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## **Muslims of Benue State: A Survey**

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## Abstract

This paper focuses principally on the characteristics of the main Islamic communities, groups and actors in Benue State. It also focuses on the dynamics of interfaith relations between Muslim groups and Christians in Benue State. In carrying out the above, certain factors are outlined as follows: Brief on the categories of Muslims in Benue State; Islamic scholars in Benue State; Islamic education in Benue State, i.e. traditional Qur'anic schools and Islamiyya primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions; Islam, politics and government in Benue State; Muslim organisations in Benue State; and Government agencies, boards and commissions as they relate with the Muslims.

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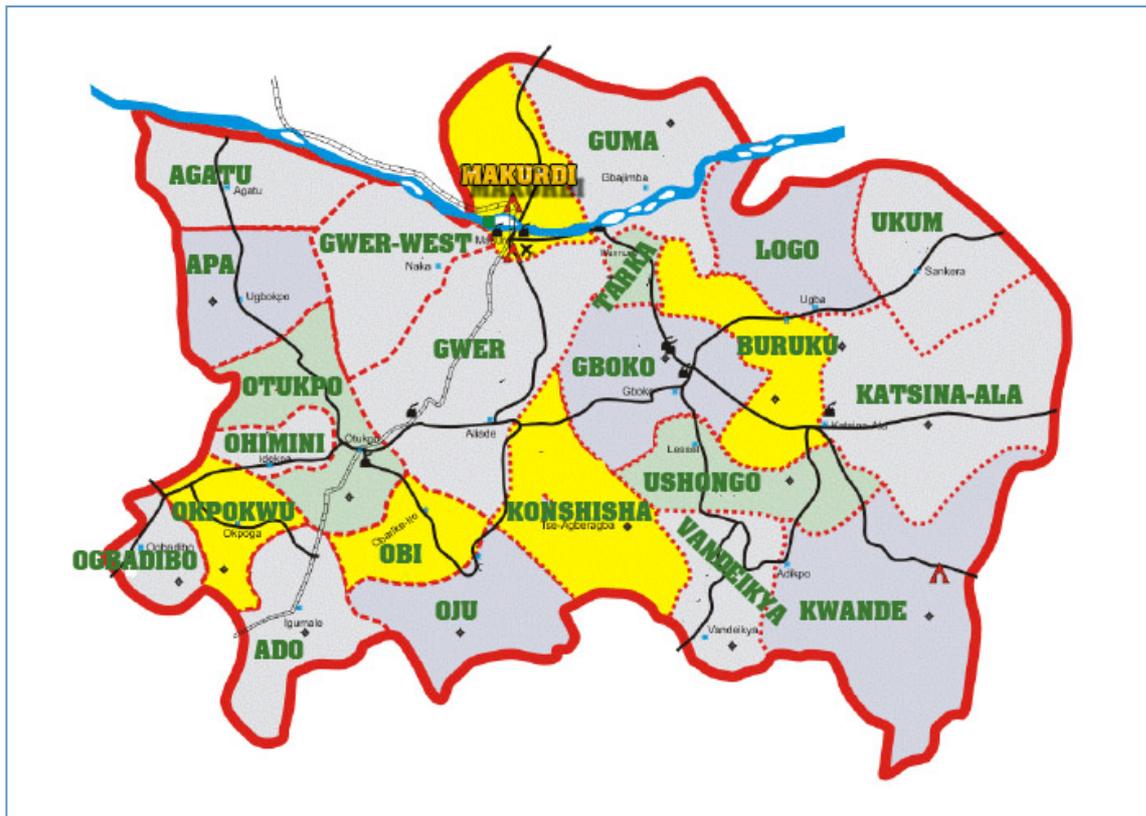
## **1 PREAMBLE**

- 1.1 The research programme focuses on strategic and politically relevant states in contemporary Northern Nigeria for a better understanding of the large population of Muslims of various affiliations.
- 1.2 This research focuses principally on the characteristic of the main Islamic communities, groups and actors in Benue State. It also focuses on the dynamics of interfaith relations between Muslim groups and Christians in Benue State.
- 1.3 In carrying out the above, certain factors are outlined as follows:
  - a) Brief on the categories of Muslims in Benue State.
  - b) Islamic scholars in Benue State.
  - c) Islamic education in Benue State, i.e. traditional Qur'anic schools and Islamiyya primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions.
  - d) Islam, politics and government in Benue State.
  - e) Muslim organisations in Benue State.
  - f) Government agencies, boards and commissions as they relate with the Muslims.

## **2 BACKGROUND ON BENUE STATE**

- 2.1 Benue State is located in the North Central zone of Nigeria. It was created on February 3, 1978 by the then military regime of General Murtala Mohammed. It was created out of the old Benue-Plateau State and old Kwara State. The state derives its name from River Benue, the most prominent geographical feature in the state. The present day Benue has twenty two local governments.
- 2.2 Benue State occupies 34,059 square kilometres with population strength of 4,291,244 (2006 population census). The state is an agrarian society and also acclaimed as "The Food Basket of the Nation". It shares boundaries with six states namely: Nasarawa, to the north, Taraba to the east, Cross River, Ebonyi and Enugu to the south, and Kogi to the west.
- 2.3 The state has seven main ethnic groups each with a distinct cultural heritage, they are; Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Utono, Akpa and Igala. The Tiv constitute the majority population. The people of Benue State hold their cultural heritage in high esteem. They celebrate festivals by way of exhibiting masquerades accompanied with drums and dances which give them colourful celebration. Non-indigenes live with them in the state peacefully. Some of the non-indigenes living in the state are: Igala from Kogi State, Hausa/Fulani, Igbo, Yoruba, Ijaw, Nupe etc.

## Map of Benue State<sup>1</sup>



### 3 CATEGORIES OF MUSLIMS IN BENUE STATE

#### 3.1 Main Divisions

3.1.1 Benue State is significantly noted to be Sunnis. However, there are handfuls of Shias and Ahmadis. These minority groups are mostly found in Makurdi and Otukpo. The majority of the Shias and Ahmadis are the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and other immigrants to the state, who come to pursue their livings as petty trading and service renderers like barbing, achaba riders, breaking of firewood, water vendors and students.

3.1.2 According to the 1963 population census, the percentage of Muslims in Benue State was 4.9% of the total population. The 2006 population census did not emphasise the issue of religion because the Federal Government had the fear of its political implication in relation to the peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. By my estimation, the present population of the Muslims in Benue State is about 6% of the total population, considering migration, mobility of labour, and some conversions among the indigenes, among other factors.

#### 3.2 Sunnis

##### 3.2.1 Sufis

The Sufi group constitutes a larger percentage of the Sunni Muslims in Benue State. By my estimate they constitute 75% of the Muslims. They are concentrated in

<sup>1</sup> From [http://www.benuestate.gov.ng/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=14&Itemid=29](http://www.benuestate.gov.ng/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14&Itemid=29).

Makurdi, Otukpo, Gboko, Katsina-Ala and Agatu Local Government Areas. Except in Agatu Local Government, where significant numbers of the indigenes are Sufis, the rest are Igalas of Kogi State, Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Nupe settlers. Most of them are farmers, petty traders and service renders as mentioned in para. 3.1.1. The Tijaniyya are the dominant group among the Sufis in Benue State. This is clear, because nearly all the Jumu'at Masjids are under their control.

### 3.2.2 Anti-Sufis (Izala and Salafiyyun)

This group is made up mostly of non-indigenes, like the Igala of Kogi State, Hausa/Fulani, and a handful of indigenous members. They are mostly civil servants, teachers, bankers and traders who go out for their daily needs. They constitute perhaps 20% of the population of the Muslims in Benue State.

### 3.2.3 Neither Sufis nor anti-Sufis

These are liberal Muslims who do not follow any opinion about Sufi or anti-Sufi. They are Muslims and that is all. They are petty traders, students and civil servants. This group constitutes about 5% of the population of Muslims in the state.

### 3.2.4 Muslim communities like Darul Islam in Niger State

In Benue State, no settlement can be found identifiable to any Muslim group. However, certain areas within some towns are densely populated by the Muslims. Places like Ipu-Igeli (Hausa Quarters) in Otukpo town, Abakpa Quarters in Oyangede town in Ohimini Local Government Area, Wadata Area in Makurdi, Sabon-Gari in Katsina-Ala town and indigenous villages like Ogule in Agatu Local Government Area and Alifeti in Apa Local Government Area are known as Muslim dominated areas.

### 3.3 Current state of relations among the various categories of Muslims

My survey shows that the relationships among the various groups of Muslims are cordial. For example, Councils of Imams and Ulama are constituted by the various groups of Muslims in the state without discrimination. Their relationships have been very harmonious.

## 4 **EDUCATION**

### 4.1 Traditional Qur'anic education

4.1.1 The traditional Qur'anic education is stratified into two levels. There is the pre-primary level call *kutab* known in Hausa as *makaranta allo* i.e. a situation where a portion of the Qur'an is written on the slate for the learners to practice until he/she can recite and write the Qur'an. It is usually being supervised by the teacher of the Qur'an known 'Alfa' or 'Malam'. This stage is not more than 'parrot reading' of the Qur'an without knowing its meaning and commentary. In many Muslim homes, every child is expected to complete the 'parrot reading' of the Qur'an before full attention can be given to Western education.

4.1.2 Virtually all Muslims irrespective of categories and ethnicities attend this traditional Qur'anic education with exception of those who have acquired Western education before understanding Islam.

### 4.2 Islamiyya schools

4.2.1 The second stratum, is known as Islamiyya school which is a higher level in studying Islam. It is known in Hausa as '*makaranta ilimi*'. The basic Islamic knowledge is

studied at this level. The curriculum is designed by the Ahmadu Bello University Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies. It includes a number of Western subjects. The certificates acquired at this level are Junior and Senior Islamic Certificates respectively.

4.2.2 Islamiyya schools which award the junior Islamic certificate are four in Benue state. They are:

- i. Nurul Islam Secondary School Gboko.
- ii. Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi College Makurdi.
- iii. Irshad Primary School Makurdi.
- iv. Hidayatul Kitab Wal Tahfizul-Qur'an Primary School Makurdi.

4.2.3 Number (i) above is run by the Muslim Community of Gboko. Number (ii) is run by the Izala (JIBWIS). Number (iii) is run by the Munnazamat ad-Da'wah Islamiyya. Number (iv) is run by an individual (Malam Baba Bashir Salatu). It stop at the Junior Islamic Certificate Level. Those who pursue this type of education are Hausa/Fulani, Igala, Yoruba, Nupe and a few indigenous Muslims.

4.3 Government primary and secondary schools

4.2.1 The curriculum of these schools is designed by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). They are run based on Western model of education. Some of the schools make provision for Islamic education based on demand of the Muslim community where the school is sited.

4.2.2 The students obtain the Junior Secondary School Certificate and Senior Secondary School Certificate. The junior secondary education is a three year programme. Senior secondary school is also a three year programme. The system is known as 6-3-3. i.e. 6 years in Primary School, 3 years in Junior Secondary School, 3 years in Senior Secondary School.

4.2.3 Muslims and Christians attend the government schools together in as much as they are located in the area where both Muslims and Christians live. Both settlers and indigenes attend the government school irrespective of tribe and religion.

4.4 Tertiary Education

4.4.1 From the survey conducted, there is not any College of Islamic and Legal Studies or the like in Benue State.

4.4.2 Other tertiary institutions which Muslims attend are tabulated below. The numbers given for Muslim students in each school are based on numbers of registered members of the Muslim Student Society (MSS) in each one.

**Table: Tertiary institutions in Benue State, with numbers of Muslim students**

School	Muslim students from Benue	Muslim students from other states	Total Muslim students
Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi	327	603	930
Benue State University, Makurdi	307	250	557
College of Education, Katsina-Ala	147	74	221
Benue State Polytechnic, Ugbokolo	145	265	410
School Of Remedial Studies, Makurdi	283	112	283
College Of Education, Oju	95	62	157
College Of Education, Gboko	46	17	63

School Of Nursing, Makurdi	46	11	57
Adokpela College Of Education, Adoka	35	0	35
National Open University, Makurdi	9	18	27
Kwarafa College Of Education, Otukpo	10	03	13
Doctor John Ada School Of Health, Otukpo	6	3	9

In none of these institutions are there Departments of Arabic or Islamic Studies.

## **5 POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT**

### **5.1 Traditional rulerships**

5.1.1 The structure of traditional rulerships in Benue State is based on heredity in some areas and election in others.

5.1.2 For instance, in Tiv society the Tor Tiv is the paramount ruler in Tivland (which constitutes fourteen Local Government Areas). The Tor Tiv is elected by the Tiv Traditional Council from an number of Tiv “kindreds”, whose heads, chiefs subordinate to the Tor Tiv, are all members of the Council which the Tor chairs.

5.1.3 The chieftaincy titles in Benue State are graded and ungraded ones. The graded ones are first class, second class and third class. The rest are ungraded. The Tiv people are predominantly Christians. The population of Muslims among them is small .

5.1.4 In Idomaland, the highest stool is that of the Och’Idoma. It is not hereditary but elective, although other Idoma stools based on tribal locations are hereditary. The stool of Och’Idoma is the chairman of Idoma Area Traditional Council which constitutes eight local governments. The stool is rotated among Idoma, Igede and Agatu. These tribes have their paramount rulers at the local government level.

5.1.5 The Tor Tiv is the President of Benue State Traditional Council. It is a first class title. Other first class titles and second class titles are members of the council.

5.1.6 There is no particular traditional rulership stool meant for Muslims in Benue State. However, a Muslim could ascend to the throne if it is his turn to become the chief of any title which is hereditary.

### **5.2 Attitudes among the Muslims towards the Nigerian constitution**

There is not much awareness on the part of the Muslims in Benue State to enable them see any fault of the Nigerian constitution against Islam. In fact there are no Muslim radicals that would create avenue for rising against the constitution.

### **5.3 Do Muslims have distinctive party affiliations?**

Party affiliation in Benue State is a central distribution affair without any particular tribe or religion affiliated to any particular party. For example, one Abubakar Usman from Ogbadigbo Local Government once contested a Senatorial seat under ANPP; he has since moved to ACN to be the running mate of the present gubernatorial candidate of the ACN.

### **5.4 Muslims in elective office**

5.4.1 In Benue State, the Tiv people who are predominantly Christians control the politics of the state with fourteen local governments, while other ethnic groups cannot make significant impact with the remaining eight local governments. This situation has blocked the possibility of indigenous Muslim to become a Governor. There is no

immediate hope of having one because in Idoma area where Muslims are found, no Governor can emerge from the area given the above fact.

5.4.2 Between 2003 and 2011, only one Muslim has become a member of the Benue State House of Assembly, from Ohimini Local Government Area in Idoma axis of Benue State. The estimated ratio of Idoma Christians to Idoma Muslims is 90-10. This shows that the Idoma people who are Christians are far more than the Idoma who are Muslims. Since the population of Benue indigenes is dominated by the Christians, the possibility of having Muslims in the House of Assembly is also little.

5.4.3 As at March 2011, there are no Muslims at all at the levels of Governor or Deputy Governor, House of Assembly member, Senator, Representative, or Chairman of any Local Government Council.

#### 5.5 Government pursuance of Muslim agendas

5.5.1 Actually, the Benue State government has not turned against the Muslims in spite of the fact that they are in minority. The government gives due attention to the Muslims by granting requests from the Muslims. For instance when the central mosques at Makurdi and Gboko needed repairs and maintenance, the state government swiftly went into action by renovating the two mosques. Other things done for the Muslims are as follows

- (a) Grant-aiding some schools and colleges belonging to the Muslims. The schools are.
  - (i) Arabic College Makurdi
  - (ii) Muslim Community Secondary School, Otukpo
  - (iii) Muslim Community Secondary School, Ogule-Agatu
- (b) Sponsoring of between 150 and 200 Muslim pilgrims to *hajj* each year since 2001.<sup>2</sup>
- (c) Eid el-Fitr, Eid el-Adha festivals and Ramadan gifts to the Muslims, this includes food item and livestock to Imams and Muslim leaders.<sup>3</sup>

## 6 MUSLIM ORGANISATIONS

### 6.1 Government agencies devoted to Muslim matters

6.1.1 Like any other state in Nigeria, Benue State has a Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board. This Board is in charge of organising *hajj* affairs for the Muslims and plays an advisory role on *hajj* matters to the government.

### 6.2 Overview of Muslim non-governmental organisations

6.2.1 A significant number of Muslim organisations exist in Benue State. Some of them are as follows:

- (i) Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN)
- (ii) Council of Imams and Ulama
- (iii) Ansarudeen Society of Nigeria
- (iv) Fathul Qareeb
- (v) Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigerian (FOWMAN)
- (vi) Hidayatu Muslimat Charity Organisation
- (vii) The Da'wah Group
- (viii) Idoma Muslim Youth

<sup>2</sup> Data obtained from the Benue State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board.

<sup>3</sup> Per interviews with a number of Muslim leaders

(ix) Fityanul Islam.

6.2.2 Some of these organisations render social services to the Muslims while the Council of Imams and Ulama is more political in nature. The only Islamic workers organisation is the Da’wah Group whose activities are purely promotion of Islam at the rural level by building mosques and other assistance to the Muslims.

### 6.3 Primary non-governmental organisations

6.3.1 Some of the primary organisations in Benue State are:

- (i) Idoma Muslim youths
- (ii) Da’wah Group
- (iii) Hidayatu Muslimat Charity Organisation.

6.3.2 The aim of the **Idoma Muslim Youths** is to promote Islamic awareness in Idomaland. It is limited to Idoma people. Members undertake building of mosques for the use of Muslims where none exist.

6.3.3 The **Da’wah Group** focuses on building of mosques and schools where none exist and preaching activities in rural areas. They also train children by giving scholarships to those who are from poor background. Members organise periodical seminars and workshops for the Muslims. The organisation also renders assistance to the orphans.

6.3.4 The **Hidayatu Muslimat Charity Organisation** is for the Muslim women. Its focus is on creation of Islamic awareness among the Muslim women in the state. The organisation also empowers women economically to enhance economic activities through vocational training in various trades like tailoring, soap making, knitting etc. Their activities are limited to the rural areas.

### 6.4 Umbrella organisations

6.4.1 The only Muslim umbrella organisations noticeable in Benue State are:

- (i) Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN)
- (ii) Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN)

6.4.2 **FOMWAN** has been active in Benue State especially at Makurdi, the state capital and Otukpo. The organisation has been able to create awareness especially in the civil service. Members sponsor programmes on radio to create awareness on girl child education in the Muslim homes. They liaise with the government on Muslim women affairs. They air their views as they affect Muslim women in the state.

6.4.3 **MSSN** is an organisation which has a national secretariat that controls their policies and activities. The activities of this organisation are limited to the schools and colleges. Membership ceases as a person ceases to be a student. They promote Islam among the students. They organise annual seminars and workshops known as Islamic vocation course (IVC) which is rotated in the state.

### 6.5 Further details on three organisations

6.5.1 The **Da’wah Group** came up in 1989 in Makurdi, organised by a group of concerned Muslim brothers who wanted Islam to reach the grassroots. The association came up as a result of an event which happened in Daudu Village where all the Tiv inhabitants converted to Islam in a day. Da’wah Group was formed to assist in teaching the new converts about Islam. Memberships of the Da’wah Group are found in Idoma and Tiv lands especially the state capital. They are mainly Muslim civil servants and bankers within the ages of 30s to 60s. The current membership in Makurdi is about 500 while

outside Makurdi is about 250 members.<sup>4</sup> Membership is voluntary. Members maintain neutral position to enable them reach other Muslim groups in the light of Qur'an and Sunnah. The Da'wah group complements government activities in terms of provision of social amenities. The relationship between government and the group is cordial. They also spread their activities through traditional institutions. They maintain harmonious relationship with the Christians in the state. The Group is in partnership with a Catholic based organisation known as Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC).

The Da'wah Group is also a member of the Inter-Faith Dialogue, a body comprising all religious organisations in Benue State with the intent of promoting peace under the auspices of Lutheran Church of Nigeria. The Group liaises with other international Islamic organisations like Munazamatil-Da'wat Islamiyya with Headquarters at Khartoum, Sudan and International Islamic University of Islamabad Pakistan. Members attend seminars and workshops in Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger and Libya.

- 6.5.2 The **Council of Imams and Ulama** is a very strong Muslim organisation consisting of all the Imams of Jumu'at mosques in the state. The initiator of this organisation is known as Malam Ahmed Mustapha Alifeti. Their aim is to enhance promotion of Islam and to create awareness for the Muslims to participate in the political process of the state. The Chairmanship of the Council of Imams and Ulama is rotational. The current Chairman is Malam Giwa Umar, the Chief Imam of Gboko Central Mosque.

The ideological orientation of the Council is to emphasise the unity of Muslims in the state. The council also emphasises the spirit of brotherhood and to co-exist peacefully with other faiths in the state. Members of the council are also members of Nigerian Inter-faith Action Association and Justice and Peace Development Commission.

The relationship between the council and the state government is cordial as most of them are civil servants. Most of the members are within the age bracket of 40 to 80, covering all the ethnic groups in the state. Members created a forum to brainstorm on how to live peacefully with the Christians in the state.

- 6.5.3 Benue State has six major branches of the **Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN)**, known as Area Councils. They are: Makurdi, Otukpo, Gboko, Katsina-Ala, Onyangede and Agatu. It also has branches in all secondary schools and tertiary institutions in the state. Membership consists of Muslim students in the state with average membership for each school ranging between 200 and 500.<sup>5</sup>

The idea of forming the MSSN was conceived by a group of students from Methodist boys High School, Kings College and Queens College in Lagos Island who were Muslims to safeguard their religion and Islamic culture and identity from the effect of Christian Evangelism and activities. The MSSN was officially inaugurated on May 30, 1954 at the Ansarundeen Primary School Hall, Alikoro, Lagos Island. The organisation later spread to Northern Nigeria and other parts of the country under a single umbrella.<sup>6</sup> When part of the present Kogi State came to Benue State from Kwara State as a result of the creation of Benue in 1976, the Igala Muslim students who then joined Benue State came with the MSSN.

<sup>4</sup> From Abubakar Aguda, one of the offices of Da'wah Group.

<sup>5</sup> From Amir Otukpo Area Council Muslim Community Secondary School Otukpo.

<sup>6</sup> From Amir Otukpo Area Council Muslim Community Secondary School Otukpo.

The MSSN is a member of the world Assembly of Muslim Youths. The MSSN has cordial relationship with the government. Government accepts advice from the Muslim students on issues that affect students in the state.

The dominant social value of the MSSN is adherence to Qur'an and Sunnah. The mode of selection of officials is through Shurah (consultation). Official's tenure lapses with the passing out of the most senior students at the secondary school level and a four year term for officials at the Area Council level. The MSSN controls the opinion of the Muslim youths in the state.

## 7 NOTABLE INDIVIDUALS

### 7.1 Ustaz Sulaiman Abdurrahman.

Sulaiman Abdurrahman is popularly known as Malam Sule in his local environment. He was born in 1970 at Otukpo in Benue State to a well known family of Abu-Ija who hailed from Adoka but settled in Otukpo. Adoka is in Otukpo LGA of Benue State.

Ustaz Sulaiman had his Primary School Education in Islamiyya Primary School Otukpo in 1982. He proceeded to Otukpo Teachers College where he obtained a Grade II Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) in 1991. After his teacher's training education, Ustaz Sulaiman took an appointment with the state Primary Education Board and was posted to Islamiyya Primary School Otukpo. He is a teacher to date.

Because of his love for Islam and his zeal to study, Ustaz Sulaiman went into studying of Qur'an and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). He also acquired the knowledge of textile designing. He is currently a teacher (both in the Primary School Board and in Islam), an independent preacher and a textile designer.

Ustaz Sulaiman established Al-Madarasatul Tarbiyatul Islamiyya, a tutorial school where Qur'an and other aspects of Islam are studied. The school is ranked one of the best in Otukpo today. He is one of the Da'wah Committee members in Otukpo Central Mosque where he takes pre-sermon every Friday before the Imam conducts the service. He is a truthful person and accepts nothing but the truth at all times. He is a member of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) a political party in Nigeria. He is the zonal co-coordinator of the party. He influences the political opinions of Otukpo Muslim communities.

### 7.2 Sheikh Muhammadu Madugu

Muhammadu Madugu is the Chief Imam of Otukpo Central Mosque. He hails from Bebeji in Kano State but was born in Otukpo in 1934. His parents settled in Otukpo and lived there until their deaths. Sheikh Muhammadu acquired Qur'anic education and studied *fiqh* (jurisprudence), Hadith (prophetic tradition) and Arabic language for a period of thirty years under the supervision of scholars from various places in Nigeria. He loves doing research and disseminating the information through preaching and lecturing to his students. He is married with two wives and eleven children. The Sheikh commands respect in his environment and he respects the constituted authorities, and the norms and values of his community.

Before old age set in, Sheikh Muhammad was a farmer and a trader in kolanuts. He used to travel from Otukpo to the western part of Nigeria to purchase the kolanuts in large quantities for retailing in Otukpo and its environs. He is a member of inter-faith coalition against HIV/AIDS and a leader of Muslim *ummah* (community) of Zone C comprising the eight local Governments in Idomaland. He performs and delegates

some Islamic rites like marriages, burial, naming ceremony and leading *sallah* in Otukpo area.

### 7.3 Imam Ahmad Mustapha Alifeti

Imam Ahmad Mustapha was born into a noble family of Imams in 1968. His father was an Imam and his grandfather was also an Imam. He attended Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) Primary School Alifeti in Apa Local Government Area of Benue state between 1974 and 1979. He proceeded to Islamic School, Lokoja where he obtained both Ordinary Level and Diploma in Arabic and Islamic Studies. Imam Ahmad also went to College of Education Ankpa and obtained the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). He is currently a head teacher and Imam of Alifeti Central Mosque. He speaks Idoma, Igala, Hausa, Arabic and English language.

Imam Ahmad is a known Islamic scholar in his area. He has a host of students learning the ‘parrot recitation’ of the Qur’an. Others are learning the interpretation of the Qur’an and *fiqh*. He is a *Da’ee* (preacher who goes about inviting people to Islam). He admits students from the various areas where he carries out his preaching.

Imam Ahmad co-founded the Council of Ulama’u in Apa LGA in the 90s, a forum that brought all the Muslims in the area together under one umbrella. He was given an international award as an ambassador of peace in 2000. With him many mosques have been built in Apa LGA. Imam Ahmed is a teacher, a mobilizer and a politician.

### 7.4 Malam Abubakar Umar Aguda

Malam Abubakar Umar Aguda is a native of Idah in Kogi State. He was born in 1958 to the family of Umar Aguda. He has been in Makurdi since 1986. He attended St. Michael Primary School, Idah between 1969 and 1976. He proceeded to St. Peters College, Idah and obtained his West African School Certificate Examination Council (O Level Certificate) in 1981. In 1982, Malam Abubakar Umar went to College of Education, Malumfashi in Katsina State and obtained the Nigeria Certificate in Education in 1984. He taught for some time before proceeding to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria to obtain a Bachelor Degree in Education (B.Ed.) in 1993, and then a Masters Degree in Education from the same university in 1997. He also obtained a Masters Degree in International Relations (MIR) from Benue State University in 2001.

Malam Abubakar took appointment from the Federal Ministry of Defence as a teacher with the Nigeria Air Force Base Secondary School Makurdi since 1986. He is presently a Chief Education Officer. While in the school, Malam Abubakar served the students as the National Vice President of the Muslim Students Society between 1985 and 1987. He was a representative in the World Assembly of Muslim Youths (WAMY) between 1992 and 1996. Malam Abubakar Umar has been a Nigeria director of the Munazamat Da’wat Al-Islamiyya based in Khartoum, Sudan. He coordinates admission of students into the International African University, Sudan. He attended many seminars and workshops on leadership and *da’wah* in many international universities like Islamic University of Islamabad, Pakistan, in Niger and Libya.

Malam Abubakar is one of the founding members of the Da’wah Group. He is a proprietor of Arabic Secondary School Makurdi. He also serves as consultant on education to all Islamic Schools in Benue state. Malam Abubakar Umar is a great Islamic actor in the state, he is an educationist, a *da’wah* activist, a grassroots mobilizer and highly respected by the Muslims of Benue State.

## 8. Selection of interviewees and Islamic Organisations

- 8.1 The selection of these groups was done through zones, namely Makurdi, Gboko, and Otukpo zones. In the cases of the Makurdi and Gboko zones, the interviewees are immigrant settlers while in the Otukpo zone (which comprises Otukpo, Agatu, Apa, and Ohimini Local Government Areas) comprises both indigenes and settlers. Abubakar Umar Aguda and Ustaz Isa Jen are from Makurdi zone, Mallam Giwa Umar is from Gboko zone, while Ustaz Suleiman Abduduraman, Zakeriyah Yahaya, Shaykh Muhammed Madugu, Mallam Mustapha Alifeti, Mallam Yahaya Ogule, Hajiya Fatima Bintu Suleiman, Alhaji Muhammed Ibrahim Ajakpe, Chief Shaibu Yunusa, Mallam Jibril Yusuf, Musa Suleiman Ujor, Zainab Ibrahim Khalid, and Malam Umar Ibrahim Khalid are from Otukpo zone.
- 8.2 The Islamic Organisations selected are: Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN) zones, Council of Imams and Lilama Ansarudeen Society of Nigeria, Fathal Qarzeb, Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria, Widayatu Muslimat Charity Organisation, the Da'wah Group, Idoma Muslim Youth, and Fityanni Islam. Some of these organisations are politically oriented, like the Council of Ulama and Imams. Some are social-culturally oriented with the Idoma Muslim youths, the Ansarudeen Society of Nigeria, and Fathni Qareeb.

## 9. List of interviews conducted.

- 9.1 Fifteen interviews were conducted in a period of 11 days, from February 16 to March 7, 2011. Below is a table showing their names, age, locations, and dates of the interviews.

<b>Nr</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date interview</b>
1	Ustaz Suleiman Abduduraman	41	16/2/2011
2	Zakeriyah Yahaya	30	16/2/2011
3	Shaykh Muhammed Madugu	87	17/2/2011
4	Malam Umar Ibrahim Khalid	32	18/2/2011
5	Ustaz Isa Jen	41	21/2/2011
6	Abubakar Umar Aguda	53	21/2/2011
7	Mallam Giwa Umar	55	22/2/2011
8	Mallam Mustapha Alifeti	43	25/2/2011
9	Mallam Yahaya Ogule	55	26/2/2011
10	Hajiya Fatima Bintu Suleiman	57	4/3/2011
11	Alhaji Muhammed Ibrahim Ajakpe	96	4/3/2011
12	Chief Shaibu Yunusa	47	4/3/2011
13	Mallam Jibril Yusuf	45	5/3/2011
14	Musa Suleiman Ujor	41	6/3/2011
15	Zainab Ibrahim Khalid	28	7/3/2011