, have been a constant source of support during this challenging time. Through this Fellowship, I've formed meaningful connections with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including Muslims and Christians, who feel like family to me now. Moreover, this experience has deepened my perception of peace as a collaborative endeavour, one that thrives on mutual understanding and respect.” **Florence**

Emmanuel Yakubu

Yakubu Emmanuel is an ECWA Christian from Niger State. He is a Principal Producer in the programs department at the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN). He obtained a B. Ed in Business Education from the Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto.

Personal Reflection **At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The training provided by the COFP Foundation through the Fellowship program has equipped me with essential skills in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and mediation. These skills are valuable not only in my personal life but also in my professional and community life. Now, I have developed a better understanding of the importance of dialogue and collaboration in resolving conflicts and building a peaceful society, I have been empowered to initiate and carry out projects focused on healthy political rivalry and equally have established relationships, collaborations, and opportunities to network and connect with like-minded individuals and organizations working towards peace and dialogue.” ~ **Emmanuel**

Idris Abdulwahab

Idris Abdulwahab is a Shiite Muslim from Kaduna state. He holds PGD in Business Administration and Management from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. He works with Rasulul Aazam Foundation Nigeria (RAAF) Kaduna state.

Personal Reflection **At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP Fellowship Program is an experience I will always cherish. It provided me with valuable insights into Christianity, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, peace management, and interfaith education.” ~ **Abdulwahab**



Oladejo-Alghazal, Shakirat Modupe

Oladejo-Alghazal Shakirat is a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat of Nigeria from Oyo state. She is the Assistant General Secretary of Lajna Imaillah Nigeria. Shakirat is a registered nurse who holds a Bachelor of Nursing Science degree from Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State. She works as a Principal Nursing Officer at the Directorate of Health Services, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta.



Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program has greatly impacted me positively. I now have a broader knowledge of interreligious peace, dialogue, and conflict resolution. The lessons learned have sharpened my skills and better equipped me as a peace ambassador. I appreciate the COFP and the entire management for this opportunity. It was a worthwhile experience.” ~ **Shakirat**



Adam Abdulrahman

Adam Abdulrahman is a Sunni Muslim from Niger State. He is a Researcher & Trainer at Da'wah Institute (DIN), Islamic Education Trust, Minna. He studied Biological Sciences at the Federal University of Technology, Minna, and equally holds a Higher Diploma in Islamic Law.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship Program has profoundly impacted me, shaping my perspective, enhancing my understanding of diversity, and equipping me with essential skills for fostering harmony and resolving conflicts. Through the program, I have cultivated a greater sense of tolerance and acceptance towards people from different backgrounds, appreciating the richness of diversity and the value of inclusivity in community-building. Engaging with individuals from various religious traditions has deepened my understanding of their beliefs and practices, fostering mutual respect and empathy across religious divides. I have also gained practical skills in conflict management, communication, and mediation, which are crucial for promoting constructive dialogue and reconciliation in diverse settings.” ~ **Abdulrahman**

Ajegena Akumbugu Immanuel

Ajegena Akumbugu Emmanuel is a Catholic Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Lafia, from Nasarawa State. He studied Philosophy and Sacred Theology and obtained his B.Phil. & B.Th. from Pontifical Urban University, Rome. He currently works as the Deputy Editor of Catholic Voice News Paper, the Principal of St. Rose of Lima College Keffi, and a curate at St. Peter's Catholic Church Keffi.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience



“I am overwhelmed by the impact of the Program and the study, as it eliminates biases built on prejudices and has given me the impetus to be a bridge builder. It has given me the opportunity to network with other Fellows across Africa and has built my capacity in Conflict mediation and Peacebuilding.” ~ **Akumbugu**

Hamza Sumaye Fadimatu

Hamza Sumaye Fadimatu is a Muslim from Plateau state. She holds a Doctorate degree from University of London and have served as Permanent Secretary in Plateau state Civil Service. She is currently the Deputy National Amirah (President) of FOMWAN.



Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship Program has impacted me very positively. It has given me an entirely new experience in the area of respect for the faith of others. Indeed, the Fellowship Program has given me the opportunity to share my experiences with people from within and outside Nigeria which ordinarily I wouldn't have done. I have also developed new strategies in networking and mediation.” ~~ **Sumaye**



Ejeh Daniel Agu

Ejeh Daniel Agu is a Catholic from Cross Rivers State and a resident of Kano State. He is the Vice Chairman of the Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (YOWICAN), Kano State Chapter. He holds a HND in Accounting from Kano State Polytechnic, Kano.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship program has profoundly impacted me on a personal level, allowing me to realize my dream of empowering the youth in my community and fostering self-reliance among them. One significant transformation has been my perception of Islam, which I previously viewed as volatile. Now, I feel comfortable living among Muslims without fear. Armed with the knowledge gained from this program and my determination to make a positive difference, I am confident that violent conflict and extremism will become obsolete in my community.” ~~ **Daniel**

Iwuoha Joseph Ikechukwu

Iwuoha Joseph Ikechukwu is a Pentecostal Christian from Ihitte Uboma, Imo State. He is a Pastor of the Dunamis International Christian Church. He holds an MSc. in Information Technology from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience in the COFP Fellowship program has been a wonderful one. Participating in this fellowship has brought out a lot of potential I didn't know I had, it changed my mentality and orientation about life, and has given me a balanced understanding of human perception.” ~~ **Joseph**



Yesufu Nanafatima

Yesufu Nana Fatima is a Sunni Muslim from Edo State. She is a confidential Secretary at the Nigeria Interreligious Council. She holds a PGD in Conflict, Peace, and Strategic Studies.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program has impacted me greatly as I have learned from my other peace Fellows from other parts of the world what is attainable in different cultures and how some of these views and experiences are sometimes relatable. It has further strengthened my commitment to peace works in our society.” **Nanafatima**



Loveline Ziseng Nyetalem

Loveline Ziseng Nyetalem is a religious member of the congregation of the Tertiary sisters of St. Francis. A Cameroonian by nationality but works as a missionary in Takum Local Government Area in Taraba state in the Catholic Diocese of Wukari. She holds a Diploma in State Registered Nursing and is also an Administrator at the Holy Family Catholic Clinic in Takum.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at the Fellowship program has been awesome! I am privileged and extremely happy to participate in the Fellowship program. The topics treated have been very rich and I'm now acquainted with the tenets of the other religion. The skills I acquired have influenced the way I live in my community for good.” ~ **Loveline**



Godwin Helen Ada

Helen Ada Godwin, a member of the Canonesses Regular Hospitallers of the Mercy of Jesus of the order of St. Augustine and hails from Benue State. Currently serving in the Maiduguri diocese, she is the Sister-in-Charge at the Shuwa Health Centre and Maternity, overseeing operations on behalf of her congregation. With a background in Pharmacy from the University of Jos, Plateau State, Helen brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to her vital role in providing healthcare services to the community.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship Program has broadened my understanding of Islam and equipped me with skills in dialogue and peace education. It's been a journey of continuous learning, covering conflict concepts, types, actors, and consequences. This knowledge gained has inspired me to actively promote inter-religious dialogue in my work, fostering peaceful coexistence among diverse faith communities.” ~ **Helen**



Muhammad Fadimatu Bello

Muhammed Fadimatu Bello is a Muslim from Zamfara State. She holds PGD in Education from National Teachers Institute (NTI), Kaduna. She is a Capacity Building Officer, FOMWAN, Kaura Namoda, Zamfara state.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Being part of this one-year Fellowship Program has highly exposed me to public interest and what it takes to co-exists in various diversities. It has encouraged me to dedicate my personal and professional life to interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding.” ~~ **Fadimatu**



Emmanuel Anthonia Tumba

Emmanuel Anthonia is a religious sister of the Infant Jesus from Jalingo Taraba state and hails from Bazza, Michika Local Government of Adamawa state. She holds a B. Ed in Adult Education and Community Service. She is the Principal of Infant Jesus School, Kona, Jalingo and a social worker.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“This program has impacted positively on me as a person because it has made me to love peace more and have changed my perception on how I view the world with regard to peaceful co-existence. I can proudly say that I am a lover of peace and ambassador of peace through my experience with COFP Fellowship Program.” ~~ **Anthonia**



Agnes Umudo Takpobuno

Agnes Umudo is a Catholic religious sister and missionary of the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostle (OLA) congregation from Delta State. She earned a B.Sc. in Physics Education from Delta State University, Abraka. Currently, she is involved in social and pastoral activities at Holy Family Catholic Church in Ajara, Badagry, Lagos State.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship has empowered and deepened my understanding of peace and unity across religions. It has shown me that we're all connected as humans and should focus on what brings us together, like love and respect, while rejecting what divides us. It proves that religious tolerance starts with each of us.” ~~ **Agnes**



Shodehinde Olalekan Adeshina

Shodehinde Olalekan is a Muslim from Ondo State. He holds Master's in Educational Planning and Administration from National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). He is the Zonal Imam of NASFAT in Ondo state. He is a notable public speaker and on-air personality.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Indeed, words cannot capture my experience as I can conveniently claim that I am a new born peace ambassador and peace lover. The Fellowship Program has changed my perception on what interfaith relationship should be and more importantly, how to look at people of the other faith.” ~~ Adeshina



Odukoya Oluwakemi Kene

Odukoya Oluwakemi Kene is a catholic from Ogun State. She holds MSc in Conflict, Peace and Strategic Studies from Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja. She is a private researcher and has successfully carried out humanitarian projects under the Regional Episcopal Conference of West Africa, SEEDS -Togo and a personal project called, “Anuluwapo Childrens project-keeping hope alive in children”.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship Program gave me the platform to re-evaluate and re-educate myself as an individual. Though, I come from a liberal background, I still had reservations particularly in the area of religious practices in Islamic religion. However, the Fellowship program has succeeded in annihilating that bias that existed in me. I can confidently say that the Fellowship program did not only expose me to religious tolerance but also presented me with a forum to explore the teachings through interactions with my fellow classmates and has also enabled me to establish a bond with many.” ~~ Oluwakemi



Muhammad Aisha Yakasai

Muhammed Aisha Yakasai is a Muslim from kano state. She obtained a B Ed in Adult Education and Community Development from Bayero University (BUK) Kano. She a staff of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps, Kano state Command as Gender Desk officer.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at COFP Fellowship Program is tremendous. It built my capacity and boosted my moral that I can now go to my community and advocate for peace. We need peace within ourselves, communities and states.” ~~ Aisha



Ukachukwu Mercy Onyioza

Ukachukwu Mercy Onyioza is a Pentecostal Christian who reside in Minna Niger state. She holds NCE from Niger state College of Education, Minna. She is a resident pastor at Shepherd's Heart Encounter Gospel Centre, Minna. She is the proprietress of Royal Excellence School, Minna, and is a certified Christian Leader from Christian Leadership Training School, Bida, Niger state. Ukachukwu Mercy is the current Assistant State Secretary of the Women Wing of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). Niger state.



Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“It has been a privilege and an amazing experience for me at COFP Program. I have been enlightened, educated and empowered with much knowledge on peacebuilding, dialogue, conflict management, mediation skills and how to communicate effectively with people of other faith.” ~~ **Mercy**



Yitkyim Leah Datong

Yitkyim Leah is a Christian from Plateau state. She holds LLB and LLM from the university of Jos. She is the senior Assistant Registrar of Plateau State University, Bokoos. Yitkyim also works as the head of Council Affairs Unit of the University. She is a Gender Rights Activist with dedication to the feminist movement.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at the Fellowship Program has been transformative and empowering. It has also been comprehensive and engaging. The experience has been holistic and I am most grateful for the network I have built which will forever be a social support system for me as I continue to promote peace in my community.” ~~ **Leah**

Abdulrasheed Isah Zubairu

Abdulrasheed Isah is a Muslim from Sokoto state. He studied Computer Science from Kebbi State University of Science & Technology, Aliero. He has worked as the Program Manager of Rural Women and Youth Development and now works with Catholic Relief Services (CRS).



Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Participating in COFP Fellowship Program has significantly impacted my personal and professional growth. It has broadened my perspective, deepened my expertise in specific areas and facilitated connections with likeminded individuals for continuous peaceful coexistence among Sokoto communities.” ~~ **Abdulrasheed**

Okoye Gloria Ukamaka

Okoye Gloria is a Catholic Nun of the Dominican sisters of St. Catherine of Siena from Anambra state. She obtained Master's in Education from University of Lagos. She works as a Mentor, Instructor and Trainer at Immaculate Heart Nursery and Primary School, Shendam, Plateau state. Her Philosophy of life is “grow and help others to grow”.



Personal Reflection At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at COFP Fellowship Program has been superb. This program helped me to understand the realities of other African countries in terms of violence. Currently, I have decided to move round schools to educate children on the need for peaceful coexistence and that all of us are from one Father and do not need to fight one another.” ~~ **Gloria**



Dimohey Fatima

Dimohey Fatima is a Pentecostal Christian from Lusaka, Zambia. She is a Pastor with Shalom Embassy Ministries International. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Library and Information Science and Public Administration from University of Zambia. In addition, she also holds an Associate Degree of Arts in Theological Studies from Miami International Seminary in the United States of America.

Personal Reflection At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship Program has impacted me immensely. I am now a better spiritual leader and counsellor, and I understand more the importance of coexistence with all God's creatures and living in harmony with all of them. I also understand Islamic religion better” ~~ **Dimohey**

Abdullah Sadiya Sheikh

Abdullah Sadiya is a Muslim from Niger state. She obtained a BSc in Information and Media Technology from Federal University of Technology, (FUT), Minna and MBA from Roxbourg Institute of Social Entrepreneurship (RISE). Aside other functions she is engaged in, Sadiya is a certified Entrepreneurship trainer and Coach and Executive Director of Passcard Consulting Limited.



Personal Reflection At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Engaging in the COFP Fellowship Program has been both insightful and fulfilling making a significant milestone in my professional journey. Before embarking on the COFP Fellowship Program, my understanding of Christianity and the art of dialogue was limited. However, the comprehensive COFP Course Modules equipped me with fundamental knowledge about Christianity and honed my skills in effective interfaith discussions.” ~~ **Sadiya**

Fidelia Gowon

Fidelia Gowon is a Catholic religious Sister of the Congregation of the Infant Jesus Sisters. She is the Novice Directress of the Congregation and currently working in Dong, Jos-North LGA of Plateau state. She is a trained formator and facilitator, and holds a Diploma in English and French as well as in theology.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience is quite unforgettable. I have not had such an encounter before where Muslim leaders and their Christian counterparts interact objectively and sincerely. I went to the Fellowship Program with an open mind, though having certain reservations. My experience with my Muslim Fellows as well as people from different ethnic backgrounds and nationalities has brought me to a deeper knowledge and conviction of the commonly shared treasures, we all have a common humanity, having a lot to learn from the faiths and practices of one another.” ~ **Fidelia**



Timta Musa

Timta Musa hails from Bornu State Nigeria. He is an ordained Pastor of the church of the Brethren and Vice Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kano State Chapter. He oversees church branches in the North Western part of Nigeria and serves as Co-chair of the Monitoring & Evaluation Committee of the Kano State Anti-Corruption and Strategy Commission. Timta holds a Master's degree in Historical Theology from the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, University of Jos.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship Program has been a transformative experience for me, enhancing my capacity in peace and peacebuilding beyond expectations. It has enriched my life significantly, influencing my perception of critical issues, relationships, and my role as a pastor and leader in society. This program has made me a better person, providing opportunities to positively impact my world.” ~ **Timta**



Rabi Yusuf Gezawa

Rabi Yusuf Gezawa is a Muslim from Kano state. She holds Master's Degree in Conflict and Security Studies from Bayero University, (BUK), Kano. She is a retiree from the Kano state Hospital Management Board, and a recipient of a national award “MON” (Member of the Order of Nigeria). She is the current national women coordinator of Joint National Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD) and also the Executive Director, Gender and Disability Inclusion Advocacy Center (GADIAC).

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Through the Fellowship Program, I have learned about Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. The program has also taught me techniques for mitigating violence and fundraising.” ~ **Rabi**



Chapter Two

2022/2023



**COFP
FELLOWS**



Class of 2023



Strengthening Bonds, Deepening Impact: Expanding the African Network 2022/2023 Cohort

The COFP Fellowship Program advanced into its 5th year with the Class of 2023, which commenced in July 2022, welcoming 63 Fellows. Continuing its international scope, the program comprised ten Fellows from Ghana, Liberia, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and Chad, alongside the majority Nigerian cohort. Representing a broad spectrum of religious traditions, the Muslim Fellows came from Sunni, Shia, NASFAT, Qadiriyyah, Ahmadiyya, and Tijjania sects, while the Christian Fellows hailed from Catholic, Baptist, EYN, Orthodox, Presbyterian, Pentecostal Fellowship Mission, Lutheran, and Anglican denominations.

Over the course of a transformative one-year Fellowship, participants successfully completed 150 credit hours of study at the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace and executed transformative community peace projects across their respective regions. Upon fulfilling the program's rigorous academic and practical requirements, the Fellows were awarded Certificates in “Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation” on May 13, 2023, by COFP Foundation, in partnership with Veritas University of Nigeria (VUNA) and Nile University of Nigeria (NUN). With this milestone, the graduates officially join the COFP Africa Network of Peacebuilders (CANEP), a dynamic network that fosters continuous engagement, cross-cultural exchange, and collaborative peacebuilding across Africa.

We are confident that the training provided in Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation has equipped the Fellows to serve as Peace Ambassadors. Their success in this endeavor depends on applying the knowledge and skills acquired. That is what it means to be a COFP Fellow.

Daniel Mugera Kathuri

Daniel Mugera is a Christian from Kenya. He is a Certified Coach, Trainer and Public speaker at the African Centre for Public Speaking Nairobi and an accredited counsellor with the Kenya Counsellors and Psychologist Association (KCPA). Daniel holds a MA in Christian Counselling from Landmark Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth Texas, USA.



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP Program has equipped and empowered me in the areas of interfaith dialogue, conflict transformation, and alternative dispute resolution through mediation. This knowledge has brought me to a high level of awareness and understanding of myself and others. The interaction with Fellows from other faiths and nations around Africa has helped me to learn more and positioned me to believe that I am not alone in my quest to see better Nations and ultimately a better continent. All this has happened courtesy of the COFP Fellowship program and I will recommend it to anyone from Africa who longs to be equipped in this area to become a great Ambassador of peace in the Continent and the World at large.” ~ Daniel



Sumaiya Abubakar Muhammad

Abubakar Sumayya Muhammad is a Muslim and a native of Plateau State. She is the Team Lead Mediation/Dialogue officer at Plateau Peacebuilding Agency and the CEO of Muryar Fulani Peace Initiative Network, Jos, Plateau State. She holds a Masters in Religion & Philosophy from the University of Jos.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“My experience with COFP has been an eye-opener, coming from a volatile community and a minority group, the experience is overwhelming and it has given me hope that peace and development will be back in my community. I have networked with a lot of people and also added to my body of knowledge.” ~ Sumaiya

Mba Pascal

Mba Pascal is a religious of the Holy Family Sisters of the Needy Congregation. She holds a Doctorate Degree in Public Administration from the Nasarawa state university. Pascal hails from Enugu State and lectures in the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, Veritas University, Abuja.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“Sincerely speaking, so far so good. It has been very educative, expository, engaging, entertaining, and uniting. If possible, I will recommend this program to all Consecrated Catholic religious persons if I have the capacity to do so. It will even foster peace in our religious communities. It is a wonderful program. The experience is worthwhile.” ~ Pascal



Muhammad Idris Kolo

Muhammad Idris Kolo is a Muslim from Niger State. He is a graduate of Mass Communication from Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Niger State. He works with the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria Bida as a broadcast journalist.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The window for sharing experiences and thoughts or ideas widened my concept of promoting peaceful coexistence wherever I find myself. I made new friends. The interactions with COFP officials and other Fellows have been awesome and in them all, I find home and family.” ~~ **Kolo**



Nzelle Abwe Joyce

Joyce is a Christian and a Cameroonian. She holds an MBA in Human Resource Management from the University of Kigali, Rwanda, and is a Licenced Professional in Communications and Public Relations from Institut Universitaire Siantou Yaounde, Cameroon.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Before joining the COFP Fellowship program, I had a lot of misconceptions about other religions, especially Islam. With all the teachings from the course experts I received, I have a clearer understanding of the Religion and relate better with my brothers and sisters of the Islamic Faith. Also, the program has helped me a lot with public speaking. It has been a delight meeting people from diverse cultures and different walks of life, networking, and learning other social skills.” ~~ **Joyce**

Agbo Hadiza Abigail

Agbo Hadiza Abigail is a Christian from Gombe State. She is a Medical Doctor/Consultant and Professor of the Reproductive and Child Health Department of Community Medicine, at Jos University Teaching Hospital. She is a Fellow of West African College of Physicians and holds MBBS from the University of Jos.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“It is difficult to put all I learned, or understood into writing. It was an experience that changed my negative perspectives to the positive in many things about life and relationship with other people. The program was detailed, and the resource persons were all unique in their own way, impacting knowledge with so much zeal and grassroots understanding of their subject. The welfare was near perfect (good accommodation and meals). Dedicated staff and above all a good seed fund for the project which I did not expect considering the economic meltdown. I pray that the Fellows nurture and support their projects so that all the efforts of the Foundation geared at Peacebuilding shall not go in vain, Amen.” ~~ **Hadiza**



Salifu Abdul- Mumin Dalhu

Salifu Abdul-Mumin Dalhu is a Muslim from Tamale, Ghana. He is not only an Islamic Scholar but also a Traditional Ruler and Chief of the Zongo community in Tamale, Northern Region, Ghana. His missionary activities include teaching, training propagators, healing spiritually, and officiating as Chief Imam of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) community, in Northern Ghana. He studied Islamic Sciences and Arabic at Imam Hussain University Karachi, Pakistan.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Before partaking in the program my perception about other religions other than Islam was very narrow and sceptical. However, my experience in this noble Fellowship program has positively changed particularly in interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, peaceful coexistence, unity in diversity, and religious similarities. Equally, I have benefitted from the understanding of the effect of a single story and a balanced story taught us in the Fellowship program. Above all, as a Muslim given the chance to be a COFP Fellow, indirectly, I was taught to love, tolerate all, and hate none. This indeed is so dear and touching to my life.” ~~ **Abdul- Mumin**



Gogwim Caroline

Gogwim Caroline is a Religious Sister of the Augustinian Sisters of the Mercy of Jesus. She hails from Plateau State, and currently, works in Jalingo, Taraba State. A Pastoral worker by profession and a Mistress Formator for Aspirants in her congregation. She obtained a Diploma in Business Administration from Plateau State Polytechnic.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I thank God Almighty for giving me the privilege to participate in COFP Fellowship program. It has been a wonderful experience for me. Without doubt, it was an enriching, educative, and very impactful experience. This program has really exposed me to know more about the Islamic religion. Before now, I had a different idea about Islam. This program gave me hope that we can still live together as children of the same father, even though we have differences that are normal in every human person. The program has taught me that our differences should not cause division or fighting but should make us understand one another better in order for us to live together as one family.” ~~ **Gogwim**



Abakar Abounassib Mahamat

Abounassib Abakar Mahamat is a Muslim from Tchadian. He is the Interfaith Dialogue Coordinator at Program Alimentaire Mondiale (PAM) Chad and has B.A in Business Administration.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with COFP has been good and wonderful and my expectations have been reached by the Foundation. I had the privilege to meet so many people from different countries. The experience will be in me for so many years and it is a privilege for me to be part of this organization.” ~~ **Abounassib**



Godwin Ebokhasomi Perpetua

Godwin Ebokhasomi Perpetua is a Christian from Edo State, she works as an Administrative Secretary in the Pastoral Agents Department of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Abuja, and the former VP, Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON). She holds an LLB Law from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“It has been a wonderful and unforgettable experience for me. The program has increased my knowledge of interfaith, dialogue, understanding of the fundamentals of different religions and their similarities, peacebuilding, mediation, tolerance, and the much-needed exposure regarding conflict transformation and resolution.” ~~ **Perpetua**



Michael Dumka

Michael Dumka is a Religious Sister of the Medical Missionaries of Mary, (MMM), Currently, she is the Administrator of the Medical Missionaries of Mary Primary Health Care and Maternity in FCT, Abuja. She holds an M. Sc. in Strategic Management from the University of Derby, United Kingdom.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“Coming across the Fellowship Program and its thematic areas, I was intrigued to become a Fellow and since then till now, all my expectations from the Fellowship program have been met beyond what I anticipated. I am happy that I met with people from diverse religious backgrounds and with the exchange of knowledge among us, I can boldly say that I am more informed than when I first came to the Fellowship program. I can make more meaningful transformations to the IDPs as I integrate them back into society for theirs and our betterment and positivity. I also now know what and what not to say to a Muslim not to trigger conflict or confusion.” ~~ **Dumka**

Hassan Mohammed Chiroma

Hassan Mohammed Chiroma is a Sunni Muslim from Bauchi State. He is the Program Officer of Grassroots Initiative for Development, Bauchi, and a peace promoter Fellow of Equal Access International who trains people on how they can deploy technological tools to promote peace. He holds a BSc in Computer Science from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“As a Muslim, I learned a lot about Christianity and also increased my knowledge of Islam. I learned that none of the two major religions advocate for hatred but rather, peaceful coexistence. I also learned that the two major religions originated from the same source and share many things in common.” ~~ **Hassan**



Eucharia Solomon

Solomon Eucharia is a Catholic from Adamawa State. She is the Kpahyekai (Wakiliyan Mata/ women leader) of Bachama Kingdom in the Bachama Traditional Council Adamawa state. She holds a BA in Language and Communications Arts from the Modibo Adama University of Technology, Yola.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“It has been a mind-blowing journey, an eye opener, excellent and hands-on experience on the need and importance of peaceful co-existence in our communities. With well-trained and informed facilitators, I must say it's a unique learning opportunity that every religious and traditional Leader should engage in for the course of peaceful coexistence in our communities.” ~
Eucharia



Sixtus Onuh

Onuh Ladi Sixtus is a Priest of the Catholic Church and hails from Kogi State. He is the Provincial Administrative Secretary of the Provincial Secretariat of Health, Justice, Development & Peace (HJDP), Kaduna State. He holds a post graduate Diploma in Peace & Conflict Resolution.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Cardinal Onaiyekan's Foundation for Peace Fellowship Program has been an interesting and educating program that has exposed me to the true meaning of peace and how peace can be extended to our various homes, communities, and society in particular. I have been able to harness my potential in designing communication strategies suitable for peace developments in the communities where I serve.” ~
Sixtus



Odeyemi Suwebat Funmilola

Odeyemi Suwebat Funmilola is an Ahmadiyya Muslim from Ogun State. She is currently the National Secretary general of the women's auxiliary body of the Jamaat - Lajna Imaillah (women servants of Allah) and the Chief Confidential Secretary at the Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro Ogun state. She holds a Master's in Personnel Psychology from the University of Ibadan.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at COFP Fellowship program so far has been so wonderful. At times when I look back, I wonder why and how I was able to scale through the screening process from a large number of applicants. The program has been excellent. Very impactful, educative, and enriching. It has broadened my mind and widened my horizon when it comes to peacebuilding, conflict management, and resolutions. It has really improved my interfaith relationship. I have been able to meet and interact with people of diverse religious ethnicity and socio-cultural, backgrounds. I have established sound relationships with participants both within and outside Nigeria. I was able to understand that we Africans share almost everything in common. Conflicts, racial and religious discrimination are not limited to Nigeria alone but are common issues in African nations. With the introduction of the COFP Fellowship program and its continuity, peace will surely reign supreme in Nigeria and Africa as a whole.” ~
Suwebat



Ugwu Mark Ifeanyi

Ugwu Mark Ifeanyi is a Catholic from Enugu State. He is the National President of the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON) Kaduna state and also the executive director of WHY THE CRIME INITIATIVE. He holds a BSc in Criminology and Security Studies from the National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN).

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at the COFP Fellowship program has been very satisfying, it has been an opportunity to mingle with great minds from around Africa to share and learn new approaches as regards mediation and peacebuilding.” **Mark**



Adeniran Adenike Patricia

Adeniran Adenike Patricia is from Kwara State & a religious from the Daughters of the Holy Spirit Congregation. She is the President of the Nigeria Conference of Women Religious, Abeokuta, Ogun State. She holds a degree in Economics/Geography from Bayero University Kano, (BUK).

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP Fellowship program has opened my mind to people of different religions and how I can live peacefully with them despite the fact that we have our different beliefs, it taught me that my opinion about the other person should not hinder my relationship with him/her. For me now, it is necessary that I teach those whom I live and work with to understand the need of living peacefully. I am grateful to the Foundation for giving me the opportunity not only to mix with people outside my culture, religion, and belief but also to embrace them, fellow children and descendants of Abraham, like me.” ~ **Adenike**



Kadabiyu Dimga Jones

Kadabiyu dimga Jones is the Bishop of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN) Shall-Holma Diocese, Gombi, Adamawa State. He obtained a Master's in Theology from TCNN, Bukuru, Jos Plateau state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“So far, the Fellowship program has changed my way of thinking about inter-religious dialogue, Conflict transformation, and meditation and the way I perceived other faiths and ethnic groups. What changed my mind and how I view people as I started attending the COFP Fellowship program was the video clip on the "danger of a single story". Before I was ignorant and judgmental in dealing with other religious and ethnic groups, the single story always 'rubbed off my identity'. Through my participation in the first and second modules of the COFP Fellowship program, I have changed my views and I realized that change begins with me in dialogue and peaceful coexistence.” ~ **Jones**



Andrew-Essien Ndifreke

Andrew-Essien Ndifreke is a Christian from Rivers State. She is the Founding Executive Director of Freky Andrew-Essien Care Foundation (FAECARE FOUNDATION). Freky is the producer of BOLD TV and holds a Master's in Human Physiology and Public Health from the University of Port Harcourt, River state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience so far in the COFP Fellowship has been very enlightening. One of my philosophies in life is that when we stop learning, we stop living. The experience has been and is definitely worth it. My mind has been greatly enhanced in the course of the modules and even the community peace project. The power of the mind shift I have now has allowed me to see others in a better, clearer, and more appropriate light. I am particularly happy because acknowledging others does not take away from us. I also learned the importance of accommodation because for a long time, it has been about religious tolerance, and it should not be so. I also must applaud the inclusive approach in the Fellowship program and ask that many more Persons with disabilities be included in the peace Fellowship. I must add, that beyond the learning modules, the interaction with other COFP Fellows, the staff and volunteers of the COFP Foundation, and the connect, has also been very rich.” ~ **Ndifreke**



Hussaini Abdullahi

Hussaini Abdullahi is a Shia Muslim from Gombe State. He is the program officer of Wildan Care Foundation, Gombe, and has HND in Accounting from the Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program has increased my knowledge in different ramifications, which includes emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental.” ~ **Hussaini**



Nanjobe Hawa Kimbugwe

Nanjobe Hawa Kimbugwe is a Muslim from Uganda. She is the Communications Manager and Program Officer of the Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum (UMYDF) in Kampala. She holds BSc in Human Nutrition and Dietetics from Kyambogo University, Uganda.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program has been enlightening and mind-blowing for me so far. I have improved my comprehension of faiths, religions, and cultures, of wars weaved around the three, and the importance of cohesion amidst the three, the program has challenged me to reflect on what I have learned and how I can integrate it into my daily life and to ask myself what I have done for my community in my capacity. I commend the COFP Team for tasking the Fellows to each come up with a project, this has helped me assess my comprehension of the program modules so far and my ability to spread the gospel or translate what I've learned into action and impact my community intentionally.” ~ **Hawa**



Okpe Blessing Aladi

Blessing Aladi Okpe is a sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Nativity (S.O.N), Makurdi, Benue State of Nigeria. She holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the Nasarawa State University and hails from Kogi state. She also acquired certificates in Mediation Skills from Tangaza College, the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya, & Theology of the Body from Theology of the Body Institute USA.



Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“So far for me it has been wonderful, beginning from the welcome ceremony to the lecture sessions. I found the accommodation, feeding, and medical care commendable. The opening ceremony made me feel at home, loved, and accepted. This program has helped me learn, relearn, and relate with other Fellows to create a peaceful and positive impact in the community where I live and work. I found the experience-sharing from the Fellows and Facilitators of each course enriching. The WhatsApp platform has been an educative tool and has opened up an opportunity for self-growth and development for me.

Also, I found the COFP peace project program which empowered me to implement a community peace project that has created a great impact in my community as a privilege and a wake-up call to make peace in our world irrespective of our religion, colour, and nationality. This community peace project was another touching and memorable aspect for me and all the participants. It helped me to see the vulnerability of life through each participant as they shared the hurt of their widowhood experiences and got that inner healing from the stories of their common misfortune. I felt happy as the women were happy with the skill acquisition and empowerment and how they gladly gave me the chance to put my counselling skills into practice every time they needed my services.” ~ **Blessing**



Umar Farouk Musa

Umar Farouk Musa is a Muslim from Plateau State. He is a member of Jama'atu Nasril Islam in Jos, the Co-chair Plateau Interstate Forum for peace and Sustainable Development. He holds a Master's degree in Social Work from Bayero University, Kano.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My Experience with COFP has really been an Interesting and life-turning one, as it shaped my consciousness in the area of Human relations, public engagement and capacity-building of individuals, groups, and communities on Inter-Faith activities (Dialogue and collaboration). The Foundation stands out in peace promotion and community engagement services. My horizon has been further increased and strengthened in the area of inter-religious harmony as well as working with other faith groups and organizations.” ~ **Farouk**

Folasade Adepoju

Adepoju Folasade is a Christian and a native of Osun State. She is the Chief Librarian of the National Library of Nigeria, Abuja. She holds a Master's degree in Information Management from Ahmadu Bello University, (ABU), Zaria.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with COFP has been awesome and an eye-opener for me. I have learned, unlearned, and relearned. I have a full understanding of Islam belief after listening to the lectures on the fundamental of Islamic belief, Jihad, War and Peace in Christianity, and understanding the framework of interreligious dialogue. Now I know there will always be extremists among us but with my conduct they can be won over.” ~ **Folasade**



Megerssa Abinet Girma

Abinet Girma Megerssa is a Christian from Harar, Ethiopia. Presently, he is the Monitoring & Evaluation & Communication Coordinator at the Ethiopia Mulu Wongel Amagnoch Church Development Commission (EMWACD) and JISRA Project Manager Ethiopia. Megerssa holds a Master's degree in Developmental Psychology from Addis Ababa University.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“At the COFP Fellowship Program, I was able to grasp many theoretical concepts and practical skills for transforming conflicts and conducting dialogues for peace. Besides, I was able to come together with my African Fellows to find solutions to African problems. I got enlightened as well that we Africans need to look into ourselves and take the initiatives to commence self-supporting community or national projects than looking for external aid or support. I was also inspired that as a continent, Africa has to have strong media with African color and culture which promotes indigenous thoughts, practices, and ways of living. In short, the whole of my experience at the COFP Fellowship could be summed up by saying "look at what the Pastor and the Imam have done" or "For a bright future, Please Africans Come Together." ~ **Megerssa**



Abdulhamid Rafatu

Rafatu AbdulHamid is a Muslim from Plateau State. She lives & works in Abuja as the CEO of Arise Muslim Women & Youth Educational Initiative. Rafatu holds a Ph.D. in Islam and Gender Studies, and is an Associate Professor of Islamic Thought and Gender Studies, Department of Islamic Studies Faculty of Arts. She is also, the Program Coordinator, Center for Gender Security Studies and Youth Advancement, University of Abuja.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship Program has allowed me to know more about Christianity and how a devoted Christian is expected to live in society. I have learned both the theoretical and practical aspects of both religions. The need for both religions' adherents to live in peace and harmony is paramount. Respect for one another's religious practices and doctrines was encouraged through the teachings in the Fellowship Program modules.” ~ **Rafatu**



Ashigabu Augustine Abe-Eslah

Augustine Ashigabu is a Roman Catholic Priest from Nassarawa State. He is the Vice Principal Admin of St. Peters College, Garaku, Nassarawa State. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Makurdi, Benue State.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience in the Fellowship program of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) can be best described as “wow.” Given that this is my first experience with a Fellowship program, I had expected to be exposed to basic tools for building peace, however what I was eventually exposed was way beyond my expectation.” ~~ **Augustine**



Agha Priscilla Nnedinma

Agha Priscilla Nnedinma is a Catholic from Ebonyi State. She works as the Assistant Director National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Abuja. She obtained a B. Sc. in Mass Communication from Ebonyi State University.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“It has been an exciting experience. From the course materials to the profound facilitators, the management and staff of the Foundation to the hospitality (comfortable accommodation and sumptuous meals) and networking with the other Fellows, it has been awesome. My profound gratitude goes to the visioner and initiator of this program for the opportunity to be a beneficiary of the soul-searching and life-changing program. The knowledge gained so far is invaluable.” ~~ **Priscilla**



Etong Fanny Bessem Epse Ako-Egbe

Etong Fanny Bessem is a Christian from Bonduma Buea, Cameroon. She is the Chief Executive Officer at the Favour Low-Cost Healthcare Foundation (FALCOH) & Founder of Young Women Mediators Network Cameroon (YWMC). She holds a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Buea, Cameroon.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with COFP was simply amazing! I learned a lot and I am still aware that there is more to learn from the Fellowship. Although I think that the huge Fellowship materials that we were made to go through for a week is too much and assimilating it all in a week is pretty difficult but upon returning and reading between the lines, I have been able to deliver better in my peacebuilding work. The feedback from my COFP community peace project has fuelled my desire to reach more communities and groups.” ~~ **Fanny**



Rabiu Mato

Rabiu Mato is a Muslim from Jigawa State. He works with Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), Abuja. He obtained a BSc in Sociology from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program gave me an opportunity to interact with different personalities from different religions and cultures in and outside Nigeria, COFP is one of the best platforms for interfaith and interreligious dialogue. In fact, through COFP I have come to understand Christianity better. Thank you COFP.” ~~ **Rabiu**



Dike Angela Chinwendu

Dike Angela Chinwendu is a religious member of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena and hails from Imo state. She is the Head Teacher of Our Lady's Nursery, and Primary school, in Bauchi State. She holds a PGD in Religious and Moral Education from the National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN).

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“This has been an awesome experience. I am privileged and happy to participate in the Fellowship program. It was a program loaded with rich topics and has impacted me greatly. I understood that dialogue is about co-existing peacefully, being patient with one another, respecting others' views and appreciating the things that are common to the Christian and Muslim religions, and knowing that we are from common humanity and children of the same father. As an ambassador, I am spurred to tread the line of peaceful co-existence and dialogue and to be an instrument of peaceful social change in society.” ~~ **Angela**

Bello Salahuddeen Mohammad

Salahuddeen Muhammad Bello is a Sunnah Muslim and a native of Zamfara State. He is the Chairman of Kaura Namoda Youths Association and presently, a Staff of the Federal Polytechnic, Kaura. Bello has a B. Sc. in (Edu) Mathematics from the Federal University, Gusau.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship program has strengthened my conviction to dedicate my personal life and professional career to interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding, it has taught me a lot about dedication, patience, and collaboration. The program has deepened my understanding of the framework of interreligious dialogue, the fundamentals of different religions and the beautiful similarities between them, and basic skills in mediation and conflict analysis. The COFP Fellowship program is amazing. My confidence level has increased so much. May God Almighty bless COFP.” ~~ **Salahuddeen**



Attah Rosalyn Jipkat

Attah Rosalyn Jipkat is a Catholic from Plateau State. She is the Secretary of both Women Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN) and Catholic Nurses Association, Plateau State. Rosalyn works at the University of Jos Health Services and holds a Master's degree in Research and Public Policy from the same institution.



Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship program has been a thrilling journey that broadened my knowledge and deepened my understanding of fostering peaceful coexistence in my local community. It equipped me with the necessary tools to promote harmony in diverse multicultural and multi-religious environments. This experience has significantly influenced my outlook and perception of group dynamics in different economic and social strata settings within my community and beyond. Moreover, the program provided an avenue for networking, and, the opportunity to create friendships with other leaders across Africa. Overall, this Fellowship program experience has been empowering and has positioned me to be an advocate for peaceful relations in my immediate community and beyond.”

~~ Rosalyn

Orbunde Adoo Margret

Orbunde Adoo Margret is a religious of the Augustinian Sisters of the Mercy of Jesus, from Gboko Local Government Area of Benue State. She is a Nurse / Midwife and Currently the Administrator of Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Hospital Jalingo, Taraba State. She holds a certificate in Midwifery from Adamawa State School of Nursing and Midwifery, Yola.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I had a negative mindset about the Islamic religion because of my experience in the North East of Nigeria, but the Fellowship program has changed my perception of my Muslim brothers and sisters. These days I do not use the word Jihad often. I have discovered the common ground that exists between the different religious groups thereby making me respect everyone's religion. All the topics selected for this program are of great importance to me as a person, The skill acquisitions/ empowerment has helped me to feel and see the happiness of the Shuwa people once again in coming together under the same roof for a common purpose, I have learned that Interreligious dialogue and respect are the best tools for peaceful co-existence. The Fellowship program has enabled me to gain more knowledge on how to bring about change in the local community and improve the well-being of the people for peaceful co-existence. May God bless and reward Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace and Hilton Foundation for touching my life in a special way.” ~ Margret



Tako Rakiya

Tako Rakiya is a Tijjania Muslim from Niger State. She holds a Bachelor's in Economics Education from the University of Abuja. She is a professional Class Room teacher working at the Niger State Universal Basic Education Board.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at the COFP Fellowship Program so far has been a tremendous and worthy one. COFP is no doubt, God-sent and my participation in the Fellowship Program is by the divine mercy of God. The Program has changed my life for good. My participation in Modules One & Two has largely changed my perception and further deepened my knowledge of both Islamic and Christian Religions.” ~~ **Rakiya**



Iliya Ibrahim Tsigah

Iliya Ibrahim Tsigah is a Catholic Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Sokoto and hails from Katsina State. He is currently the parish priest of St. Anthony's Catholic Church Talata Mafara Zamfara State. He holds Bachelor's degrees in Theology and Philosophy from the Good Shepherd Major Seinar, Kaduna state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The experience was totally unexpected but it was a positive one. In fact, it should not be called a program but a School because all we did during the Fellowship program was purely academics with the view to put it into practice before and after graduation. All I can say is that I have been impacted so much so that I am a better Christian and priest than I was. And that my horizon has widened about other religions, especially the Islamic religion.” ~~ **Iliya**



Mohammed Sow Sheriff

Mohammed Sow Sheriff is a Muslim from Liberia. He is the Executive Director of the NGO, Think Positive Liberia. He has a B.Sc. in Education.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP has helped me to gain self-motivation and resilience driven-skills that enable me to autonomously accomplish the activities presented under the Fellowship work plan. It has paired me with Open-minded and curious individuals like me who are tenacious enough to engage in peer discussions on topics that are beyond their areas of expertise. I believe that the COFP Fellowship program is truly a life-changing experience for me because it is ultimately helping me to get the opportunity to meet and network with professors, mentors, and students with unique experiences from across Africa. The COFP program has provided me with an exceptional opportunity to explore different career options and talents most especially in Interreligious Dialogue, conflict transformation, and Peacebuilding. It also gave me the perfect platform to express ideas on building peace amongst people of different faiths and learn more about different countries, and their cultures, and gradually build a huge networking group.” ~~ **Sheriff**



Gani Mary Swamlong

Gani Mary Swamlong is a member of the congregation of the Sisters of the Infant Jesus Plateau State. Presently, she teaches at the Women's Vocational Training Centre, Jalingo, Taraba state. She obtained an NCE in Social Studies/Music from the College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with the Fellowship program has been a good one. I saw it as a privilege to meet people from different parts of the African countries, faiths, and cultures as we shared our thoughts with our unique stories which I am looking forward to using to improve the lives of many, especially among the community members where I work as I hope to build a community where everyone can be accepted and respected despite our differences. I also learned through the facilitators of the Fellowship program that 80% of what each community suffers is because their leaders have failed in their responsibilities and the Followers too failed to live up to theirs. I appreciate the efforts of the COFP team and say, thanks a million to the COFP for the great work thus far. God bless you.” ~ **Mary**



Ariwa Okechukwu Martin

Ariwa Okechukwu is a Christian from Umuahia, Abia State. He is the Program officer of CONNAK Foundation, Umuahia, Abia state. He holds a Master's Degree in Business Education from Enugu State University of Science and Technology, (ESUT).

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My Experience with the COFP Fellowship has widened my knowledge of how to foster peace, harmony, and transformative development through social justice, dialogue, and resilience building in my society. The program has also equipped me with the needed skills for advocating and building a culture of peace in my community.” ~ **Okechukwu**

Odunaiya Adesola Olajumoke

Odunaiya Adesola Olajumoke is a Christian from Osun State. She was the National Financial Secretary of CPFN Women Wing, (a unit under WOWICAN), Katsina State, and a B. Ed holder in (French Education) from the University of Lagos.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with COFP has been so positive in terms of creating, allowing, and enhancing peace in our communities. My knowledge about peace through COFP has gone broadened. I have got to realize that no religion, culture, or sect is superior to the other and that it is better “to wage peace than wage war”. I have also realized that the only way by which peace could be achieved is by tolerating, accepting, and appreciating other people no matter the level of differences.” ~ **Adesola**



Saadatu Hashim

Saadatu Hashim is an indigene of Kano State. She is a development worker and the Executive Director, Concerned Mothers Association Kano (CMAK) an NGO with a focus on interfaith peacebuilding, Gender-Based Violence, Girl-Child, and Almajiri education. She holds a Master's in Industrial Design from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Saadatu is the former FOMWAN Amirah of the state and also The Women Committee Chairperson of Darul Andalus that works in collaboration with the Swiss Embassy for the women IDPs in the North East.



Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I have been attending programs since the year 2000 with lots of certifications but none comes close to the COFP Fellowship program in terms of organization, conduct, and system of imparting knowledge on peace and project management. I have been writing proposals but I understand proposal writing better in the COFP Fellowship program. The liberty of interaction with people from other faiths, tribes, and countries has expanded my horizon. I can now interact with other Fellows from different African Countries and states in Nigeria, ask questions, get information on what peacekeeping is like in other places, and even replicate good project initiatives by myself. The selection of capable Facilitators made the program unique in terms of imparting knowledge logically.” ~
Saadatu



Chukwudolue Pauline Uchenna

Chukwudolue Pauline is a religious from the Sisters of Jesus the Good Shepherd and hails from Ozubulu in Anambra State. She resides and works in Lafia, Nasarawa state. She is the Administrator of St Bernard Health Center Akanga, Nasarawa State, and a Member Lafia diocese Health Commission. She holds HND in Community Health from Bingham University Teaching Hospital Jos.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Indeed, The Fellowship program expanded my knowledge of the Islamic religion which I thought was a religion of war. In the course of the Fellowship program, I come to understand that Islam speaks of peace and Christianity speaks of peace as well. All we need to do as faithful people is to understand one another and live in peaceful co-existence. We all are of the Abrahamic generation.” ~
Pauline

Hussain Makanjuola

Makanjuola Hussain is a Muslim from Osun State. He works as the Executive Director of the Muslim Peace Network, Kaduna State. He holds a Master's degree in Islamic Studies from Kaduna State University.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Participating in the 2022/2023 COFP Fellowship program was a great experience for me as it availed me the opportunity to meet colleagues and make friends from different States, share experiences and challenges and identify some of the Fellows from my State, region, and religion for future collaboration and networking. This program made me discover common grounds that exist between and among diverse religious groups, it taught me to respect the differences and use dialogue-negotiation as a tool for bridging religious and cultural divides, the COFP Fellowship program has continued to leave indelible marks of positive social change in me and my community where I live.” ~ **Makanjuola**



Juma Fatuma Kamene

Juma Fatuma Kamene is a Sunni Muslim from Kenya. She is the Founder of “Engage Jamii Initiatives”; a community-based organization that focuses on connecting women with their children in Nairobi. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Humanities and Social Sciences from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Being part of the COFP Fellowship program in mid-2022, has enabled me learn a lot. I gathered more content on religious affairs while engaging people of different faiths I met at the program. I also gained confidence while discussing religious matters since I was empowered at the Fellowship to understand what our religious differences can lead to when not well articulated. I have learned to respect and advocate for respect for religious diversity and religious understanding, (People perish due to lack of knowledge). I am now more knowledgeable to create platforms for interfaith dialogue forums without fear. I look forward to working with more religious leaders from different religious affiliations for the betterment of humanity. I am grateful to Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) for this wonderful experience and exposure.” ~ **Fatuma**



Eddedem Enene Oku

Eddedem Enene Oku is from Creek Town in Odukpani L.G. A of Cross River State. A Clergy of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) and a member of Grassroots Ecumenical Promoters of Nigeria, who has served his Church for 21 years, he works in the Interfaith Department of the Church.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at the COFP Fellowship program has been wonderful, it enabled me to meet and interact with people of different faiths, and also have more understanding and studies about our Muslim brethren. The Fellowship program has taught me to see and always take a Muslim faithful as myself. It's been so wonderful.” ~ **Enene**



Salamatu Ibrahim Njira

Salamatu Ibrahim Njira is a Muslim from Kano State. She obtained a BSc in Biochemistry from ABU Zaria and also specialized in Chemical Pathology. She is the Deputy Medical Lab Scientist at the Kano State Contributory Healthcare Agency.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with COFP is fantastic and memorable. It availed me the chance to broaden my horizon on peacebuilding and also gave me an opportunity to network on peacebuilding with people from different countries. I am really grateful for the opportunity.”

~~ Salamatu



Ezugwu Priscilla Nnedinso

Ezugwu Priscilla Nnedinso is a native of Enugu State and a member of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Mother of Christ (IHM). She is the headmistress of Our Lady's Primary School Maiduguri, Borno State and holds a B.Ed. in Linguistics from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, (UNN).

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience in the COFP fellowship program is a great one indeed. I just see myself as a privileged one. The program has changed my mind-set about the Muslim people and it proved instrumental in helping me build a strong relationship with Muslims and even my fellow Christians as well. It has helped me to acquire great skills for peacebuilding and dialogue. It has helped me to understand myself and others more deeply. The program offered me the opportunity to understand my religion more and how I can live and relate peacefully with people of other religions.”

~~ Nnedinso



Maigari Abdullahi

Maigari Abdullahi is a Sunni Muslim from Katsina State. He is an assistant Director and the Assistant Zonal Inspector at the Katsina State Universal Basic Education Board. He holds a B-Ed (in Woodwork Technology) from Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship Program provided me with the opportunity to explore the root causes of war and investigate the relationships between human nature, culture, religion, and war. And I learned how training on violent conflicts, dialogue negotiation, mediation, and extremism, possibly creates common grounds for dialogue that builds a non-violent approach and commitment to addressing the issue of social injustice. Through the seed grant I got from COFP to implement a peace project in my community, I was able to apply my experience and skills learned to particular issues and challenges in my community and demonstrated how peace actors can play an integral role in promoting peace, reconciliation, and community resilience in the society.”

~~ Maigari



Igweshi Augustine

Igweshi Augustine is an Anglican Christian from Enugu State. He is the Executive Director of the Center for Peace Advocacy and Sustainable Development (CEPASD), a non-governmental organization in Abuja. He holds a B.Sc. in Geology from Ebonyi State University, Abakiliki.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience at the COFP Fellowship program has been significant and impactful to me and the work I do in peacebuilding. Before coming in for the Fellowship program I did not really know much about interfaith and mediation but with the various modules, teachings, facilitations, and learning, I have learned, unlearned, and relearned and acquired knowledge on interfaith and mediation. The practical approach to the facilitation of the modules makes it easy to assimilate.” ~~ **Igweshi**



Nkenglefac Jethro

Nkenglefac Jethro hails from the South West Region of Cameroon. She is a Catholic Nun in the congregation of the Tertiary Sisters of St Francis for 21 years now and currently, working as a hospital Administrator and health counsellor in Cameroon. She obtained a Higher Graduate Diploma in Business Management from Cambridge International College.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Participating in the COFP Fellowship program has been a very fulfilling moment for me. It taught me many things, most of which are understanding other religions, gaining skills to fulfil my mission of peace, and allowing me to meet with people from different parts of the world who have the same drive. Moreover, it has empowered me at all levels. The success of my community project which is a required fulfilment of the course process of the program gave me an inner push and so much confidence that I pledged to continue to "Do Something". The daring attitude of Cardinal Onaiyekan to have initiated this, is highly commendable I must say.” ~~ **Jethro**



Okoliko Hannah Ojochide

Okoliko Hannah Ojochide is a religious of the congregation of Daughters of the Holy Spirit, Nigerian Province from Kogi State. She holds a BSc in Public Administration from Veritas University, Abuja. She is the Headmistress of St. Monica Catholic Nursery and Primary School, Imo, Ilesha, Oshogbo, Osun state. She is also a Counsellor in her congregation.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I give thanks to Almighty God for granting me the opportunity to experience the COFP Fellowship program. The program has improved my relationship with people of different religions other than mine. It has strengthened my view of a new Nigeria and the possibility of a better Nigeria where there is harmony between people of different religions and more people are brought out of poverty through the opportunity of empowerment funds.” ~~ **Hannah**



Jibril Idris

Jubril Idris is a Shia Muslim from Kaduna State. He is a teacher with Rasulula'Azam Foundation, and a deputy Imam in Tudun Nupawa, a community in Kaduna. He holds a B.Ed. in Educational Technology from the Federal University of Technology, Minna. Presently, he is the Zonal Provost and an Assistant Superintendent at Nigeria Immigration Service Zonal Headquarters, Kaduna.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace has transformed and rehabilitated my thought and sharpened my perception and foresight. Before my attendance in the Fellowship program, I had a different mindset on so many issues concerning other religions. In the course of this program, I learned a lot on the Tenets of Christianity, it has widened my knowledge and exposed me to things I could not have known if I wasn't given the chance to be among the 2022/2023 Fellows. I was also equipped with the strategies and processes to be adopted while intervening in conflict management and transformation. I was made to understand that crises are inevitable but can be managed properly to a bearable level such that it appears non-existent. I have learned the importance of applying dialogue to solve critical issues as against the use of weapons. In the end, I was able to deduce that, peace is constructive while violence is destructive.” ~~ **Jibril**



Adam Muhammad Gaddafi

Adam Muhammad Gaddafi is an Izala Muslim from Plateau State. He volunteers with Farmers-Herders Initiative for peace and development in Africa, Jos. He holds (BTech) in Chemical Engineering from Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The experiences acquired from COFP Fellowship program are beyond my expectations seriously. Few among them are my exposure to Christians and Christianity. In fact, I learned so many things that improved my vision in interfaith relationship and peacebuilding” ~~ **Gaddafi**



Igwe Caroline Adaku

Igwe Caroline Adaku Is a Dominican Sister of St. Catherine of Siena, Italy, Rome. She is from Anambra State and holds the office of the Promoter for Justice and Integrated Commission (JPIC), West African zone of the Dominican Sisters Africa (DSA). She is currently the Administrator of Dominican Nursery and Primary School, Lagos, and has a Master's in Educational Guidance and Counselling from the University of Lagos.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience has been awesome and mind-blowing. I have come to understand the true reality of conflict mediation and its processes. Before this experience, I have always believed a one-sided story regarding the continuous religious crises in the Northern part of Nigeria, as a result, I have always had a problem relating freely with persons of Islamic religious beliefs, but now my reality in that regard has changed, and my dislike has been transformed to love as I have come to realize that the other person involved in the crises is a soul that needs to be conquered with love.” ~~ **Adaku**



Khalid Mohammed Abaker

Khalid Mohammed Yusuf Abaker is a Tarikhat Tijanniya Muslim from Sudan. He is the logistics Radio Operator with Medecins Sans Frontiers, Darfur, Sudan. He holds HND in Post-Harvest Processing, Handling, and Storage Technology and Management from Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship program made me understand that COFP Foundation is committed to building the processes of peace and interfaith dialogue and social change in Nigeria and Africa.” ~ **Abaker**



Layode Emmanuel Atedola

Layode Emmanuel Atedola is a Christian from Oyo State. He is a lecturer of Philosophy at the University of Ibadan and holds a Master's in Philosophy from the same University.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“At the COFP Fellowship Program, I had a very unique experience, in the final analysis, humanity is one irrespective of seeming differences in tribe/ethnicity, religion, language, colors/race, and other things which may be mere preferences.” ~ **Layode**



Nwosu Caroline Ijenwa

Nwosu Caroline Ijenwa is from Anambra State and a religious Sister of the Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy Congregation, DMMM. She works in Karu, Abuja & holds a B.Ed. in Education/Religion from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN). Currently, she is studying at the Institute Du Formateurs (IFF) – Jos in Plateau state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP Fellowship program exposed me to teachings that equipped me with the skills to understand different religions of the world – Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and African Traditional Religions, and their similarities and differences. The concept of Comparative religion enabled me to vividly identify that all the religions have a common ground – all exist because of God, all worship one God, and have one end – eternal life with God. Furthermore, I learned the causes of conflict and violence among individuals in society and ways to eradicate it.” ~ **Ijenwa**



Binanchi Aliyu Balarabe

Binanchi Aliyu Balarebe is a Sunni Muslim from Sokoto State. He is the PRO of Jama'atu Nasurul Islam (JNI) Sokoto. He holds a BSc (Ed) in Biology from Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.



Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience with the COFP Fellowship program is amazing as I met with seasoned and experienced facilitators who drilled us on understanding the different religions, and techniques of interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation, and mediation. I also got the opportunity to share with other African Fellows their experiences, values, and challenges of building peace among people of different faiths. I can say without an iota of doubt that the Fellowship program has equipped me with a lot of skills and knowledge on peace advocacy, project management, and fund-raising skills to run successful projects. I appreciate the opportunity given to us by the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace to be part of this noble course. I also look forward to graduation and enrolment into the CANEP.” ~ **Binanchi**

Saleh Abubakar Alhaji

Saleh Abubakar Alhaji is a Muslim from Yobe State. He works with the University of Maiduguri Nigeria, and Inter Action-Initiative for Community Development (CBO) Maiduguri. He obtained M.Sc. in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Maiduguri.



Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“This program has widened my knowledge and understanding of other faiths. Before now, I see them as a threat, especially Christianity but with this program that I have undergone with the COFP, I have seen that Christians are not a threat nor an enemy but one family. No doubt this program is fantastic, may God Almighty reward our father the founder of this project, His Eminence Cardinal John Onaiyekan, and the entire COFP crew. Also, our Sister Agatha Chikelue for her encouragement, tolerance, and patience.” ~ **Saleh**

Mbehimi-Bob Stanislas Heritier

Mbehimi-Bob Stanislas Héritier is a Christian from the Central African Republic. He is the founding President of CentraAfricaine du Recyclage des Déchets (ACARD), He works as the Project officer of Focal Point/GenDem at the International Republican Institute (IRI), Bob has a degree in Economics & a Master's in Engineering and Project Management from the University of Bangui, CAR.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Through this Fellowship, I understood a lot of things about Christianity and Islam; the Jihad, inter-religious conflict, mediation, and dialogue. This acquired knowledge allowed me to develop a great capacity in leadership, then through a small project financed by COFP allowed me to reach 177 young people on the dangers of hate speech, and the importance of living together in peace and harmony.” ~
Mbehimi-Bob



MaryMbukpa

Mary Mbukpa is a Christian from Cross River state, Nigeria. She is the Project Coordinator, Plan International Abuja Nigeria and Health Development Specialist. Mary obtained an Honorary Doctorate degree in Philosophy from Ashland University, Ohio, USA.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The opportunity to deepen and strengthen my knowledge and skills in Peacebuilding, Interreligious and Conflict Resolution was exciting as well as meeting with other COFP Fellows. The support from COFP to the community, peace and empowerment project was the high point as this aligns with my aspiration to work towards sustainable peace and empowerment of vulnerable targets.” ~
Mbukpa.



Chapter Three

2021/2022



**COFP
FELLOWS**



Class of 2022



Bridging Borders, Building Peace: The First International Cohort 2021/2022 Cohort

The journey to the 2021/2022 COFP Fellowship Program, now in its 4th year with the Class of 2022, began in July 2021 with a total of 60 Fellows. This year marked a significant milestone as the Fellowship expanded internationally. While Nigerian Fellows remained the majority, ten participants were drawn from across Africa, including Ghana, Liberia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Zambia, Somalia, Morocco, and South Africa. These Fellows represent a diverse range of Christian and Muslim sects/denominations across Nigeria and Africa. Among the Muslim sects are Sunni, Shia, NASFAT, Qadiriyyah, Ahmadiyya, and Tijjania, while the Christian denominations include Catholic, Baptist, EYN, Orthodox, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Anglican.

Through a rigorous, intensive, and participatory one-year Fellowship Program, Fellows successfully completed the required 150 credit hours of study at the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace and implemented individual community peace projects in their respective states and countries. Having fulfilled all graduation requirements, they were awarded Certificates in “Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation” on May 21, 2022, by COFP Foundation in partnership with Veritas University of Nigeria (VUNA) and Nile University of Nigeria (NUN).

Their graduation formally inducts them into the COFP Africa Network of Peacebuilders (CANEP), an expanding network that fosters ongoing interaction, cross-cultural learning, joint peacebuilding interventions, and experience-sharing across the continent. With the training received in Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation we are certain that Fellows were empowered to become Peace Ambassadors. This means great expectations lie ahead, as they apply their skills to address today's conflicts.

By turning lessons into action, these Fellows will play a crucial role in preventing and countering violent extremism, recognizing the vital role of community and religious leaders as well as civil society actors. We believe that their shared commitment and collaborative efforts will ripple through their communities, advancing religious harmony, peaceful coexistence, and community development. This is the true essence of being a COFP Fellow.

Abubakar Uthman Shehu

Abubakar Uthman Shehu is a Muslim from Kebbi State. He is the Executive Director, Inter-Religious Harmony and Advocacy Initiative, TStv Africa-Abuja. He holds a B.Sc. in Information Technology, from Jamia Hamdard University New-Delhi, India and has a vast experience as a university lecturer in the field of Computer Science and Information Technology.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP Fellowship program has widened the scope of my knowledge and understanding in the area of interreligious conflict intervention and mitigation processes; It has added to my skills of proposal writing, reporting, fundraising and benefit of team work and collaboration; It exposed me to different approaches to dialogue and conflict resolution, strengthening my conviction in the possibility to co-exist in unity despite diversities.” ~ **Abubakar**



Eugenia Abadum

Eugenia Abadum is a Catholic and an Augustinian Sister of the Mercy of Jesus, she works in Ejule Kogi state where she is the Vocation Directress of her congregation. Sr. Eugenia holds a Licentiate in Religious Sciences from Pontificio Università Urbaniana Rome, Italy.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience so far has been worthwhile, I have come to understand what it really means to live & relate with people (even those who hurt you), how to love them and how to be a mediator especially in situations where the tendencies of conflict are obvious, (and sensibly knowing and identifying the signs or drums of war and making a quick move to stop it or discourage its spread). It is NOT ENOUGH to talk or give lectures on peace, but the actions that follows it makes a bigger impact. I will personally like to commend the Foundation for also giving me the opportunity to bring down to my local community a glimpse of what we have been taught, through the seminar I organized on peace talk & skills acquisition & empowerment. It is indeed a great privilege to be a Fellow on this great platform.” ~ **Eugenia**

Emetumah Fatima Ijeoma

Fatima Emetuma is a Muslim from Imo state. She is the Amirah of the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria, (FOMWAN) Imo state. She holds a Ph.D. in Mass Communication from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and lectures at the Federal Polytechnic Nekede Owerri, Imo state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP has equipped me in no small measures to authoritatively undergo my peace advocate mission with confidence. The knowledge gained will surely help me to contribute in stopping religious bigotry that is tearing our country apart today.” ~ **Fatima Ijeoma**



Sabina Nganga Njeri

NGANGA SABINA NJERI is a Kenyan and a Catholic. She is the Secretary for the Kenya Women of Faith Network. Sabina is Certified Counselling Psychologist and Mediator at the Technical University of Kenya, Nairobi. She holds a Master's degree in Counselling Psychology from The Mount Kenya University.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) Fellowship Program has given me a lot of personal growth. As a Christian I have learnt more about Christianity and what the Bible talks about the way man should relate with his Creator (God) and how man should relate with his neighbor. My neighbor is every person I encounter as we are all created in the image and likeness of God (Imago Dei).” ~ **Sabina**



Abbas Agbaje Oluwaseun

Abbas Oluwaseun is an Ahmadiyya Muslim from Osun State. He is a trained Missionary & National Officer at Majilis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, Nigeria. He holds a B.Sc. in Botany from Unilag and M.Sc. in Sustainable Environmental Management from the University of Greenwich, UK.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program has offered me tremendous opportunities to better understand the 'Otherness' of people who don't share our faith and creedal philosophy. I have gained excellent knowledge and insights on peaceful dialogue, mediation and conflict resolution, and leadership. My community project provided a unique opportunity to make critical contributions to fostering community peace and addressing diverse enablers of violence at different social strata. The COFP Fellowship program has allowed me build an enhanced skillset for making a difference in the society. The experiential learning has offered immense value and I truly appreciate the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace for building Peace Ambassadors.” ~ **Abbas**



Agbaraji Gladys Osinachi

Gladys Osinachi is a Religious Sister from Clarissan Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She is the Coordinator of Institute for Formators Jos. She holds Master's degree in Educational Psychology from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace Fellowship program has taught me how to be an ambassador of peace. I will remain ever indebted to this Foundation. Through this Foundation, I have learnt the need for people to live in peaceful co-existence, to educate people on how to discontinue from creating division but rather embrace peace and unity. Again, I have learned that people should not allow an imported religion divide us rather it should be a uniting factor for all of us, that peace is a fundamental component of community development and that living together in peace rather than constant hostility should be our priority.” ~ **Osinachi**



Shaljaba David Buba

Shaljaba David Buba is a faithful of the EYN/All Saints Protestant Church. He was the Commander, 34 Brigade of the Nigerian Army, Owerri and retired as a Brigadier General from the Nigerian Army. He works as the Chairman of UEDA/GUAPA Humanitarian Development Initiative, Maiduguri. Buba holds a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is a Fellow of National War College, Nigeria.



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“My personal experience and what I've learnt so far on this program speaks volumes. However, for the purpose of brevity, most important is the opportunity of obtaining more knowledge on my faith as a Christian and how to relate more friendly and peacefully with others that are not of the same faith with me. The program has deepened my understanding on the situation that people's reactions especially in our Country Nigeria towards religious differences basically is due to either the person lack in adequate knowledge about their religion or that the religious leaders preach what is not obtained in the various religious books. My perception about how to live peacefully in Nigeria and even globally is possible if this program is given more publicity especially through our various learning institutions. We need peace in our communities, states and the entire country now more than ever and it can be achieved. I am proud to be a COFP Fellow.” ~ Shaljaba

Kadiri Haleemat

Kadiri Haleemat is a member of Nasrul-Lahi-L-Faith society (NASFAT), Abuja and an Assistant Director with (NAFDAC) from Lagos state. She holds M.Sc. in Industrial Chemistry from Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP Fellowship program has informed and adequately equipped me with the most needed knowledge and tools to engage in dialogue and promote peace in my community.

Equally, the program has built my capacity effectively on inter religious dialogue and ways and manners to interface and relate well with other religious bodies. And, I have also acquired more understanding and knowledge on the conduct and practice of other faiths”. **Haleemat**

Laisin Juliet

Laisin Juliet is a Catholic Reverend Sister of the Infant Jesus Religious congregation. She teaches at St. Paul's Nursery and Primary School, Dawaki Plateau State. She holds a B. Ed. in Education Administration and Planning from Taraba State University.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“I am very blessed to be a beneficiary of the COFP Fellowship program this year. This program has helped me to build relationships outside of my circle and exposed me to different views and people from various spheres of life. My basic knowledge of Islam has helped me to appreciate our differences and taught me to avoid generalization. I have also learnt some skills in peacebuilding, peaceful co-existence and different ways to nip symptoms of conflicts in its bud and this will remain in me all my life.” ~ **Juliet**



Agbakoba Julie Ngozi

Julie Agbakoba is a Catholic Sister of the Clarissan Missionary of the Blessed Sacrament, Ezillo Community, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State. She holds an M.Sc. in Accounting from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My gratitude to God Almighty for this golden opportunity given to me to participate in 2021/2022 Fellowship program. To the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace, I say well done for the great work you are doing, you will continue to live long. This program has made an impact on me positively as a person, at my place of work and the society at large. My way of thinking, reasoning and attitude has changed having been educated on interreligious dialogue and peace building. Through the project I carried out through COFP seed grant, many have been empowered, and peace restored in communities. I will continue to implement all I have learnt to touch lives. Long live Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace.”

~~ Julie



Abdellah Khayya

Khayya Abdellah hails from Boujdour in Morocco. He was a Sunni Muslim, peace educationist & activist, Co-founder and Secretary General, the Moroccan Youth League for Interfaith Dialogue. Abdellah holds a Master's degree in International Relations from the St. Petersburg State University, Russia. Abdellah died in a ghastly motor accident in November, 2023. May his soul rest in peace.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I am honored to be selected for COFP Fellowship program. This program has a positive impact on me personally and professionally as I was able to meet up with great fellows and lecturers as well as COFP Foundation team who have afforded me great support before and during the Fellowship. Attending the COFP Fellowship was one of the most rewarding things I have done in my career. Having the opportunity to have a deep understanding of interfaith and interreligious dialogue as well as fundamentals for co-existence is indeed rewarding. I realized how important it is to broaden my thinking and gain new perspective. At COFP Foundation, you are surrounded by brilliant and talented Professors and Fellows. Having the opportunity to exchange knowledge with some of the Fellows was my favorite part of the Fellowship. I felt as though I finally found a way to practice interreligious dialogue as Fellows belong to different faiths and the program was organized in Nigeria where interreligious dialogue is a big issue. I experienced tremendous growth through my interactions with Fellows and lecturers and I learned a lot about myself as a leader and peace advocate. Finally, it was an honor to implement my community project which had a good impact on young peace champions in my community. All these achievements could not have been done without the generous support from COFP Foundation.”

~~ Abdellah



Ajegena Azizi Elizabeth

Elizabeth Ajegena is a Christian from Nasarawa State. She is the Chairperson of the Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria, (WOWICAN), 19 Northern states and Abuja. She holds B. Sc. in Economics from the University of Jos, Plateau state.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“In my one-year training program with COFP, I learned how to tolerant one another irrespective of religious or ethnicity differences and to respect one another's opinion.” ~ Elizabeth



Mariam Hassan Gambo

Maryam Gambo is a Sunni Muslim from Yobe State. She is the Executive Director of Child Protection and Women Empowerment Initiative, (CPWEI). She holds a B.Sc. in Biology and Masters in Educational Psychology from Yobe State University, Damaturu, where she is also a Lecturer.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship program has really made a tremendous effect in my life. It made me have an entirely different view towards people of other religions. It gave me the opportunity to widen my network internationally. With the support from COFP, I was able to successfully conduct an interfaith dialogue and brainstorming session

with Women-led Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) where discussion focused on the roles of women in Peacebuilding and Countering Violence Extremism in Yobe State. I can boldly and confidently say that I am equipped and ready to promote peaceful coexistence, spearhead and participate actively in all peacebuilding activities on interfaith and violent extremism prevention.” ~ Mariam



Louis Ojougboh

Louis Nwabueze Ojougboh holds (B.Sc.) in Computer Science from the National Open University of Nigeria. He is the National Vice President Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria, South South Coordinator of PDP Youth Vanguard & Director Arts, Culture and Tourism National Youth Council of Nigeria.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Partaking in COFP's Fellowship is a great privilege for me for it has made my approach for Peace more defined, by listening and carefully ascertaining root causes and being more diligent and diplomatic in my everyday life, because when you have a sustainable peace of mind among everyone, there will be sustainable development.” ~ Louis



Yilma Boru Hilpa

Boru Yilma is an Ethiopian and a Christian of the Orthodox Church. He is the Program Head, Ethiopia Interfaith Forum for Development Dialogue and Action (EIFDDA), Addis Ababa. Yilma holds Masters Degrees in Gender Studies and Business Administration from the Addis Ababa and Jimma Universities, respectively.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“At the outset, I am thrilled to witness that I am able to acquire the required knowledge and skills which has truly turned my wishes into reality. This excerpt was my ambition I wrote while applying for the COFP Fellowship program “in the future EIFDDA, I would like to build the capacities of the grassroots community representatives to be advocates and champions of peace. To this regard this initiative would be a good opportunity to gain knowledge and experience for mobilizing religious leaders, community elders, youths and women representatives to advocate for peace and conflict resolution” The courses have been designed and delivered exceptionally to fulfill the need I was looking for when I applied for the program, which includes the Tenets of Christian Faith, Fundamentals of Islamic beliefs etc. They really provided me with the core concept of religion, faith interactions and the role of interfaith dialogue on peace in addressing conflicts involving religion.” ~ Yilma



Phoebe Thomas Abdu

Phoebe Abdu is an ECWA Christian Rev. and the vice President of the Irigwe Development Association, Plateau state. She holds a B.Sc. in Journalism from ABU (NTA Television College), Jos.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I honestly learned a lot in the COFP Fellowship program, I experienced the reason to forgive and let go of the past and embrace peace because the Christian, Islamic and Jewish religions are all Abrahamic religions emanating from the same creator.” ~ Phoebe



Dahiru Usman Abubakar

Dahiru Abubakar is a Shia Muslim from Gombe State. He is the Managing Director and Chief Executive of Munzaifad Venture. He holds a Master's Degree in Development studies from Bayero University, Kano.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program has taught me a lot about inter-religious cooperation. Before I came for the program, I had no idea of what it was all about, but now, I can discuss conflict issues and look for ways to mitigate conflict issues in my community.” ~ Dahiru



Lucy Esedebe

Lucy Esedebe is a sister of Our Lady of Apostles (OLA). She is the Administrator of O.L.A Hospital/Orphanage, Zawan, Jos, Plateau state. She holds a B.Sc. in Nursing/Health Education from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun state.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP Fellowship program has greatly impacted on me in the aspect of listening, cultivating and engaging in dialogue. I can now listen through before making judgement. (SEE, HEAR & ACT). In order to listen effectively, I have to be patient. Finally, Dialogue has become a tool for me to approach difficult issues before taking a stand. The program has helped me to appreciate others better and to respect people's opinion. Chimamanda's “DANGER OF DANGER OF A STORY” STANDS OUT AS MY WATCH WORD.” ~~Lucy



Aliyu Garba

Aliyu Garba is a Sunni Muslim from Katsina state. He is a Lecturer with the Federal College of Education, Zaria. He holds a B. Sc in Accounting from Bayero University, Kano.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) Fellowship program provided a conducive atmosphere to have a dialogue between me (a Muslim) and people of other faiths (Christians). It gave me the opportunity to talk and listen to others, getting to know and learning to understand the 'other'. I have learned and understood that in interfaith dialogue we try to approach our partners in a spirit of tolerance, truthfulness, sincerity, love, respect and good will, without forcing the

other person to accept our own beliefs or ideas.” ~~ Aliyu



Lerum Semen Isaiah

Semen Isaiah lerum is a Lutheran Christian from Adamawa state. A graduate of Mass Communication from Taraba State University Jalingo & a reporter with NTA Ganye. Also, she is a media Fellow with Search for Common Ground Nigeria and Adamawa state coordinator of, I have conscience Foundation.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Because of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace Fellowship program, my confidence has grown to a point that I can even stand in my community to talk about inter religious issues amongst other things, I can proudly say that because of this Fellowship program, I gained a great deal of confidence.” ~~ Lerum



Suwaibatu Yakubu

Suwaibatu Yakubu is a Sunni Muslim from Ghana and a member of the Ghanaian Conference of Religions for Peace. She is a graduate of IPMC Secretarialship and Management Studies. Swaibatu works with the National Disaster Management Organization, Elmina Ghana, as a Disaster Control Officer (DCO) and is currently working in the Central Region of Ghana, Cape Coast.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“After educating my community on the importance of living peacefully, we have not recorded any clash between the Muslims and Christians over the last two months. Moreover, with the little token that I gave to my participants, some of the women have set up petty trading on their own and I am grateful to COFP for the opportunity given to me to also impact positively on the lives of others. Thank you so much, May the Almighty continue to bless the COFP Foundation.” ~ Suwaibatu



Akintayo Ademola Akinyemi

Akintayo Akinyemi is a Cherubim & Seraphim Christian from Osun state. He is the Chairman of the Youth Wing of CAN, (YOWICAN), Osun state. He holds an HND from the Federal Polytechnic, Ede and a PGD in Tourism and Management from NTI Kaduna.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I want to thank God for this privilege. I have never for once come across the category of people I met in the course of this program. I happen to be a hot-tempered person, who doesn't tolerate people stepping on my toes, but this program has assisted me to be cautious in my relationship with the masses especially in relation to peace campaign. My level of tolerance has increased rapidly and I am setting up a peace foundation for myself soon. I thank COFP sincerely for this opportunity.” ~ Ademola



Adamu Sha'aibu

Adamu Shaibu is a Muslim from Jigawa state and a member of Joint National Association of persons with Disability. He holds a Bachelor in Agric Technology from ATBU, Bauchi.

Personal Reflection

At the end of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Actually, it has been a wonderful and positive experience for me in the COFP Fellowship program. The program enabled me to have a clearer knowledge on interfaith especially between Islam and Christianity. The knowledge acquired equipped me more on how to interact and mediate in restoring and enhancing peace between two parties. It is an opportunity to meet with people from different parts of the world, however the most amazing thing is that everyone loves peace.” ~ Adamu



Kaltum Abari

Kaltum Abari is a Sunni Muslim from Adamawa State. She is the State President (Amirah) of Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Adamawa State. She attended school of Midwifery, Yola and Post Graduate School of Nursing. She is a registered Nurse and Midwife by profession.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I must begin by thanking the COFP Fellowship program for changing my life. it's really wonderful to me personally, to realize that yes, we can make it. I never thought it is possible to gather the various religious groups that were living with grudges with one another in one place, talk less of sitting with one another, but now it is seen practically that they interacted, sat together and even visited one another. I was highly impressed with these experiences. I wish to once again thank the COFP Fellowship Program for this initiative. Thank You.” ~~ **Kaltum**



Rebecca Tarpeh Major

Tarpeh -Major Rebecca is a Liberian. She is a Catholic and the Secretary General of Inter Religious Council of Liberia. She holds a B.A in Sociology and Public Administration, from The University of Liberia

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I learnt a lot especially on mediation, how to settle a dispute and create an agreement when there is a conflict between two or more persons and how to tolerate one another without considering his or her religious and ethnic

background.” ~~ **Rebecca**

Chrisvic Ebhodaghe

Chrisvic Ebhodaghe is a Christian from Edo state. She is an Assistant Research Fellow with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution Abuja and the national Ex-officio of the Young Catholic Students of Nigeria (YCS). She holds an LLB from the Ambrose Ali University Ekpoma Edo state, BL from the Nigerian Law School Abuja and PGD in Peace, Conflict and Strategic Studies from Nile University, Abuja.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Sincerely, it has been a wonderful experience for me, journeying closely with members from diverse denominations and religions. Thanks to the quality time spent at the different modules. The program has broadened my horizon on issues of inter-faith, giving me an opportunity to study in depth and understand the fundamentals of different religions and the beautiful similarities amongst them. I am grateful for knowledge gained; acquaintances made as well as the whole formation in its entirety. The world definitely needs more of this to stop the avoidable violent conflicts that abound. A very big thank you to the organizers, COFP is truly making the world a better place.” ~~ **Chrisvic**



Uzoigwe Thecla Maria

Thecla Uzoigwe is a religious Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary congregation. She is the Principal of Our Lady's School, Maiduguri. Sister holds M. Sc. in Inorganic Chemistry from the University of Maiduguri.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“This one-year Fellowship program is a great privilege for me. It has actually exposed me to know people of like minds who are promoters and ambassadors of peace. It has informed, educated and transformed my perception for peace and related issues in the society so much that I can stand as a peace mediator for the voiceless and less privileged in the society. COFP has empowered me immensely & I was able to empower other women in my community who were jobless to become self-reliant and also peace ambassadors. Through the enlightenment from this Foundation, I have been able to establish a platform known as The Way Forward Initiative which aims at educating and empowering women. We have begun the journey and it is really helpful. Hail COFP! Hail Cardinal Onaiyekan!! Thank you, Hilton Foundation. God bless your efforts to serve humanity.” ~~ **Thecla**



Taofeeqah Aderoju Fagbolade

Taofeeqah Aderoju is a Muslim from Oyo State but lives & work in Lagos. She is the National President (Female wing) of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Nigeria. She holds a Master's degree in Education from the University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos State.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“When people live together in peace, there is harmony, tranquility, quietness, love and happiness. These and more are the instructions written in the two Holy Books which are taught at COFP. In my participation in the program so far, I have learnt more about these lessons and it has improved my relationship within and outside my community. I now know that "Peace in a society is a two-way process and can only be established if all parties worked together to achieve it.”

~~ **Taofeeqah**



Okorie Ruth Hajaratu

Ruth Okorie is a Christian and the Chairperson of the Women Wing of Christian Association Nigeria, Kano state chapter. She holds M.Sc. in Organic Chemistry from the Bayero University, Kano.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“With the training received, the knowledge acquired and capacity built through COFP Fellowship program, I realized that peace is achievable. As I get committed to the work of peace in the community, I can now communicate easily with people of other faith, understand and work passionately to impact positive attitude for a peaceful co-existence.” ~~ **Ruth**



Ishaak, Ali-Baba Kpacita

Ali-Baba Ishaak is a Quadirriyya Muslim from Niger State. He is the Peace Promoter/Mediator of Qaddirriyya Sufi Movement. He holds a B.Sc. in Political science from ABU Zaria and PGD in Management from Bayero University Kano.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship Program has been a wealthy experience; impacting positively on my life, and changing my thoughts on one-story narration and negative perception about Christianity and Christians.” ~~ **Ali-Baba**



Egwu Jovita

Jovita Egwu belongs to the Congregation of Our Lady of Apostles (OLA). She is the Administrator of OLA Hospital, Jos Plateau State. She holds a B.Sc. in Social Works and Administration.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“COFP has implanted in me greater courage to mobilize, organize, partake, sensitize and promote peace in the community of my birth by bringing all the different stakeholders to discuss on peace building and development.” ~~ **Jovita**



Emmanuel Chikoya

Rev. Canon Emmanuel Chikoya is an ordained Anglican Priest serving as General Secretary of the CCZ since August 2017. He holds a Cambridge University Diploma in Religious Studies, (BTH and MTH) Specialization from Justo Mwale University. Presently, Emmanuel is a Commissioner in the Human Rights Commission, Zambia and equally Chairs the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) Steering Committee. He also serves on the Board of Zambia Interfaith Networking Group (ZINGO) and Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation. Rev. Emmanuel is a Theologian with special interest in stewardship of the economic and physical environment and promotion of good and accountable governance, as well as justice and peace.



Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My personal experience is like that of a blind person whose sight has been restored. The COFP Fellowship program has capacitated, empowered and enabled me to have a user friendly me in the area of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. It has provided me with a well-structured training in the area of peacebuilding and the much-needed exposure regarding conflict transformation and resolution. I feel more confident to function as a practitioner.” ~~ **Chikoya**

Neibo Boniface Achor

Neibo Boniface Achor, is a Catholic Priest of the Archdiocese of Abuja, Nigeria and was ordained by His Eminence, John Cardinal Onaiyekan, CON, the Cardinal Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja. He is currently Parish Vicar, of St. Benedict Catholic Church, Lokogoma. He holds Bachelors in Philosophy and Theology from Pontifical Urban University, Rome and an M.Sc, Political Science and Diplomacy.



Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Peace is a natural yearning of the human heart but only a few fervently work to keep it, and give it. To this effect, I must admit wholeheartedly that I have had a better opportunity undergoing this program of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace to become a better and balanced peace actor in my community. The program has been deeply therapeutic with immense healing effects and has broadened my horizon personally that there is a bigger world outside the world I know. It has given me a broader view of the dangers of stereotypes either religiously, ethnically, culturally etc. Peaceful and harmonious coexistence is sacrosanct to engineering collaboration amongst different faiths in Nigeria and elsewhere and all hands must be on deck to achieve this at the home front, in communities and nationally as a country, and globally as well. The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace has not only given me a platform to leverage upon, it has even more equipped me with the rudimentary and requisite skills and for this I am always grateful.” ~~ **Boniface**

Paulina Chioma Ogonnaya

Paulina Ogonnaya is a Catholic from Enugu State and a Dominican Sister of St. Catherine of Siena. She works with the Institute for Formators, Jos Plateau State. She holds a Master's Degree in Peace and Conflict studies from the University of Ibadan.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My experience through the COFP Fellowship Program has been so enriching with the different lecturers and encounters with each and every participant. I was enriched first of all by what I was seeing among the COFP Team members. I saw

Team Spirit in action. Their spirit of teamwork inspired me in my own working place and added value to how I related with my team members. Then, the interactions between the two major religions in Nigeria: Christianity and Islam. I felt like calling the whole world to come and witness how we can live as children of one God. I always look forward to our meeting with one other. There is so much knowledge to share each time we gather. Then the contents of each topic, the peaceful ambience of each lecturer that comes, the desire to assimilate everything that was being taught, were all good experiences which make good memories. I use this opportunity to thank the Founder, His Eminence, John Cardinal Onaiyekan, the Director, Sr. Agatha Chikelue and her Team. Thanks to you all, my dear Fellows. As we approach the 3rd Module, I am already feeling that I will miss you all when the program ends. But remembering that the Digital World has made us more and more one big family, we will continue to keep in touch and share our encounters as true Fellows of COFP and Ambassadors of Peace and Inter Religious Dialogues.” ~~ **Paulina**

Aliyu Fatima

Aliyu Fatima is a Muslim from Kebbi state. She works with the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps, NCDC, Abuja as a Research and Peace Desk Officer. She holds a BA in English from ABU, Zaria and Masters in Gender, Peace and Security from KAIPIC, Accra, Ghana.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Foundation and the peace Fellowship program has impacted my life in more ways than I can count. It has helped shape and change the way I used to think about people of different faiths, cultures and religions and has taught me acceptance and patience. The program has exposed me to various ways of handling disputes and also better ways of communicating with people, from my home, place of work and even amongst friends and family. Attending the COFP Fellowship was one of the best decisions I ever made, and I can say that I am a better person and individual because of it, as I have learnt and known the importance of peaceful coexistence and always, to embrace peace wherever I go and at any time. Thank you.” ~ **Fatima**



Halimah Tijani Idris

Halima Tijani is a Shia Muslim from Zamfara state. She is a woman leader of the Raslut A 'Azam Foundation of Nigeria, Zamfara state chapter. She holds a B.Sc. in Home Economics.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My overall experience from this program is that dialogue can resolve all conflicts, build capacity to address violence, enhance freedom of religion, bridge community divides and build a culture of peace. The program captured my opinions, priorities and experiences in transforming communities together.” ~ **Halimah**



Hassan Jacob

Jacob Hassan is an ECWA Christian from Gombe State. He is the Chairman of the Gombe state Chapter of the National Association of Christian Religious Educators of Nigeria (NACREN). He holds a B. Ed. in Christian Religious Studies from Gombe State University.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My personal experience with the COFP Fellowship is a great one in the history of my life, because it is at the cost of the COFP program that I learned to make peace among different ethnic groups and reason with people no matter how difficult the person is. This program has completely changed my life and my thinking about Islam.” ~ **Jacob**



Tinuke Layi Muritala

Tinuke Layi Muritala is a Sunni Muslim from Oyo State, Nigeria. She is a member of Elders' Council of NASFAT Society and Volunteers as a Dawah Facilitator. She holds a Master's degree in Publishing and Copyright Studies (MPCS) from the University of Ibadan.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The Fellowship Program has afforded me the opportunity of an increasing awareness on the importance of dialogue and mutual understanding especially in the interreligious context. My mini peace project has paved way for creating spaces for communication amongst Muslims and Christians in my community thereby providing an opportunity of shared learning and improved interactions. The fact that few of the beneficiaries have carried out a step-down of the workshop and some are in the process of doing so is giving me a sense of fulfilment that I'm doing what I can (like the hummingbird) in building peace in my community.” ~ **Tinuke**



Roland Ako Arrey

ARREY ROLAND AKO is a Roman Catholic Priest from Cameroon and the Diocesan Youth Chaplain of the Diocese of Mamfe. He is also, the Coordinator of the Bishop's Scheme for the rehabilitation of ex-combatants. He holds a B.A. in Philosophy from St. Josephs Major Seminary, Akwa-Ibom State, Nigeria and a degree in Theology from St. Thomas Aquinas Major seminary, Bambui, Cameroon.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“Peace is a daily, weekly, monthly process, of gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.” John F. Kennedy. “My COFP Fellowship personal experience has been an amazing one. This Fellowship Program has caused a change in my opinion on some issues, eroded old barriers and provided me with tools to work for the construction of new structures for a better and peaceful co-existence among persons and communities. Besides the beautiful lectures and experiences of the facilitators, I have greatly benefited and have been enriched by the life experiences of Fellows from different parts of the Continent. Again, I have become more conscious of some realities and facts I previously ignored or undermined. My perception and analysis of situations are more acute and balanced now. Like Eleanor Roosevelt, I have become convinced that: “It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it.” ~ **Roland**

Sadiya Binta Suleiman

Sa'adiya Suleiman is a Sunnah Muslim from Zamfara state. She is the state Ameerah of the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria FOMWAN Zamfara. She holds MA in Arabic studies.



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“During the 1st and 2nd modules of the COFP Fellowship program, I understood the basic concepts and terminologies in peacebuilding, I learned conflict resolution skills for relevant interfaith actions. And I will also be able to train other people in their communities which will in turn bring about multiplier effects on the inter-religious dialogue conflict management.” ~~ **Binta**



Maria Utaji

Maria Utaji is an Augustinian Sister of the Mercy of Jesus. She is from Benue state but lives and works in Mubi, Adamawa State Nigeria. She holds a B.Sc. in Accounting from the University of Maiduguri Borno State. Currently, she is in charge of a Nursery/Primary School belonging to her congregation at Mubi.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP Fellowship program has been of tremendous help and has enlightened me greatly in the area of understanding and tolerating people and their beliefs & also in the area of conflict management and mediation.”
~~ **Maria**

Obio Bassey, Owai

Bassey Obio is an ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and the Convener of Grassroots Ecumenism Promoters of Nigeria (GEPON). He has Masters in Theology from The University of Calabar and has studied in Nigeria, Tanzania and Switzerland with study visits to France, Germany, Italy and a pilgrimage to the Vatican City, Rome where he met Pope Francis. He hails from Akamkpa, Cross River State, Nigeria.



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“I must confess that the Fellowship Program has increased my knowledge on peace, conflict and interreligious dialogue issues. It has also improved my skills and capacity for taking appropriate action for peace. Besides, it has contributed to better positioning of our work in PCN GEPON for more technical grassroots peace building. All glory to God and much appreciation to COFP. Together we move.” ~~ **Bassey**

Obiaku Theresa Ebere

Obiaku Theresa is a Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Mother of Christ Congregation. She is the Head Teacher of Our Lady's Nursery school, Maiduguri. She holds an NCE in English.



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“COFP Fellowship program is like an eye opener to me, it has armed and broadened my knowledge about Christianity and Islamic religion and changed my mindset about Islamic religion especially. I also learned that we are all created by one God and we are worshipping the same God. Lastly, that understanding other people's religion, ethnicity and culture will go a long way to help us respect and live in peace with one another.” **Theresa**

Idris Yusuf

Idris Yusuf is a Sunni Muslim from Borno State. He lives and works in Suleja Niger State. Idris is the Interfaith Dialogue Coordinator of the Nigerian Red Cross Society, Niger State. He holds a B. Sc. in Political Science from the Umaru Musa Yar'adu'a University, Katsina State.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

The COFP Fellowship program did exposed me to all about peaceful coexistence and how to tolerate and respect one another. It has built me with skills that will help me to clear some wrong perspectives and help people to understand the other better in the community. At graduation, I will become a Peace Ambassador and

this gives me great joy knowing that I belong to this wonderful program that promote peace, unity and religious tolerance in Africa.

Dogmo Ruth

Hodahentine Ruth is a Dominican Sister from Kebbi state. She is a Counsellor at St. Hilary Secondary School, Polo, Maiduguri. She holds a B. Sc. in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution from the National Open University Nigeria.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“In our world today, there are so many chaotic situations here and there but peace is an essential commodity in our society that can calm the chaos. Before the Fellowship program, I used to live in suspicion and fear of people from other religions, but now, all that has changed. I have learnt to tolerate and accommodate other people's ideas and ideologies for peaceful coexistence.” ~ **Dogmo**



Clementine Nishimwe

Clementine Nishimwe is a lecturer in the Department of Religion studies at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Her area of research interest are Migration and Religion, African studies, Christian studies (Theology), African women, Theology & Gender studies. She also oversees the departmental Newsletter.



Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“My name is Dr. Clementine Nishimwe. The Fellowship program at COFP has equipped me with the skills on peace, conflict/conflict management and resolution as well as writing up a research project and applying for the research funds. The skills I acquired were demonstrated and enhanced in the success of a mini project I drafted and was sponsored by COFP. I am working on publishing in a scholarly journal what I learned from the people who participated in this research. The COFP Fellowship has not only opened a new research window for me but also allowed me to give back to my Johannesburg community. As I write this, I have a number of people who registered on google to attend the next interreligious conversation.” ~ **Clementine**

Emmanuel Ejeh



Emmanuel Ejeh is a priest of the Catholic Diocese of Oturkpo, Benue state. He is the Coordinator/Director of Justice, Development & Peace Commission (JDPC) and Caritas Commission. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Sacred Theology and Philosophy from Rome. He also holds LLB from Benue state University and BL from the Nigerian Law School.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship program is quite significant and exciting. It has added value to my vocation as a Catholic Priest. The COFP Fellowship has helped me to go beyond beliefs to look at social problems with objectivity and ways to contribute positively to issues of religious intolerance. Furthermore, the Fellowship has taught me to go into inter religious dialogue with a free mind and not with bias. These will make us all live in peace and harmony.” ~ **Ejeh**

Musa Muhammad

Muhammad Musa is a Muslim from Adamawa state. He is the Chief Imam Concordia College of Adamawa state Council of Imams and Da'is. He obtained a Bachelor of Education in English at the University of Maiduguri.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I got so much skills and knowledge which I never had before from the program and as an Imam, I will use these skills to disseminate more knowledge about Islam & the Christian religion to my followers” ~ **Musa**



Mercy Audu Doma

Mercy Audu is a Sister of Our Lady of Fatima. She works with Mandela Hospital, Jos and holds a B. Sc. in Nursing from Madonna University, Okija Anambra state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“The one year of my Fellowship program was indeed worthwhile. I have been enlightened, empowered and my horizons have been widened. I have better information and understanding of both Christianity and Islam now. My notion about peace and peaceful co-existence have been modified. Previously I see peace as talking things over but peace can also be achieved when I decide to let some things go. I have a part to play in maintaining peaceful coexistence by doing the best I can from the story of the humming bird and to avoid single stories. Retaliation does not bring peace but dialogue goes a long way to resolve issues especially dialogue with the right persons and also the reality of conflict that I have learned to live with daily, in addition to the conflict management styles of accommodating people, avoiding issues, collaborating with people who have interest in peaceful coexistence. All thanks to the COFP Fellowship program & the Hilton Foundation.” ~ **Mercy**



Yusuf Fatima

Fatima Yusuf is a Sunni Muslim from Kebbi state. She is a WAEC holder and the PRO of the Muslim Sisters Organization, Kebbi state.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I learned that the three major religions in the world are from the same source. (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). The only problem is how the followers embraces them. I learnt about mediation skills, and how to interact with people of different faiths and lots more.” ~ **Fatima**



Ijeoma Denisia Okonkwo

Okonkwo Ijeoma Denisia is a member of the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy (DMMM). She obtained a Masters degree in International Relations from Godfrey Okoye University Enugu state and B. Sc. In Communication from Catholic Institute of West Africa, CIWA Rivers state. Currently works at the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace as a Personnel Officer.

Personal Reflection

At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“With my upbringing as a Christian, I have not really been opportune and privileged to know other religions. But as a Fellow of COFP Fellowship Program, it was a great opportunity to have insightful conversations and learn more about different faiths. It has helped me to become more knowledgeable about different religious traditions and more skilled at communicating with people from other religious backgrounds. I wish also to add that the program has permitted everyone to define their own religious experiences and identity which others must respect.” ~ **Ijeoma**



Algoni Jidda

Algoni Jidda is a Tijania Muslim from Borno state. He is the community Liaison officer of Neem Foundation. He holds a BSc in Peace and Conflict studies from the University of Maiduguri.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“In fact, recounting the experience I got from the Fellowship program and how it helped me in particular, and the society that I am living in generally, is a thing of joy. The program gave me a lot of measures and ways on how best to interact with my fellow Nigerian Christians. Also, it has taught me how to understand the differences & respect each other's religion, which I didn't know before I joined the program. Furthermore, it taught me how to manage conflict situations to a large extent. Those are just a few of my experiences. Keep up the good work COFP! Thank you COFP FELLOWSHIP.” ~ ~ **Algoni**



Angela Ekwutosi Odunukwe

Angela Odunikwe is a Catholic from Anambra state but resides in Abuja. She is the National Secretary of National Association of Catholic Lawyers, NACL and the Chief Executive officer of Prime Age Development Initiative. She holds LLB from ESUT and BL from Nigerian Law School.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“I cannot quantify what the Fellowship program has done for me but permit me to say that it has greatly affected my life and work. Though I had been an advocate of peace, COFP Fellowship program brought in the dimension and understanding of interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding. It has helped me to see the dangers of a single story that most times is used to describe an individual group, when in actual sense no group has a single story. It has raised my consciousness that every effort counts. This experience has left me with unalloyed, all-inclusive consideration of people from diverse regions and religious lines with a common lens. Like a humming bird, am resolute to do the best I can.” ~ ~ **Angela**



Idris Mohammed

Idris Mohammed is a Sunni Muslim from Katsina state and an Investigative Journalist, Extreme Terror and Violent Crimes Researcher. He is a data enumerator and member of Nigerian Network of Peace Facilitators of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). He is the Founder of Sulhu Development Initiative (SDI) and holds M. Sc. in Mass Communication from Bayero University, Kano. Currently, Idris is a lecturer at Usmanu Danfodio University Sokoto Nigeria.

Personal Reflection At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program: An Unforgettable Experience

“As a young person and peace ambassador, COFP contributed to my deeper knowledge of interfaith dialogue and it is important in societal building. Through this journey and for the first time, I came to recognize and embrace the significance of having a multi ethnic and religious society. I am inspired by the dedication and commitment of the COFP team to better Nigeria and create positive change through a religious lens.” ~ ~ **Mohammed**



Titiloye Josephine Mary

Titiloye Josephine Mary is a Religious Sister of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus congregation. She holds a B. Sc. in Theology/Psychology from St. Mary's College, Omaha, USA. She worked in Plateau state but was recently transferred to work with vulnerable children in Oghara, Delta state.



Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful” (Co. 3: 15). With this quotation, permit me to say that my going for the 1st and 2nd module of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Peace Foundations which was centered on the Inter-Religious Dialogue, as well as Conflict Transformation and Mediation was an eye opener for me. This program broadened my knowledge more on the teachings about Islamic belief in God (Allah), and Christian belief in God. Both religions centers on peace and unity, and of the fact that we are all from the same Father in faith, Abraham. My experience of meeting with Fellows from different religions and background, coupled with various educational knowledge and skills, both within Nigeria and other African countries, gives me a true judgement of the reality that living in harmony among ourselves, (Christians and Muslims alike), is 100% feasible by having free minds and sincere fraternal love for each other. For this reason, I am longing to be an ambassador of peace wherever I go, and whenever the opportunity arises. May Almighty God continue to bless the Foundation to grow from strength to strength, Amen. Thank you, Hilton Foundation and God bless.” ~~ **Titiloye**

Augustine Ngode Anyio



Anyio Augustine is a Catholic and the Program Officer at Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Center, Abakiliki, Ebonyi state. He holds a Masters in Disaster Risk Management and Development Studies from ABU, Zaria.

Personal Reflection **At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:** **An Unforgettable Experience**

“The COFP Fellowship has not only increased my knowledge in interreligious dialogue, but has also provided me with the necessary guidance for meaningful consultations and dialogue with critical stakeholders. The COFP program has created in me the discipline of promoting respect, diversity, and development for a more cohesive community, restoration of trust and reduction of the feelings of threat as a result of intentional encounter and interaction among members of different faiths. This Fellowship course in all, has changed my perspective about other religions and to assume good intentions from all, at all times.” ~~ **Augustine**

Adam Ahmad Tijani.

Ahmad Tijani is a Muslim from Kano state. He is the Kano State Coordinator of Interfaith Mediation Center. He holds a B. Sc. in Mass Communication from Bayero University, Kano.

Personal Reflection
At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:
An Unforgettable Experience

“During this one-year training of the COFP Fellowship program, I learned a lot especially on mediation skill processes and how to tolerate one another without being biased against his/her religious and ethnic background.” ~ **Tijani**



Fatima Lawrence

Fatima Nungnaan Lawrence is from Plateau state and a Sister of Our Lady of Fatima Congregation. She had her primary and secondary school education in Quaan Pan before joining the Congregation. She is presently working at Christ the King Nursery and Primary School Gwada as the School Busar and Doctrine teacher in Minna Diocese, Niger State.

Personal Reflection
At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:
An Unforgettable Experience

“Wow! The Fellowship program has equipped me to look at life differently and to also think differently, when it comes to peace. It has helped me in my relationship with my immediate community and the society in which I work. The Fellowship has also given me more understanding on steps to take when it comes to peace building. I am more grounded in my understanding of other religions especially, Islam and Christianity.” ~ **Lawrence**



Napoleon Emuchay Otuonye

Napoleon Otuonye is a Cherubim & Seraphim Christian from Abia State and resides in Lagos. He is the General Secretary & also Head of Administration of the Church in Lagos. He has an M. Sc. in Shipping and Maritime Studies from Liverpool.

Personal Reflection
At the End of the One-Year COFP Fellowship Program:
An Unforgettable Experience

“The COFP Fellowship Program has armed me with good knowledge and skill in Mediation, Dialogue and Peacebuilding. I now have a better understanding that Muslims and Christians have commonalities notwithstanding our ethnic, religious and cultural differences, we are bound by common humanity, and that we belong to one another.” ~ **Napoleon**



Chapter Four


2020/2021



**COFP
FELLOWS**



Class of 2021


Cardinal Ouslykhan Foundation for Peace (COFP)
Once we accept freedom of religion as a fundamental human right, then it will become possible, for as a practice, our faith with conviction and at the same time respect others in the practice of their own faiths.
John Paul II

Expanding Impact: 2020/2021 Cohort

The third edition of the COFP Fellowship Program commenced in September 2020, delayed slightly by the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This cohort marked a significant milestone, welcoming the largest class yet—40 Fellows (24 males and 16 females, including 25 Christians and 15 Muslims). Participants came from diverse religious affiliations, including Sunni, Shiite, NASFAT, Qadiriyya, Ahmadiyya, Izala, and Tijjania (Islamic groups) and Catholic, ECWA, Baptist, Assemblies of God, EYN, COCIN, Methodist, Lutheran, and Anglican (Christian denominations).

Through an immersive one-year Fellowship, these leaders completed 150 credit hours of study at COFP, actively implementing community peace projects that addressed pressing societal challenges. Upon meeting all graduation requirements, they were awarded a Certificate in Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation on April 11, 2021, in collaboration with Veritas University of Nigeria (VUNA) and Nile University of Nigeria (NUN). As part of CANEP, they now contribute to a growing national network of interfaith peacebuilders committed to promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and coexistence.

Bata Hauwa

Bata Hauwa is a member of Church of the Brethren Borno State & a reporter with Radio Nigeria Peace FM, Maiduguri. She holds B. A in Mass Communication from the University of Maiduguri, Certificate in Journalism from National Broadcast Academy, Lagos, and a P.G.D in Strategic Planning.

Hauwa said “My perception towards other religion, and my way of reporting events on religion, conflict, peace and trauma has changed through the Fellowship program”.



Alli Yekini Adesina

Alli Yekini Adesina is a Sunni Muslim from Ondo State & the former Assistant Secretary of Nigeria Interreligious Council, Ondo State Chapter. He is also the State Coordinator, National Council of Muslim Youth Organization (NACOMYO), and a facilitator at Da'awah Institute of Nigeria, Minna, Niger State. He holds a B. Ed in Economics from Ekiti State University and M.Sc in Business and Applied Economics from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ondo State. He is a Senior Lecturer at Bethel College of Education, Ondo state.

For Alli, the Fellowship program offered him the opportunity of knowing the fundamental meaning of 'Jihad' and 'Crusade' and also provided an avenue to be more knowledgeable in the aspect of Dialogue, Negotiation & Conflict resolution.

Ihesiulor Victoria Bolanle

Ihesiulor Victoria Bolanle is a member of Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (CPFN) & the National Chairperson of the Women's Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN). She is from Kogi state but lives & work in Abuja. Victoria holds a B. Sc. in Business Administration from the University of Abuja.

Victoria expressed that having completed the Fellowship Program, her capacity in the areas of conflict transformation, mediation and dialogue improved beyond her imagination and for this, she intends to organize the National workshop for (WOWICAN) and (FOMWAN) annually to promote peace.



Habib Aliyu Muhammad

Habib Aliyu Muhammad is a Shia Muslim, from Zamfara state and a Principal Assistant Registrar of the Federal College of Education Technical, Gusau. He holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

Habib confirmed that the Fellowship Program is relevant to his work and has improved his knowledge on Dialogue & Mediation skills which he applied in the execution of his peace project in his community.



Adamu Ephraim

Ephraim Adamu is an Anglican Christian & the Project Officer of Search for Common Ground, Abuja. He holds a B.Sc. in Information Systems Development from Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland, UK and MBA from the University of business and international studies, Geneva, Switzerland.

Ephraim was certain that the skills learnt during the Fellowship Program will help in his quest to work and promote peace in his community with special focus on peace education.



Tukur Aisha Isyaku

Tukur Aisha Isyaku is a Muslim from Katsina state. She is the Ameerah & Health Chair of Kaduna State Chapter of the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), she is also the Chairman of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, and the Advocacy Chair Kaduna Maternal & New Born Accountability Mechanism (KADMAM), Kaduna State. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Pharmacy from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria.

Aisha having completed the three Modules of the Fellowship Program acknowledged that the knowledge gained in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding experiences will enable her to continue to promote peace and

harmony in Kaduna State

Musa Gerald

Musa Gerald is a Catholic priest from Kebbi state and was a Lecturer at the Catholic Institute of West Africa (CIWA), Porth court, Rivers State. He is the present Bishop of the newly erected Catholic Diocese of Katsina. He holds a PhD in Communication Studies from School of Journalism and Communication, University of Queensland, St. Lucia Brisbane, Australia.

Gerald attested that the Fellowship Program broadened his scope in Inter and Intra Religious Dialogue spheres and this will help him bridge the gap of religious extremism in his community as well as carry out a more in-depth Peacebuilding project in the educational sector.



Aliyu Usman Aishatu

Aliyu Usman Aishatu is an Izala Muslim from Nassarawa state but lives and work in Plateau State. She is the women leader of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Movement, (JPRM) Jos, Plateau State. She holds a B.SC in Public Administration from University of Jos.

For Aisha the Fellowship Program was an eye opener in another dimension, looking at the state of our nation, the experiences gained and her peace project implementation was very timely for her as the women leader who interact with people from different Faith.



Samuel Nuhu Baba

Samuel Nuhu Baba is a member of ECWA Church in Nasarawa state and a Lecturer at the Nasarawa State University, Keffi Nasarawa State. He obtained M.A in Linguistics from University of Ilorin, Kwara State.

Samuel described the Fellowship Program as a 'Scintillating experience' that broadened his knowledge and rebuilds his Capacity in Leadership Skills'.



Abubakar Mohammad Sarki

Abubakar Muhammad Sarki is a Sunni Muslim from Nasarawa State, but lives and works in Abuja. He is the youth President of Islamic Research and Da'awah Foundation, Abuja. He is also the Ameer (president) of Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (AMAC). He holds an LL. B from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Sarki testified that he has learnt how to be a good Mediator through the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution. (ADR) and Dialogue which for him is the first option in promoting Peace in his community.



Adejoh Justina

Adejoh Justina is a Catholic Nun of the Augustinian Order. She hails from Kogi State and works in Taraba State. She is the Principal of Our Lady of Consolation Girls' Secondary School Jalingo, Taraba state. She holds B.A in Christian Theology and M.A in Pastoral Theology, both from the Anglian Ruskin University, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Justina confirmed that she has learnt that every positive, notable and desired change must begin with Self. The Fellowship she said will help her promote peaceful coexistence among her students, and religious community.



Hussani Idris Garba

Hussani Idris Garba is a Fulani Muslim from Plateau state but works in Kaduna State. He is the President of Coalition of Muslim Youths Scholars in Nigeria, Kaduna state. He holds a Master's Degree in Arabic studies from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Garba testified that the experiences and encounter from the Fellowship Program has helped him to set up committees to tackle Issues of violence & Conflict in his community.



Akerele Julia

Akerele Julia is a Christian of Cherubim & Seraphim (C&S) denomination from Edo state and works in Lagos State. She is the National Secretary of Women Wing of CAN (WOWICAN) and the National Director of the Children Department, Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC) Nigeria Region. She holds a B.A Hons in French from ABU Zaria.

At the end of the Fellowship Program, Julia has this to say, 'I learnt about the similarities in both religions and how to strengthen the bond on our Commonalities'. She was very happy to have learnt how to read the Holy Quran for the first time during this training.



Garba Isah

Garba Isah is a Shia Muslim from Bauchi State and works in Kano State. He holds a B.A in Islamic studies/ English (combine Hons) from Bayero University, Kano State. He is the Program Coordinator of Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) Kano State.

Garba said that has come to understand the perspective of Dialogue and Mediation as the first and greatest weapon for peaceful coexistence through the Fellowship Program.



Asake Samaila Joshua

Asake Samaila Joshua is a Pastor of the Light of the World Evangelical Church, Kano State, and the Chairman of Youth Wing of CAN (YOWICAN) Kano State. He is from Kaduna state and holds an MSc in Theology and PhD in church Administration and Management.

For Asake, the COFP Fellowship program is one of the best peace conferences that he has ever attended.



Usman Risikat Bola

Usman Risikat Bola is a Muslim from Oyo state but lives and work in Abuja. She is the Amirah Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria FCT Abuja and holds a Diploma in Public Administration.

Bola was convinced that the one-year Fellowship Program has tremendously built her capacity with new ideologies amidst newly established family of COFP Fellows, friends, and folks cutting across diverse backgrounds.



Eneh Francisca Ogechukwu

Eneh Francisca Ogechukwu is a Catholic Christian from Enugu state. She lives & work in the FCT. She is the National Chairman on Education Committee, Catholic Women Organization and a retired Director, Department of Special Needs Education, FCT Education Secretariat, Abuja. She holds a Ph.D in Education Administration and Planning from University of Abuja.

Francisca disclosed that she has learnt that resolving conflict cannot be done through debate, but through Dialogue and understanding the parties involved and also, giving them opportunity to express themselves.



Bello Lateef Adekunle

Bello Lateef Adekunle is a Sunni Muslim from Oyo state who resides and works in Minna, Niger State. He is the Policy and Communications officer at Development Initiative of West Africa (DIWA) Minna. He is also a Facilitator and Trainer at Da'awah Institute of Nigeria (DIN), Minna, Niger State. He holds a B.A in Linguistics from University of Ilorin.

Bello described the Fellowship Program as a reflection of what Humans can achieve if we focus more on issues of Common Humanity and De-emphasize our differences in Religion, Culture and beliefs.



Adamu Deborah

Adamu Deborah is a Catholic Christian and hails from Cross River state but works in Sokoto State. She is the Field Officer at Malaria Consortium International Sokoto. She holds a B Sc in Computer Science from the National Open University of Nigeria.

Through the knowledge acquired from the Fellowship Program and her Peace Project execution, Deborah's Capacity increased in resolving Conflict in her Community and society at large.



Garba Shehu Ibrahim

Garba Shehu Ibrahim is a Sunni Muslim from Sokoto state, he is a teacher and state coordinator of National Council of Muslim Youth Organization (NACOMYO) Sokoto state. He holds a B.A in Hausa from Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto State

As the one-year program draws to an end, Garba testified that “My knowledge in dealing with Intra/interreligious Conflict has been broadened and this has enabled me to build a stronger relationship with people from different Ethnic & Cultural backgrounds in Nigeria”.



Ibe Iyke Ambrose

Ibe Iyke Ambrose is a Catholic from Imo State. He is the President of African Hope Development Initiatives and the National Vice President of Joint National Associations of Persons with Disabilities. He holds Master's Degree in Political Science and Public Administration and a First Degree in Law.

Iyke stated that the program broadened his horizon against some beliefs and dogma in both religions. For him, his new learning has brought a paradigm shift on how peacebuilding techniques can be applied in area of psycho-socio trauma element that can aid rehabilitation in the society.



Ishaq Amatullateef Damilola

Ishaq Amatullateef Damilola is an Ahmadiyya Muslim from Kwara state, and a National Executive member of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jam'at. She holds an MSc in Agricultural Administration.

According to Damilola, 'COFP Fellowship Program has given me an opportunity to experience a paradigm shift and a change of perspective in understanding and accepting other religion, while dutifully focusing on & Maximizing the Similarities'.



Onyeansi Veronica Ifeyinwa

Onyeansi Veronica Ifeyinwa is a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Apostles (OLA). She hails from Anambra and works in Kaduna State. She is the Executive Director of Interfaith Forum of Muslim and Christian Women Association in Kaduna a.k.a Women's Interfaith Council (WIC). She holds Master's Degree in Admin and Planning from the National Open University of Nigeria.

Veronica affirmed that her experience in the Fellowship Program was enriching, inspiring and empowering. The skills and knowledge acquired spurred her into action in promoting interreligious Dialogue among the different faith groups in her work place.



Abel Nuhu

Abel Nuhu is a Lutheran Christian from Adamawa state and the Project Officer of Lutheran Foundation Yola, Adamawa State. He works as a volunteer with the Nigerian Red Cross Society. He holds B. Sc in Management Technology from MAUTECH, Yola, Adamawa State.

Abel on completion of the three Modules of the Fellowship Program described the training as a 'Square peg in square hole'. His experience was such that he would love to have over and over again. The knowledge acquired gave him the courage and skills to successfully plan & execute his Peace Project which yielded the desired results.



Ibrahim Mohammed Jidda

Ibrahim Mohammed Jidda is a Sunni Muslim from Borno state. He is a Psychosocial Specialist at Search for Common Ground North East Nigeria. He has a B. Sc. in Nursing and Master's Degree in Peace Building from University of Maiduguri.

According to Jidda, the Fellowship Program was very relevant to his work and the community he lives in, Northeast Nigeria which is currently divided across religious line. He said the knowledge gained from the program will help him to change the narrative beginning with his peace project.



Ibrahim Salome

Ibrahim Salome is a Catholic from Sokoto state. She is a committee member of the Commission for Interreligious Dialogue, Sokoto Diocese. She holds NCE Certificate in Home Economics from the Federal College of Education Zaria, Kaduna state.

Salome was convinced that there are people working tirelessly to promote peace and she is happy to be part of them through the Fellowship Program which made her realize that there is no basis for fighting and killing of one another because we all come from & serve one God and we shall all return to one God.



Ilugo Cletus

Ilugo Cletus is a member of Christ Chosen Church of God International from Delta state and the Peacebuilding Project Manager at Search for Common Ground, Delta State. He holds a Masters in Development studies and Conflict, Security and Development from the Nigerian Defense Academy, Kaduna State.

According to Cletus, the Fellowship Program was a, “meeting place for learning constructive analysis of issues of Violence & Conflicts in Nigeria, and de-construction of age long assumptions that has affected the effective Inter religious bonding and cohesion among the dominant faiths in the country”.



Obaditan Hakeem Otitoju

Obaditan Hakeem Otitoju is an Ahmadiyya Muslim from Kogi State but lives and works in Ogun State. He is a missionary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Organization in Ilaro, Ogun state. He holds M.A in Islamic Studies from LASU. Hakeem was pleased with the knowledge and skills gained through the Fellowship Program, which for him, is very necessary for promoting Peaceful coexistence in his community.



Umar Mario Francis

Umar Mario Francis is a priest of Abuja Catholic Arch-Diocese. He hails from Kaduna state and works in FCT, Abuja. He holds a Bachelors of Arts in Philosophy and Theology from the Benue State University and Urbanian University Rome respectively.

Francis confirmed that he has learnt the various types of Conflict Resolution, Dialogue and Mediation skills during the program and will ensure a peaceful co-existence in the community he works among the two major religions.



Jahota Rhoda

Jahota Rhoda is an Anglican Christian from Plateau state and the state Chairperson of the Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN) Jos, Plateau state, she has PGD in Marketing.

Rhoda viewed the Fellowship Program this way: 'It was an experience that can never be forgotten, interactions and encounter with other Fellows gave me a sense of acceptance and tolerance'. She affirmed that the Fellowship program made her understand that 'Peace is Dear' and she is glad to be part of it.



Enebe Uchenna Johnpaul

Enebe Uchenna Johnpaul is a Catholic from Enugu state and works in Delta state. He is the ICT Program Assistant at the Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria. He holds a B. Eng. in Civil Engineering from Enugu State University of Science & Technology. He is an Ex- Officio member of Young Catholic Student and the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria, Abuja.

Johnpaul described the Fellowship Program as very apt and timely, in promoting better understanding on the basic tenets of the major religions, through the various process in Dialogue & Mediation.



Yusuf Ibrahim

Yusuf Ibrahim is a Shi'a Muslim from Gombe state and the Team Lead/CEO of Advocacy Centre for Development, Gombe State. He holds B. Sc. in Business Education from University of Maiduguri Borno state.

Ibrahim said, the Fellowship program availed me a better understanding of the Oneness of God from the Christian perspective, through experience sharing from the field and have also expanded my network of relationships.



Osofodunrin Grace

Osofodunrin Grace is a Catholic Christian from Benue state but works in Abuja. She is presently the Coordinator of Justice Development and Peace Commission Abuja Archdiocese. She holds M. Sc. in Gender and Women Studies from University of Abuja.

Grace confessed that the Fellowship Program has broadened her knowledge on Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding through experience sharing with great Scholars from both religions. All these made her gain better understating on the fundamental areas of Commonality in Christianity & Islam she said.



Ukachukwu Tony

Ukachukwu Tony is a Christian from Imo state but lives and work in Minna. He is an Apostle of Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (CPFN) and the Financial Secretary of Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (YOWICAN) 19 Norther States and FCT, Minna and the National Director of Publicity, at Christian Youth for Peace and Development Initiatives (CYPDI). He holds a Diploma in Computer Science from Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife.

In the words of Tony after his experience of the Fellowship Program, “Truth be told, my experience at COFP remains the best and most outstanding in all my Interfaith peace involvements over the years. Friendly and professional staff,

inspiring resource persons, the joy and fulfilment of implementing my community peace project has made a lasting impact in my life”.

Ossi Christopher.

Ossi Christopher is a Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Abakiliki and hails from Ebonyi state. He is the Director of Centre for African Studies, Adult Education and Rural Development CASEARD. He holds a BA in Philosophy and Theology from Urban University Rome, and an MA in Political Philosophy from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Christopher testified that his experience of the Fellowship Program is beyond Comparison. Knowledgeable facilitators, complex issues discussed during the program, all provoked his thought and reflection on writing two books on peace.



Aladejana Mosurat Taiwo

She is a NASFAT Muslim & the Zonal Secretary Women Affairs of NASFAT Ekiti Zone and the Founder, Muheebdeen Foundation She holds PGD in Marketing from the National Institute of journalism Ogba, Lagos State.

For Monsurat, the program was appropriate as it gave her a completely different view and understanding about Christianity and ethnicities in Nigeria. Her new knowledge and experience positively influenced the planning & implementation of her peace project.



Ogbansiegbe Bright Kristopher

Ogbansiegbe Bright Kristopher is a Methodist Pastor from Abia state and works in Yobe State. He is currently the state Secretary of both Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Interfaith Coalition for Social Cohesion (ICSC), and has HND in BAM Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu.

Bright has this to say at the end of the Fellowship Program, “My motive to learn, relearn and unlearn, during the Program exposed me to an in-depth knowledge gained in all the modules which helped and shaped my perspectives & perceptions on peace and further prepared me for my community peace project”.



Onwurah Chrysantus Chinyere

Onwurah Chrysantus Chinyere is a Catholic Nun from the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love and a Lecturer at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. She hails from Anambra state and holds a Ph. D in Public Health from the same Institution.

According to Chinyere, the Fellowship Program has exposed her to the basic tenets of Islam. Her new knowledge on dialogue and conflict management has enriched and inspired her to take the message of peace to the educational sector.



Imam Ridwan Jumat

Imam Ridwan Jumat is a Sunni Muslim from Oyo State & works in Plateau state. He is currently the coordinator of Plateau State Television Programs on 'Islam calling' and also the coordinator Da`wah on television JINI Jos, Plateau state. He is equally the Principal of Sani Mikaila Comprehensive College, Jos He holds B.A (Hons) in Islamic Studies from University of Jos

For Ridwan, “The Program has given me the opportunity to meet people of different backgrounds, experience sharing has broadened my understanding of service to humanity and will help my Radio presentation greatly”.



Darlington Okoye

Darlington Okoye is a Catholic Christian who hails from Enugu state and works in Yola, Adamawa State. He is the IDP Case Management officer at Catholic Relief Services CRS, Jimeta Yola. Darlington holds an MBA from the American University of Nigeria, Yola, Adamawa State and Masters in Public Health from University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

Darlington confessed that the Mediation and Dialogue skills learnt in the Fellowship Program will greatly assist his work with the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Adamawa to promote peace.



Chapter Five

2019/2020



**COFP
FELLOWS**



Class of 2020



Resilience Amid Global Challenges: 2019/2020 Cohort

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 underscored the interconnectedness of humanity while also exposing social injustices, tribal divisions, discrimination, poverty, and inequalities. These realities highlighted the urgency of interreligious dialogue and collective responsibility in building a new global order based on human dignity, social justice, and religious freedom.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, which brought about a nationwide lockdown in Nigeria, the 2019/2020 COFP Fellowship successfully launched in July 2019 with 34 Fellows—23 males and 11 females (19 Christians and 15 Muslims), once again representing diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds from across the country. Participants hailed from religious groups such as Sunni, Shiite, NASFAT, Ahmadiyya, Izala, Qadiriyya, and Tijjania (Islamic sects) and Catholic, ECWA, Baptist, Assemblies of God, EYN, COCIN, Methodist, and Anglican (Christian denominations).

This cohort undertook a rigorous 150-credit-hour training program in peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and mediation at COFP. In addition to their community peace projects, they actively engaged in COVID-19 intervention efforts in their respective states. Upon successfully meeting all academic and ethical standards, the Fellows were awarded a Certificate in Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, and Mediation on August 14, 2020, by Veritas University of Nigeria (VUNA) and Nile University of Nigeria (NUN)—partners in this transformative initiative.

Like their predecessors, these Fellows joined CANEP, ensuring sustained collaboration and the continuation of their peacebuilding missions beyond the program. As agents of peace, their responsibility extends beyond the classroom, requiring them to apply their knowledge, educate others, and engage in proactive peace initiatives within their communities.

Jaafar Isa Dauda

Ja'afar Isa Dauda is a Sunni Fulani Muslim from Kano state. He holds a B. Tech in Mathematics from the Federal University of Technology Yola in Adamawa state. He is the former Secretary General of the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN), Kano State Area Unit and a member of the National Council of Muslim Youths Organization (NACOMYO). He is a certified teacher and has undergone trainings on interreligious dialogue and mediation. Ja'afar and is experienced in his profession as a teacher.

According to Ja'afar, 'I have actually learnt a lot but most prominent is the fact that we should always have the opinion of each other, that is, the danger of a single story. I am among the lucky ones to attend this Fellowship Program'.



Abdullahi Abdulmalik

Abdullahi Abdulmalik is a Sunni Muslim of Nupe tribe from Niger State. He is a Researcher and Trainer with the Dawah Institute of Nigeria/Islamic Education Trust. Abdulmalik acquired a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from the Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto.

Abdulmalik confessed that the COFP Foundation has strengthened his relationship with Christians and with people of other faiths and this has broadened his network.



Gonsum Mary Asibi

Gonsum Mary Asibi is the Principal Executive Officer at the Jos North Local Government Council and a Catholic Christian. She is also the National President of the Catholic Women Organization of Nigeria. She has a Higher National Diploma in Public Administration from the Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi and a Masters' Degree in view from the University of Abuja.

Mary believes that The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace Fellowship training has impacted positively in her life as she now has a better understanding of the other faiths. This has helped in molding her reaction towards others when she sees them in certain situations.



Abdussalam Abdullateef Abiodun

Abdulsalam AbdulLateef Abiodun is a Sunni Muslim and an Imam of the NASFAT Community in Rivers State. He holds a Masters' Degree in Educational Management from the University of Port Harcourt and a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Arts from the University of Uyo. Abdulsalam is the Vice Director of Studies at the City Model Schools, Port Harcourt and have received awards for the most industrious teacher of the year for 2001/02 and 2008/09 academic sessions.

In Abiodun's words "Through the Foundation and courses attended during the Fellowship, I had been made to understand that nobody can fight for God and that God who divided us along different religious lines had not made a mistake".



Atumeyi Bernice Ojonugwa

Atumeyi Bernice Ojonugwa is a Catholic Nun of the Congregation of Our Lady of Fatima. She is a graduate of Business Management from the Kogi State University and has a PGD in Education from the National Teachers Institute, Kaduna. Sr. Bernice is currently the Headmistress of St. Theresa's Primary School Jimeta, Yola in Adamawa State.

Bernice testified that through COFP, she has learnt to be a humming bird in her time. She affirmed that even as I round up the noble Fellowship program, she will continue to do the little she can in the best way she can in sowing the seeds of peace God has placed in her hands through the Foundation.



Samuel Usaku Alahira

Samuel Usaku Alahirah is a Lutheran Christian and Administrator of the Northeast Zone of the Christian Rural and Urban Development Association of Nigeria from Adamawa State. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Theater and Communication Arts from the University of Jos.

Alahira testified that In the Course of this training, she came to realize that religion is often wrongly presumed to be the cause of conflict, while it is really the ignorance of the masses that is often leveraged upon by a few individuals to achieve their selfish interests. She also learnt a great deal about other religions and how to find common ground in our diversities as foundations for peace building in our communities.



Adam Umar

Adam Umar is an Izala Muslim from Plateau State. He holds an SSCE certificate and his is also the Youth Chairman of his Organization.

Adam confessed that before he joined the COFP Fellowship Program, he did not know much about other religions but now he has realized that there's little difference between Christian and Islamic religions. This is the reason why he implemented his community peace project with the intention of educating his people on the similarities that exists among us.



Achinihu Immaculate Ngozichukwu

Achinihu Immaculate Ngozichukwu is a Catholic Christian and the South East Women Coordinator of the National Association of Physically Challenged Persons in Imo State. She holds a Higher National Diploma in Information Science.

According to Achinihu, "I sincerely appreciate the COFP Foundation for educating me on various topics treated during modules one, two and three. I have learnt a lot, so numerous to mention. In fact, this program is a Ph. D program"



Pius Augustine

Pius Augustine is a Pentecostal Christian Pastor working in Michika Adamawa state. He obtained a Diploma in Christian Religious Education and has a B.A. in Theology from the ECWA Theological Seminary Jos, Plateau State.

Pius has this to say “Considering the fact that I came from one of the most dangerous zones in the Northeast of Nigeria, COFP Fellowship Program has helped to change my perception and views about others and about life in general. The program has served as an eye opener to me and has delivered me from a resentful and vengeful mindset which I developed due to my experience with insurgent attacks for the past nine years in Michika, Adamawa state, North east of Nigeria. Earlier, I thought that the only solution is revenge and war. But with the Fellowship program, dialogue and peace talk is a better option. I am proud to say that the Fellowship program has transformed me into a peacemaker and a mentor to those who use violence to terrorize the innocent”.



Akewugberu Saliu Akanni

Akewugberu Saliu Akanni is an Ahmadiyya Muslim and former National Protocol Officer/Head of Schools of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Nigeria from Ogun State. He bagged a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics.

Saliu affirmed that “With the skills acquired from the Fellowship program and small peace project which I carried out in my community, I can see that I am more loaded with ideas, skills; capabilities and leadership acumen that will enable me extend my tentacles in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and peaceful co-existent even beyond my community and more importantly to people of other faiths in my state”.



Abraham Egbodo Ogah

Abraham Egbodo Ogah is a Methodist Pastor & Christian from Benue State. He is also the current Circuit Presbyter of the Methodist Church Nigeria in Jalingo, which covers Taraba and Adamawa States. Rev. Ogah has served in many parts of the country as a Minister and holds a B.Sc. in Education (Political Science) from Taraba State University.

For Abraham, “This fellowship program has opened my eyes to see the reality of life. I have learnt from the slogan of Sister Agatha that “whatever hate can do; love can do better”. Before the program, if anyone talked of showing love or saying that government should call the Boko Haram to a round table discussion for settlement, I will hate such speaker and even turn off the television set or radio. But today after the first, second & third modules of the Fellowship program, I am now an advocate of round table discussion for amicable resolution over conflict which includes ending insurgency in Nigeria.



Baba Ramatu

Baba Ramatu is the Deputy Director Urban and Regional Planning at the Lands and Housing Bureau, Lokoja Kogi State. She is also a Tijanniya Muslim and Chapter President of the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN) Kogi State. Ramatu obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Geography and a Masters' Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Jos and the Ahmadu Bello University respectively.

Ramatu testified “My capacity has been improved to understand others and to serve humanity no matter how small the act of my contribution will be in enhancing peace and security. Like the Hummingbird to do the best I can and preach the message of peace wherever I am”.



Diga Gambo Raphael

Diga Gambo Raphael is a Catholic Priest of Kaduna Archdiocese and an indigene of Kaduna State. He has Degrees in Sacred Theology and Philosophy from the Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kaduna and St. Augustine Major Seminary Jos.

For Diga, “The COFP Fellowship program has equipped me enough, even though I wish the program doesn't end, I am now a better, certified, verified peacebuilder, with skills to interact and dialogue more professionally and without doubt. The Fellowship opened my eyes to a lot of things I never would have known and to a lot of other things I was ill-informed about”.



Adamu Bitrus Duchi

A Baptist Christian and the Assistant Secretary of the Christian Council of Nigeria, Borno State, Adamu Bitrus Duchi holds a Bachelor's degree in Adult Education/Public Administration from the University of Maiduguri.

Birus says “Today I must confess that I was proved wrong by what I have received from this program. The stuff & content I gathered from this program from the previous modules has truly turned me from the man I used to be into another good man today. The last mini peace project we had in Borno State, if not for our exposure through the Fellowship program, I wouldn't have done anything. Now I can organize peace talks and I can talk about peace anywhere boldly and authoritatively. I can now make peace with people of different faith because I have been enlightened to know the common ground between Christians and Muslims”.



Dike Nicholas Chigozie

Dike Nicholas Chigozie is a Catholic Christian and the Coordinator of the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria Archdiocese of Abuja and also the Program Officer Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP). He is also a member of Abuja Interfaith Youth Network among others.

Nicholas testified that Having being privileged to be part of the Fellowship program, his relationship with the Muslims changed tremendously. He is no longer afraid of entering the Mosque, no longer afraid of reading the Quran, he now attends a lot of interfaith programs and activities, and is now a peace ambassador.



Dikko Basirat Olajumoke

Dikko Basirat Olajumoke is an Ahmadiyyah Muslim and an advisory Board Member of the Women of Faith Peacebuilding Network. She is from Osun State and acquired a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology, a Postgraduate Diploma, Masters and PhD in Guidance and Counselling from the University of Lagos. She is a member of the Association of Professional Counsellors and has attended several workshops and seminars with many written articles in both local and international journals to her name.

Basirat confirmed that the Fellowship program has influenced her a lot. She has been privileged to further understand more of Christian principles/faiths, cooperate with people of other faith and cultures, and learned a lot of Inter/Intra faith dialogue skills.



James Helen Danladi

James Helen Danladi works and lives in Adamawa State. She is a graduate of Accounting and an Anglican Christian. Helen is the immediate past Chairperson of the Christian Council of Nigeria Adamawa state and is the present National Welfare Officer of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Adamawa state.

Helen shared that Understanding the concept of social justice, which is one of the cardinal points picked during this Fellowship program has had a great impact on her. This has helped in shaping and influencing the process of her decision making and decision taking and not just how to relate with people of other religious faith, but also within family members and colleagues at work place.



Ogunlade Toyin Gabriel

Ogunlade Toyin Gabriel is the former National President of the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON). He hails from Ekiti State & holds a Higher National Diploma in Computer Science.

Gabriel agreed that with the knowledge he has acquired through the Fellowship, he now knows that there is no religion that preaches 'war'. This has changed his mentality of thinking that one religion is evil, although there are extremist elements in all religions which often make some believe that their religion is superior to others. The fact is that we worship the same God but in different ways.



Karim Olayinka Ramota

Karim Olayinka Ramota is a native of Ijebu Ode, Ogun state. She is a professor in the Department of Home Economics and Food Science and has a Ph.D. and B.Sc. in Food Science & Technology, an MSc. in Food Technology at the University of Ilorin, Kwara State. As a NASFAT Muslim, Ramota believes that interreligious dialogue and mediation is important in increasing her skills and knowledge in her service to humanity.

Olayinka confessed that “When I was coming for the Fellowship program, I had a myopic knowledge of only Islam but since I joined the program, I have come to realize that we are all worshipping one God with so many commonalities”.



Mamza Yohanna Shaibu

A graduate of Theological College of Northern Nigeria Jos, Mamza Yohanna Shaibu is an indigene of Biu, Borno State of Nigeria. He bagged a Ph.D. in CRS Church History from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and an M.A. in Church History. Mamza is an experienced teacher and a member of the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). He has published his works on Christian Religious Studies in various journals and has written textbooks in the same field.

Mamza says “I learned humility, respect to other people's faith and feelings. I now understand that Nigeria have hope with such credible men and women. God bless the founder and the management as well as all the Fellows”.



Abdulrazaq Muhibba Modupeore

Abdulrazaq Muhibba Modupeore is a Sunni Muslim and the President, Plateau State Chapter of the Federation of Muslim Women Associations of Nigeria (FOMWAN). She has a Diploma in Library and Information Science from the Bayero University, Kano.

Muhibba testified that the COFP program has given her the opportunity to meet with people of different backgrounds thereby sharing best practices. It has also given her the full understanding that service to humanity no matter how small the act, the contribution you make can possibly impact or even change someone else's life. This has also given her the opportunity to deepen her understanding of others as well as see people for who they are.



Aliyu Ibrahim

Aliyu Ibrahim is an ECWA (Evangelical Church Winning All) Christian and the Director of Peace and Interfaith of the Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (YOWICAN) from Gombe State. He holds a National Diploma from the Federal Polytechnic Bauchi and a Diploma in Television Journalism from the NTA Television College, Jos.

Aliyu confessed that it has been his dream for over 10 years that one day he would be able to start an interfaith dialogue group for youths in Katagum LGA of Bauchi State where there has been mistrust, suspiciousness and intolerance. “I stand to testify that this Fellowship program has provided me with the knowledge, skill and platform to fulfil my dream. I have learnt in one year what ordinarily would not be learnt in five years”.



Oniah Jude

Oniah Jude is a Catholic Priest of the Catholic Archdiocese of Abuja and Pastor of St. Ignatius Parish Karu. He is from Cross River State. He holds a Bachelor of Philosophy and Theology from Urbana University, Rome and awaiting a Masters' Degree from the Nassarawa State University, Keffi.

According to Jude “Since I started this program, my commitment to making a positive and significant impact in the world has deepened. I have been engaged in peace, justice and conflict resolution arrangements than I have ever been. It has made me to be more broadminded and this is why I will always bring to the table a deeper approach to resolving conflicts. It has strengthened my long-held idea that dialogue and peace are not achieved by denying or ignoring them but rather acknowledging and stating them in order to reach common grounds for peaceful living”.



Sada Muhammad Lawal

Sada Muhammad Lawal is a Fulani Muslim and Secretary General of the Joint Youth Islamic Organization from Zamfara State. He acquired a Higher National Diploma and Masters' Degree in Civil Engineering from the Kaduna State Polytechnic and Bayero University, Kano respectively as well as an MBA from the Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto.

In his words “The most impactful thing that the 2019/2020 Fellowship program has done in my life is numerous, first it imbibed in me the sense of increase in respecting other people's views, religion, tribes, traditions and way of thinking, in terms of peacebuilding and communal living. I gained a lot on different ways and manner of conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence”.



Saraki Akeem Aderayo

Saraki Akeem Aderayo is a Qadiriyyah Muslim and the Mukadam Nafhatul Nasiriyyah Al-Qadiriyyah Al-Kuntiyyah. Saraki obtained an M.Sc. in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution from the National Open University of Nigeria. He is convinced that interreligious dialogue and mediation is the necessary tool that can help establish the platform for openness, better understanding and good relations.

For me “Today, I have come to understand love, understanding and tolerance in their truest forms and meaning. I have developed a refined set of personal, academic and practical religious ethics and values prompting the little I can do for my society. I have achieved interreligious maturity culminating into mutual understanding and cooperation as well as positive orientation in relation with whom I engage both within and outside of my immediate religious and professional community. On the overall, I am well trained and informed to continue and sustain the essence of the COFP objectives.”



Okoroafor Augustina Chigozie

Okoroafor Augustina Chigozie is a Catholic Nun of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and currently the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Conference of Women Religious (NCWR). She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social Works from the University of Nigeria Nsukka and hails from Abia state.

Augustina says “I have gotten a lot of enlightenment about Islam and I have seen that the only difference is our mode of worship. I intend to educate others by carrying out sensitization exercises across all the dioceses and parishes within my conference. I really appreciate this program and wish that it would continue so that more Nigerians would benefit from it”



Ibrahim Aminu

Ibrahim Aminu is the Vice Chairman Youth Wing of the Islamic Research and Dawah Foundation. He is a Sunni Muslim and resides in FCT Abuja. Aminu serves as Co-Secretary of the Inter-Faith Youth and Peace building Network of Nigeria and holds a B.A. in Arabic Studies.

Ibrahim said “I can categorically state that the COFP Fellowship Program is an eye opener for me and I have learned a lot and developed my skills for lasting peace.”



Chong Sixtus

Chong Sixtus is a Catholic Christian and Secretary of the Riyom Community Association from Plateau State. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Christian Religious Studies.

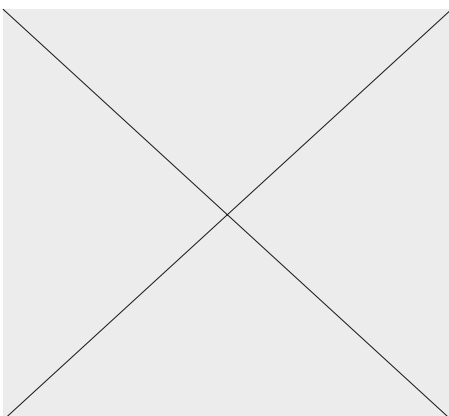
Sixtus testified that, “I have learnt different skills needed to promote peace with people of other religions in my community and I intend to stepdown this knowledge in my community to avoid further religious conflicts in the state”.



Abbas Abubakar Lumu

Abbas Abubakar Lumu is a Shi'a Muslim and Chairman, Da'awah committee of the Rasulula Azam Foundation (RAAF) from Sokoto State. He obtained a B.A. in Islamic Studies from the Usman Dan Fodio University Sokoto, where he also bagged an award from the Zero Tolerance Club. He is a class room teacher under the Ministry of Science and Technology, Sokoto State.

Abubakar confirmed that he has acquired more skills and knowledge in interreligious dialogue and mediation from the Fellowship Program.



Nongoatse Moses

Nongoatse Moses is a Protestant Christian from Vandeikya Benue state and an On Air Personality at the Wazobia FM Kano state. He is a graduate of Mass Communication Benue State University and has a Masters' Degree in Public Relations from Bayero University Kano.

Moses says “Going forward, I am now more resolute in my pursuit for a peaceful community. With the training I have received from the COFP Fellowship program, the clear message of peace would always feature boldly in my daily broadcasting activities”.



Muhammad Alhaji Gana

Muhammad Alhaji Gana hails from Jere Local Government Area of Borno state. Fluent in Arabic, Kanuri and Hausa languages, Muhammad has a B.A. and M.A. in Islamic studies. A Shia Muslim of the Rasulul-A'azam Foundation (RAAF) of Nigeria, he is a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross and has worked and trained in other international organizations.

According to Gana “Before attending this very valuable program, I had different views concerning Christianity but presently, due to this Fellowship course (a golden opportunity for me), I learned many wisdoms in this ocean of knowledge”.



Okoye Lilian Ebele

Okoye Ebele Lilian is the current President of the Catholic Women Organization, Archdiocese of Abuja. She bagged a Higher National Diploma in accounting from the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu and a PGD in Management from the University of Calabar.

Lilian says “COFP Fellowship Program has taught me how to foster lasting peace. With the skills acquired, I can ensure that children, youth and women have a chance to play key role in reshaping the society for true lasting peace and development.”



Oyewo Sarafa Adekunle

Oyewo Sarafa Adekunle is a Baptist Christian from Zamfara state. He is the General Secretary of the Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (YOWICAN) of the 19 Northern States and Abuja. Oyewo holds a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science (Education) from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Sarafa affirmed that “I had attended many workshops, seminars, and even trainings on Interfaith and peacebuilding yet, I could not achieve my dream of becoming a well-equipped and certified agent of peace, but thank God, I have now made it and achieved my dream with the help of COFP efforts through its Fellowship program for the year 2019-2020 Session.”



Tajudeen Alabede

Tajudeen Alabede hails from Oyo state and a Sunni Muslim. He is currently the Assistant Director, Head of Program and Corporate Services with the Muslim Ummah of South West Nigeria (MUSWEN) Oyo state. He has a Masters' Degree in Public and International Affairs (MPIA) from the University of Lagos. Tajudeen preaches interreligious dialogue and mediation as the necessary tool to impact inter-faith relationship in Nigeria as a nation.

For Tajudeen, One major lesson learnt was learning directly from the perspectives of the adherent of a religion. This will increase the need for us to respect one another.



Chapter Six

2018/2019



**COFP
FELLOWS**



Class of 2019



The Inaugural Fellowship: 2018/2019 Cohort

The groundbreaking maiden edition of the COFP Fellowship Program commenced in July 2018 and ran through April 2019 in Abuja, Nigeria. It brought together 35 pioneering Fellows—22 males and 13 females, representing 18 Christians and 17 Muslims from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. These Fellows were drawn from various religious traditions, including Sunni, Shiite, NASFAT, Qadiriyya Sufi, Ahmadiyya, Izala, Miyetti Allah, and Darisqst Tijjania (Islamic groups), as well as Catholic, ECWA, Baptist, Assemblies of God, COCIN, Lutheran, and Anglican (Christian denominations).

Throughout the one-year intensive training in dialogue negotiation and conflict transformation, Fellows completed 130 credit hours at COFP and successfully implemented peace projects in their respective communities. Upon fulfilling all requirements, they were awarded a Certificate in Interreligious Dialogue and Mediation by Veritas University of Nigeria on April 5, 2019. Their graduation marked their official induction into the COFP Alumni Network of Peacebuilders (CANEP)—a platform for continuous engagement, cross-cultural learning, and experience-sharing beyond the Fellowship.

We firmly believe that this specialized training has equipped the Fellows to serve as Peace Ambassadors, reinforcing the essential role of religious leaders in preventing and countering violent extremism. Sustainable peace demands committed leaders who can translate dialogue into action, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration in their communities and this, is the essence of COFP Fellowship.

Danjuma Zechariah Abundu

Danjuma Zechariah Abundu hails from Arkurmi tribe in Kaduna State. He has a Diploma in Bible and Theology from the Theological Seminary of Northern Nigeria and is the resident Pastor of the Assemblies of God Church in Sabon Tasha, Kaduna State. He is also the Sectional Leader Sabon Tasha Section Assemblies of God Kaduna South District. Danjuma has an amount of experience in interreligious mediation and has worked in different parts of Kaduna State as a Pastor, preaching, teaching and counseling etc.

Danjuma testified that the COFP Fellowship program is quite enriching and strongly believe that dialogue is the best way to take and that COFP Foundation is doing a great job in this regard.



Obazee Sidikat



Obazee Sidikat is a native of Oredo LGA in Edo State. She has a B.Sc. In Public Administration from University of Benin. She is a Muslim. A registered nurse and Head of Department of the School of Post Basic Nursing Studies of the University of Benin Teaching Hospital, Benin city, Edo State. Obazee is a member of the Fellowship Program has now increased my sensitivity to peace issues, I now see it as a personal responsibility at any opportunity to enlighten individuals and the community on the need for conscious effort to foster peaceful coexistence in order to avoid conflict. member of the Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN) and was the State Amirah of the Association from 1994 to 1998. She is currently the Edo State Chairperson of FOMWAN on three committees, namely, health, disciplinary and school inspectorate communities.

She is the Leader Muslim Women Group of Benin Central Mosque and the Patron of Nigerian Red Cross Society, Egor Division, Edo State.

At graduation, Sidikat confirmed that the Fellowship Program has now increased her sensitivity to peace issues. She now sees peacebuilding as a personal responsibility at any opportunity to enlighten individuals and the community on the need for conscious effort to foster peaceful coexistence in order to avoid conflict.

Bello Abduljelil

Bello Abduljelil is an indigene of Ogbomosho in Oyo state of Nigeria. He is a graduate of Mathematics from the Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti. Bello has worked with Ta'awanu group of schools as a Mathematics Teacher. He is a NASFAT Muslim and an active member of the NASFAT spiritual wing, and a Branch Missionary of Nasru-Lahi-Fathi Society with a good amount of experience in interreligious work.

Saddled with the sacred responsibility of spiritual growth and development of his members by virtue of his spiritual positions and work, Bello was burning with a desire to learn more and become more competent in interreligious matters through the COFP Fellowship Program in order to build better & balance spirituality in his members which he believe will make them more tolerant of themselves and others so that together we will bring about positive development. Reading, watching T.V, thinking and travelling as well as ICT are his hobbies.



Cecilia Nwanneka Okolo

Cecilia Nwanneka Okolo is a devout Catholic from Enugu State, Nigeria and the current National President of the Catholic Women Organisation of Nigeria (CWO). She has attended many international courses/workshops organized by high-ranking institutions in Nigeria and abroad. Barr. Mrs. Okolo has a bachelor's degree in Law from the then University of Ife and now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and a Master's Degree in Business Policy and International Finance from Strathclyde Business School, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK. She has enjoyed successful careers in both banking and lecturing professions, amidst other development works with a wide variety of local and foreign organisations and institutions. Barr. Mrs. Okolo is the Founder of Lift Saxum Ltd/Gte, whose mission is to transform the lives of women and youths in Nigeria.



At graduation, Cecilia affirmed that as the National President of the Catholic Women Organization Nigeria, she has a veritable platform to cascade knowledge acquired from the COFP Fellowship Program to thousands of our women present in the Nine Provinces (comprising 54 Dioceses and one Vicariate) throughout the length and breadth of Nigeria. With the lessons from the Fellowship program, she is convinced that there is no alternative to peace.

Cyril Edebe



Cyril Edebe hails from Edo State but currently live and work in FCT Abuja. He is a graduate of B.Sc. Economics from Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma, Edo State. He is presently working as School Administrator in St. Michelle Academy, Kagini, and a member of the Interfaith Youth and Peace Building Network of Nigeria and the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria, Abuja Archdiocese. Cyril has worked in various capacities for the Catholic Archdiocese of Abuja and the Diocese of Auchi.

Cyril has this to say at the end of the Fellowship program, 'This program has changed my perceptions about Muslims and has also given me a deeper understanding of my obligations to foster and promote peace among teenagers of different faiths to re-orientate them on the need to live peacefully with adherents of different faiths'.

Dathan Misal Musa

Dathan Misal Musa is from Gombe State and holds National Diploma certificate in Business Administration. He is a Christian of Baptist denomination and currently a Board Member of the Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, Gombe State and the North East Youth Leader of the Christian Council of Nigeria (C.C.N). He has attended many workshops and seminars and held many leadership positions in religious and interfaith platforms in his fifteen years of work.

Dathan testified that he has been attending seminars and workshops on peace and dialogue for quite a long time but none of them has given the kind of new knowledge, experience and exposure like the COFP Fellowship Program as he is determined to continue with his pursuit for peace as a peacebuilder and ambassador in his community and country.



Usman Magaji Imam

Usman Magaji Imam is an indigene of soba LGA in Kaduna State. He is a Doctor of Islamic Studies and has a Bachelor in Islamic Shari'a Law from International University of Africa, Khartoum, Sudan. He was once the Auditor General of the West African Student Union in Sudan and Chief Imam of the African Mosque in, Khartoum Sudan Republic. Dr Usman is currently the chief Imam at Wuse Zone 5 Jumaat Mosque, FCT ABUJA and holds the office of the Secretary General at the Jama'atulannahdha Al-Islamiyyah Al-Alamiyya Kaduna State Chapter. He is also the Executive Director at the Annadah Islamic Foundation in Bauchi

Magaji is very passionate about dialogue and coexistence and this is why he is very interested in the Fellowship Program. He strongly recommends skills and knowledge in interreligious dialogue and mediation for all religious and faith leaders and teachers in Nigeria. He hopes to use skills learnt from the Fellowship to setup frameworks from the grassroots to promote peace in their communities.



Ahmad Haleemah Oladamade

Ahmad Haleemah Oladamade is a native of Ilorin, Kwara State. She has Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science from the University of Ilorin, kwara State. Haleemah is a candidate of Postgraduate Studies at the International Institute of Journalism, Abuja. She is the Chief Editor and Researcher at Da'wah Institute of Nigeria, Minna. She is a writer of many articles on Sister's Magazine selling in the U.K. and has a strong appetite for knowledge. Haleemah is a leader, a teacher and a human resource manager with experiences in mediation. Presently, the Da'wah Institute and the Islamic Education Trust (IET) employs her to conduct research, develop resource materials, and organize training programmes in interfaith engagement and bridge building for peaceful co-existence.

Haleemah has this to say as the one-year program draws to an end, 'Although interaction with people of other faiths is not new to me due to my background, attending the COFP Fellowship Programme has proven to be a new dimension in my interfaith experience. The fellowship afforded me the opportunity to not only to learn more about Christianity, but also to gain new perspectives regarding my own faith, through interactions with colleagues and facilitators. Furthermore, gaining mediation skills through this program has made me a better peace practitioner. As a Muslim, I believe that interreligious dialogue and mediation is necessary, not to eliminate differences of faith or to defeat or silence others; but actually, to gain better understanding and build bridges between different faith communities and achieve common' goals.

Jechonia Gilbert

Jechonia Gilbert is a Christian leader from Yola LGA, Adamawa State. He is a construction engineer with major interests in religion, peace and community transformation. Jechonia has worked in different capacities such as director of inter-faith and ecumenism for Christian Association of Nigeria Adamawa State Chapter and Secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Northeast Zonal chapter. He presently holds the seat of Zonal and State Secretary of the Christian Council of Nigeria, Northeast Zone and Adamawa State Chapter, respectively.

Jechonia has this to say as he concludes the program, 'I tell you the truth; the COFP Fellowship Program has not only healed my inter-religious ill-health but has also build in me the boldness to kick start any peace project, anywhere the need may arise for promoting peace among people of different beliefs and understanding'.



Halimat Jibril

Halimat Jibril is a Muslim from Minna, Niger State. She has a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature from Amadu bellow University, Zaria. She has done some coursework in Project Management and MPA at the University of Liverpool and Institute of Administration in Kongo Zaria respectively. Halima worked with the Niger State Civil Service and retired as Director of Program services at Radio Niger after thirty years of service. She has also worked as the program secretary with the European Economic Commission/FGN/Middle belt program and was the Normadic Education Consultant in Bauchi State. Halima was a participant at the CEDPA/USAID training on Gender and Development in Abeokuta in 2003 and has been very active in UNICEF projects in Nigeria. She coordinated the FGN/DFID/UNICEF Girls' Education Project Phase 1 in Katsina State as the State GEP Coordinator and later on re-engaged with UNICEF as State Project Coordinator in Bauchi State under GEP Phase 2. She is the current National President of the Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN).

Halima stated that through the COFP program, she realized that Muslims and Christians have commonalities that should encourage them to jointly work for peace and peaceful co-existence as she concludes the one-year program.



Edna Livinus Habila

Edna Livinus Habila hails from Guyuk local government area of Adamawa State. She is a graduate of the Federal College of Education, Yola and currently teaches Agricultural Education at the Government Day Secondary School, Chikila, Guyuk LGA, Adamawa State. She is a Catholic Christian and the President of the Catholic Women Organization (CWO) in Yola.

Edna testified that the Fellowship program was very nice and touching and hope to step down this knowledge to her community and the people she led.



John Gospel Gana

John Gospel Gana is of the irigwe tribe in Bassa local government area of Plateau State. He possess and M.Sc. in Clinical Psychology and a B.Sc. in Psychology all from the University of Jos, and he is an Assistant Lecturer, Department of General & Applied Psychology, University of Jos. He is the current Secretary General of the Irigwe Youth Movement and has worked in various capacities both at the State and local government levels and has won different awards among which is the Best Graduating Student in Psychology. He has published two research works on social issues.

According to John, 'When the time to join COFP came, I asked: what was I going to discuss with the Muslims? Could I hear something different? Was it another talk show? Was it about the 'tolerance' and 'bringing to book' phrases again? Can the inherently hurtful be trusted? The gulf of trust and accommodation was so wide and deep to bridge. To my amazement, the composition was welcoming; the atmosphere and organizers electrifying, the Muslim scholars invited were sincere in their presentations and never spared the extremists on both divides. The Fellows were unlike I have seen, the discourse was open and deep and wide, the common grounds were inexhaustible and the passage of days made the experience life – changing. We are a common humanity indeed. Thank you COFP. And the scales fell off my eyes.



Joy Diamond Leka

Joy Diamond Leka is a native of Biu local government area of Borno State. She has a Diploma in Mass Communication from the State Polytechnic, Yola and currently works with the Adamawa State Ministry of Information and Strategy. She is a Christian and member of Grace Band, Yola, Adamawa State. Joy preaches interreligious mediation and tolerance as the necessary tool for peaceful coexistence of the inherent different religions and faiths.

Joy confessed that she was challenged by the Fellowship program and so, wrote a book titled 'Our diversity is our strength' in order to further strengthen peace in the country.



Alhassan Magaji Kargi

Alhassan Magaji Kargi hails from Kubau LGA of Kaduna State. He has a Masters and a Bachelor in Arabic Studies from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and currently works with the Arewa House, Ahmadu Bello University Kaduna. He is the vice Chairman of Kubau Local Government Council of Ulama'a Izalla, the Ulama'a Jam'atu Nasril Islam and the Assistant Secretary to Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'ah wa'Iqamatis-Sunnah, Kaduna State. He is also the Director, Darus-Salafiyya Centre for Islamic Guidance Kargi, Kubau local government council, Kaduna State.

Alhassan testified that the COFP Fellowship Program changed him which is why he now believe that any conflict can be resolved through dialogue. According to

him, 'I am very impressed with the knowledge gained here and have set up a committee in my mosque to dialogue for peace with other religions'.

Mary Nkiruka Imaezue

Mary Nkiruka Imaezue is from Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from University of Abuja, Nigeria and Nigerian Certificate in Education in Christian Religious Studies from Anambra State College of Education Awka. She is currently the Assistant Director (Education) with the Federal Ministry of Defense Headquarters, Abuja. She is the former President of the Catholic Women Organization of Nigeria, Catholic Archdiocese of Abuja.

Mary confessed that the Fellowship program has transformed her into a peacemaker and have prepared her better to lead the Catholic Women Organization of Nigeria Abuja Archdiocese peacefully as their president.



Modinat Ajoke Adekoya-iromini

Modinat Ajoke Adekoya-Iromini is an Ahmadiyyah Muslim from Ijebu Ishiwo in Ijebu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. She holds a Ph.D. in Crop Genetics and Breeding from Huazhong Agricultural University, Wuhan, Hubei Province, PR China, Masters in Plant Breeding and B.Sc. in Botany from the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and the Ogun State University, respectively. Modinat is currently the National Protocol Officer II of the Ahmadiyyah Muslim Jama'at Nigeria, Lecturer with the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta and a member of the Genetics Society of Nigeria. She has been involved in conflict settlement between religious groups as her faith preaches peace between humanity. Modinat has conducted a lot of research and publications and attended many trainings. She has also won many prizes, Honor's and International recognitions such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Scholarship for the Green super rice Project and others.



Modinat shared her experience of the COFP Fellowship Program this way at her graduation 'Being a Fellow of the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace has further moulded me as a Peacebuilder in all ramifications as I foster the cause of peace. I have been an activist that always fight for people's right but this Fellowship has taught me that peaceful dialogue, negotiation and mediation can yield better results. It has made me understand better, people's values and beliefs and taking care of such as I deal with people. I am grateful to God and the Foundation for the opportunity and will always champion the cause of peace as a refined advocate of Peace'.

Naomi Tula

Musa Naomi Tula is from the Gade tribe in Bauchi State and a member of the Christian Council of Nigeria. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree, in Christian Religious Studies Education. She is an Anglican and an Advisor to the Christian Council of Nigeria.

Naomi confessed that she has learnt to see the Muslims as her brothers and sisters rather than enemies like she initially thought. With the skills acquired, she was able to interact well with Muslims and hope to have future collaborations with them.



Bello Nasir Mohammed

Bello Nasir Mohammed is a Sunni Muslim from Gombe State, Nigeria and a Trainer/Facilitator at the Da'awah Institute of Nigeria, Islamic Education Trust Minna, Niger State. He has a Masters degree in Environmental Management from Bayero University, Kano, and a B.Sc. in Geology from the University of Maiduguri. Bello has been involved in peace building trainings both in and outside the country and has acquired many years of experience in interreligious mediation, however, he wants to learn more by meeting, sharing and adopting new ideas from the Fellowship Program.

Bello has this to say about the Fellowship program, Cardinal Onaiyekan peace Fellowship has been a remarkable experience for me. The Fellowship has significantly helped in my renewed commitment to ensuring a better and more peaceful Nigeria. It has equally provided for us with a network of outstanding peacebuilders capable of and very much enthusiastic about making Nigeria and all its crannies peaceful for all. It is a journey that has significantly impacted me, and the knowledge and wisdom acquired will continue to echo in me. I believe lessons learned from COPF will continue to help me navigate through life. It is certainly an honour to be part of this remarkable project.



Mukhtar Tukur Sulaiman

Mukhtar Tukur Sulaiman is a Shiite Muslim from Sokoto South Local Government Area of Sokoto State. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Statistics from Usman Dan Fodio University and also a professional Diploma in Education from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He currently teaches at Aminu Gingu Memorial Secondary School, Shagari in Sokoto State. He has worked in Yobe, Lafia and Sokoto States and has many volunteer experiences with World Health Organization. He is the Assistant Secretary of the Rasulul A'Azam Foundation (RAAF),

Mukhtar confirmed that the Fellowship program did not only change him religiously but also his way of life. The Fellowship for him was really a blessing in disguise to me.



Taparki Moses

Taparki Moses is a Catholic Priest of the Diocese of Yola and hails from Adamawa State. He holds a Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) and a Bachelor Degree in Theology from the Catholic Institute of West Africa (CIWA) Rivers State, Nigeria. He also holds a Bachelor of Philosophy from St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Makurdi. Moses was a Lecturer and Formator at the St. Augustine Major Seminary Jos, and a one-time Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria CAN, Adamawa State Chapter. He is currently the Director for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism Yola Diocese.

Moses summarized his experience of the one-year Fellowship program this way, 'The many invaluable lessons learnt in the course of the 2018/2019 COFP

Fellowship Program sessions have made deep and lasting positive impressions on me. I am now a staunch believer in the truth and the reality that peaceful co-existence is possible, even in a delicately balanced, complex, multi-cultural and multi-religious society like Nigeria. I can never thank the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) enough for this monumental life-time opportunity accorded me; I sincerely pray and hope that others will also come to benefit from this noble Fellowship Program of the COFP for the eventual re-thronement of peace and cordiality, especially in communities that have been severely devastated by sectarian violent clashes owing largely to ethno-religious differences, not only in Nigeria but in Africa as a whole, and the world over'.

Akorah Callistus Chukwunweike

Akorah Callistus Chukwunweike is an indigene of Anambra State and a Roman Catholic Priest of the Archdiocese of Onitsha. He holds Masters Degree in Canon Law from the Catholic Institute of West Africa (CIWA) Port Harcourt, Bachelor Degree in Theology and Philosophy from Seat of Wisdom Seminary Owerri. He has held several pastoral and administrative positions within and beyond his diocese, and is currently a member of the Onitsha Inter-diocesan Tribunal. Fr. Callistus is the Onitsha Archdiocesan Director of Interreligious Dialogue.

As the Fellowship draws to an end, Akorah has this to say, 'As a COFP Fellow, the impact of the program has been of tremendous help and improvement on my apostolate. I once worked in a conflict ridden community and when I looked into what I have gained from this program, I was sad not to have known all these before now, especially when I was in that community'.



Kachalla Innocent

Kachalla Innocent is an indigene of Adamawa State and a Priest of the Catholic Archdiocese of Abuja. He has a Bachelor Degrees in Sacred Theology (B.S.T) and Philosophy (B. Phil) respectively from St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Makurdi, Nigeria. In addition to many past and current pastoral assignments and experiences, Kachalla is the Assistant vocations Director of the Archdiocese of Abuja.

Kachalla confirmed that his ignorance and misconceptions about Islam and other cultures were better cleared during his encounter and studies at the Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace Fellowship program. He states categorically during his graduation that he has not only come to know more about Islam and other religions but also learnt many tips and ways to engaging in interreligious dialogue and peace building. With his new learning, he has come to agree that while knowledge is power, communication is key to peaceful co-existence in the world at large.



Pius Peter Gadzama

Pius Peter Gadzama is from Maiduguri, Borno State. He is a graduate of Geology from the University of Maiduguri, Borno State. Pious is the Diocesan President of the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria and has attended many workshops and trainings on peace building and development in Nigeria. He has also worked with the Justice, Development and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Maiduguri and the Borno State Ministry of Health. He is a volunteer at Catholic Relief Service in Maiduguri.

According to Pius, 'COFP Fellowship program has condemned my ideology about Muslim and with constant prayers and continuation of this kind of program; I hope to impact what I have learn here in my community'.

Rilwan Mohammed Abdullahi

Rilwan Mohammed Abdullahi is an indigene of Kaduna State and a grass root politician. As a polio survivor, he has been at the forefront advocating for and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities on several platforms and fora, while holding several key leadership positions including Executive Director, Centre for Muslims with Disabilities (CMD) and Vice President Sitting volleyball Federation of Nigeria. He is presently a member of the Conflict Management and Mitigation Regional Council (CMMRC), Chairman, National Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities (NAPWPD) and Director, Beyond the Border of Disability Initiative.

Participating as a Fellow in the one-year COFP Fellowship has tremendously expose me to Islamic and Christianity teachings on peace and dialogue particularly in the area of building common ground said Rilwan



Olurotimi Saheed Timehin

Olurotimi Saheed Timehin is from Lagos State. He is a Doctor of Arabic Studies, has Masters in Arabic and Islamic Studies, and a Bachelor Degree in Arabic language and Literature, all from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. His professional and interfaith works has taken him round the country and beyond with certificates, awards and a barrage of research works and publications to his honour. As an Ahmadiyya Muslim, he has held several leadership positions with different religious and interfaith bodies including Co-Chairman of the Nigeria Inter Religious Council, Lagos State Chapter and Secretary of Al-Hadara in LASU, and is currently the National Preaching Coordinator of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at, Nigeria with about two decades of experience in interreligious field.



Timehin has this to say at the end of the one-year Fellowship program, 'As for me, I saw the Fellowship as an opportunity to meet new people in the peacebuilding enterprise and network with them but the content of the curriculum from the first day caught me off guard. Though I had been trained, I had no idea of how to take off with the knowledge attained from those trainings. Though the NIREC episode provided an avenue, it wasn't a total experience. It was the COFP Fellowship that opened new vistas for me on how to combine the various skills I had acquired and turn them into functional competencies for peace work. AND I WAS AWAKENED!

Samiat Omolara Mumuni

Hajya Samiat Omolara Mumuni is a native of Lagos state. She is a B.A. Degree holder in Sociology and M.Sc. in Community Development from the Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, USA. As a management and public administration professional, she has held several administrative positions and contributed greatly to the social development of her local government and state. Hajya Samiat is currently the Director Finance and Administration in the Local Government Establishment and Pensions, and the President Lagos State Customary Court, Lagos Island. She is a Muslim of the NASFAT denomination and the National Women Affairs Secretary of NASFAT. She is a Board Member of the Nigerian Women of Faith Network which is affiliated to Religion for Peace (RFP).



Samiat appreciated the COFP for giving her this privilege to be exposed to this laudable training that has metamorphosed into other meaningful contributions to our environment and country at large. It was an impactful conference which left a great landmark in her dealings with people and perception about life she confessed.

Umar Abdullahi

Umar Abdullahi is from Plateau state. He has a Grade II Teaching Certificate He is a Fulani Muslim and member of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau state. Umar is convinced that interreligious dialogue and mediation is a necessary tool for community peace. He hopes to acquire requisite interfaith dialogue and mediation skills from the Fellowship program to enable him educate his fellow herdsmen and their conflict community on the need to live in peace, and build local structures and systems that track and report early warning crises signals and other crises issues to relevant authorities for necessary actions



Saleh Mohammed Sanni

Saleh Mohammed Sanni is a native of Kaduna State but resides in Kano state. He holds a B.Sc. Degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution from the National Open University of Nigeria, and an M.A. Degree in Public Relations from the Bayero University, Kano. He also obtained other Degrees and certificates from national and foreign institutions as well as work experiences both within and outside Nigeria. Sheikh Saleh is a non political Shiite Muslim and Shiite scholar. He is the current Secretary General of Rasulul A'azam Foundation since 2010.

Saleh narrated the transformation that the Fellowship had on him this way, 'My involvement in the just concluded 2018/19 Fellowship program under Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace (COFP) will remain a turning point in my life. Because of the positive influence the Fellowship had in me by changing the way I perceived religious approaches to peace. I learned from the program that religious perspectives to peacemaking are more than what I thought before. It amazed me to find out, through my interactions with other fellows and the facilitators the level of transformation that I have undergone through this program.'



Maryrita Adebambo Adedayo

MaryRita Adedayo Adebambo is a Catholic Rev. Sister from the Congregation of the Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus (EHJ). Sister hails from Ogun State but resides in Delta State. She is qualified legal personnel with a Bachelor of Law Degree from the University of Lagos, Nigeria and a graduate of Nigerian Law School. As a Barrister, and dispute resolution specialist, she has done a lot of work in the area of alternate dispute resolution in many communities. MaryRita is currently the Project Coordinator of the Eucharistic heart of Jesus Development and Peace Centre in Delta State where her major concern is to intervene on issues of social justice and conflict resolution as a woman and child rights activist.

For MaryRita, the concepts and terminologies acquired during the period of the Fellowship program like, conflict Resolution, Dialogue and Mediation has enabled her to develop and implement peace building programs such as seminars and workshops that has enhanced social cohesion and integration in the community where she works.

Zahra Baba

Hajia Zahra Baba is an indigene of Borno State. She is a graduate of the University of Maiduguri with B.A. Degree in Islamic Studies and Arabic Education. She has practical experience in interreligious works with different organizations and groups within and outside the country. Zahra is currently a member of the Borno Women Interfaith Network for Peace and the Borno state Ameerah of the Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN).

According to Zahra, 'The Fellowship training taught me a lot; those days I used to relate with Christians with large space and indifference but now I have learned to accept them for who they are and forgiving them for what they are doing out of ignorance. I also learned that communication gap between me and Christians contributed a lot in misunderstanding each other. So, the Fellowship training program changed my thoughts, perspective and way of thinking entirely towards so many people and on so many things'.



Sunday Akson Abdu

Sunday Akson Abdu hails from Plateau state. He holds a Higher National Diploma in Public Administration from Plateau State polytechnic and currently undergoing Masters Degree Program in Business Administration in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma. He is an erstwhile Hon. Member of the Plateau State House of Assembly and Senior Special Assistant to the Governor of Plateau State, among other high profile professional and development memberships and portfolios both at state and national levels. He is of ECWA Christian sect and currently the National President of the Irigwe Development Association.

The one-year Fellowship program for Sunday was a period of transformation, 'The Impact of this Fellowship program to my life cannot be mentioned in a sentence. But surface it to say that, it has greatly impacted my life to the extent that I now see the need to advocate for a government ministry devoted for inter-faith dialogue, where issues bedeviling this nation that breeds crisis can be trashed' he stated as the program ends.



Dachomo Sylvester Davou

Dachomo Sylvester Davou hails from Plateau State. He is a Doctor of Ministry, from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA, USA. He has M. Sc. Degree in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK, and Bachelor Degree in Divinity from TCNN/University of Jos. He is an ordained Pastor of the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN). Sylvester is an evangelical teacher, music instructor, and currently the Registrar at Gindiri Theological Seminary, with a number of phenomenal interfaith and theological publications to his credit, informed by his two decades of vast and deep local and foreign theological and interfaith works and experience.

Dachomo has this to say at the end of his one-year Fellowship program, 'The Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace Fellowship Program couldn't have come at a better time. The growing animosity and division in Nigeria is something that if not checked can lead to another road to "Rwanda". The Fellowship program has accorded me the opportunity to see life in another light. Our shared humanity goes beyond religious and tribal difference. I now have very good friends who are Muslims from all over the country. Over the years I have been working on peace matters but from within the Christian family. The Fellowship program has given me the training and capacity to look beyond that and seek to work for peace amongst my Muslim brothers and sisters. Lastly, the realization that there are people who have the same mind-set with me who are Muslims has made this task a lot easier. Looking forward to years of self-sacrifice and service to this world in bringing the much-needed peace.'

Haruna Yau

Haruna Yau is from Plateau state. He holds a Grade II Teaching Certificate. Presently he is the Chairman of the Plateau State Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, living in Dutsen Kura, Bassa Local Government Area. Haruna believes interreligious dialogue and mediation is necessary tool for peace, and he hopes to utilize the interreligious mediation skills obtained from the Fellowship program to advocate peace between the herdsmen and community people in his community and country through peace sensitization for development and building strong and functional peace building networks. He is a Fulani Muslim who is tired of conflicts in his community and loves his animals.

By the end of the Fellowship program, Haruna expressed the fact that he now understood Jihad to be of the mind by spreading Islam peacefully, not by killing and maiming of other groups. He promised to spread this message in his community.



Yassin Maisikeli Garba

Yassin Maisikeli Garba hails from Kano State. He holds a B.Sc. Degree in Engineering from the Southern College of Technology, G.A., U.S.A. and a Diploma in Electronic/Communications Engineering from the Kano State Polytechnic. As an Engineer, he is also an IT consultant who specializes in security systems, document management systems, communication systems, network & database design & development. He is a Sunni (Sufi) Muslim and currently a member, Central Working Committee, Sultan Foundation for Peace and Development, as well as member, the Advisor (Science and Technology), and Project Coordinator (Environment) of Qadiriyyah Sufi Movement in Nigeria.



By the end of the one-year Fellowship program, Yassin confessed that he was more determined to work for peace in his community, between his community and other communities; speak truth to power however sternly constituted, and fight the course of justice for the rest of his life as a COFP Fellow, 'so help me God' he concluded.

Oledinma Patience Onyinye



Oledinma Patience Onyinye is a Religious Sister of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena. She lives and work in Katsina State Nigeria. Sr Oledimma holds Bachelor of Arts (ED) English from the Institute of Education, University of Abuja, a Certificate in Pastoral Counselling Training Skill from the Gaudium Et Spes Institute Abuja, and a Diploma in New Evangelization from the Emmaus School of Evangelization. She is the former Coordinator and Teacher, St. Dominic's Catholic School of Evangelization, Abuja, in addition to other teaching and coordinating positions. She is currently the Head Teacher and Coordinate, Maryamu Nursery and Primary School and St. Vincent Ferrer's College Malumfashi, Katsina State as well as the Coordinator of Interfaith Dialogue Forum for Peace in Sokoto Diocese.

Patience delightfully expressed the fact that the Fellowship program has made her more passionate in promoting peace and mutual understanding and for this reason, she has organized several programs in peacebuilding for Religious Leaders, Students, Women and Youths in her state of Katsina.



About COFP Foundation

COFP is a non-governmental organization with the mandate to provide a platform for building and strengthening the processes of peace and social change in Nigeria and Africa at large. Established in 2010 by John Cardinal Onaiyekan, the Foundation recognizes that most conflicts in Africa (despite their ethno-religious colorations) are symptoms of deeper structural problems arising from all manners of exclusion religious, ethnic, political, economic, gendered that can only be adequately resolved through governance structures that are both ethical and just.

COFP therefore strives to address these challenges by, among other things, promoting ethical leadership, offering a space for faith leaders, citizens and political leaders at all levels to engage in discussions for peace and development. The Foundation also assist in providing conflict parties with critical skills for peacebuilding, conflict management and transformation within their communities.

