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A Study of
Violence-Related Deaths
in Isin and Oke-Ero Local
Government Areas of Kwara
State (2006-2014)



The 'Invisible Violence' Project

Based in the premises of the French Institute for Research in Africa on the campus of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria Watch is a database project that has monitored fatal incidents and human security in Nigeria since 1 June 2006. The database compiles violent deaths on a daily basis, including fatalities resulting from accidents. It relies on a thorough reading of the Nigerian press (15 dailies & weeklies) and reports from human rights organisations. The two main objectives are to identify dangerous areas and assess the evolution of violence in the country.

However, violence is not always reported by the media, especially in remote rural areas that are difficult to access. Hence, in the last 8 years, Nigeria Watch has not recorded any report of fatal incidents in some of the 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the Nigerian Federation. There are two possibilities: either these places were very peaceful, or they were not covered by the media. This series of surveys thus investigates 'invisible' violence.

By 1 November 2014, there were still 23 LGAs with no report of fatal incidents in the Nigeria Watch database: Udung Uko and Urue-Offong/Oruko (Akwa Ibom), Kwaya Kusar (Borno), Nafada (Gombe), Auyo, Gagawawa, Kaugama and Yankwashi (Jigawa), Ingawa and Matazu (Katsina), Sakaba (Kebbi), Bassa, Igalamela-Odolu and Mopa-Muro (Kogi), Toto (Nassarawa), Ifedayo (Osun), Gudu and Gwadabaw (Sokoto), Ussa (Taraba), and Karasuwa, Machina, Nguru and Yunusari (Yobe).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Study of Violence-Related Deaths in Isin and Oke-Ero
Local Government Areas of Kwara State (2006-2014)
Project Invisible Violence

Introduction	4
Methodology and limitations of the study.....	4
Isin Local Government Area: the context	5
Isin Local Government Area: the findings.....	6
Oke-Ero Local Government: the context	13
Oke-Ero Local Government: the findings.....	14
Conclusion.....	19
List of Tables.....	20
List of Acronyms and Abbreviation	20

Gbemisola ANIMASAWUN & Fatai A. AREMU*

**A Study of Violence-Related Deaths in Isin
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Kwara State (2006-2014)**

Project Invisible Violence

Executive Summary

There are several violence-related deaths across Nigeria which escape public knowledge primarily because they are not captured by the media. Such cases of ‘invisible’ yet destructive incidents vary from high to low-level violent occurrences with attendant loss of lives and disruption of livelihoods.

The central objective of this study is thus to unravel and document such incidents in Isin and Oke-Ero Local Government Areas of Kwara State between 2006 and 2014. Guided by the research instrument of the Nigeria Watch Project, a total of 100 copies of questionnaire were administered and complemented by 6 key informants Interviews (KII) and 2 Focused Group Discussions (FGD). The findings show that fatal violence in these rural and peri-urban communities was underreported in the media and resulted mainly from motor accidents, criminal activities and border disputes.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the advent of citizen-journalism and the general democratization of information through community radios and social media, certain forms of abuses, excesses and violence still escape being reported. Ranging from the micro-space of abusive matrimonial relations to brutal state-society relations, different forms of violence go unreported in both peace and war times. The dearth of data or non-reporting of these forms of violence cannot be without implications for the victims, their immediate communities, the larger society, the media and the research community.

An understanding of the factors responsible for the non-appearance of such communities like Oke-Ero and Isin Local Government Areas in Kwara State throws more light into the structures, issues, actors and relationships which constrain the visibility of violence, as documented in this research based on field work done in the two communities under focus. This research therefore seeks to unearth, contextualize and explain the factors that have veiled violence-related deaths from June 2006 to May 2014 in contexts such as fatal incidents caused by accidents, communal clashes, crime, religious or political issues.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Conducted in November 2014, the investigation relied on the gathering of quantitative and qualitative data. A total of 100 copies of questionnaire, 6 Key Informants Interviews (KII) and 2 Focused Group Discussions (FGD) were utilized for generating the primary data for the study. Key Informants included

community leaders, officers of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence corps (NSCDC), and representatives of the Motorcyclist Association and the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW). The FGDs were held at the Local Government Areas Headquarters with civil servants, motorcyclists, community chiefs, vigilantes, as well as youth and market women leaders. The discussions were used to validate the existence of violent incidents and provide more details about them.

The limitations of the study include the inability of respondents to remember the actual dates and the totality of violence-related deaths in their localities since 2006. Data had to be crosschecked from hospitals and with security personnel who acted in their individual capacity. The uncooperative attitude of the members of the Law enforcement agencies to allow access to official record also restricted the investigation.

ISIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: THE CONTEXT

With headquarters in Owu-Isin, Isin LGA is located in Kwara South senatorial zone and had a population of 59,841 people at the 2006 census. It was created out of the old Irepodun Local Government Area on 6th December, 1996. Despite the presence of mineral resources like granite, gravel, literate, feldspar, mica, tantalite, koalin, talc, quartzite and totmali, there is no industry and residents are mostly farmers and traders living in the rural South Central part of Igbomina land and the North Western (i.e. Eku-Osi) part of Yoruba land. They have a rich Igbomina and Yoruba culture with the Agbasin, Egungun and Aworoko festivals. They also have tourist attractions such as: the Ijoko Waterfalls, Aise Waterfalls, Ati Waterfalls, Tii Oye Stone Images, Alaguso Mountain, Agbasin Shrine and Kooyi Shrine.

Isin LGA has eleven (11) wards and three (3) districts: Isin I, Isin II and Olla. It covers about 644 square kilometers with thirty-six towns and communities known as “Eku merindinlogoji”, including Oke-Onigbin, Edidi, Isanlu, Alla, Iwo, Iji Isin, Ijara Isin, Owu-Isin, Oke-Aba, Pamo, Odo-Eku, Oba-Isin, Kudu Owode, Igbesi, Oponda, Sabaja, Iwo Odu-Ore, Oke-Oyi, and Eleyin. Olla Town was later merged with the Local Government. The road distance from Owu-Isin to Kwara State capital in Ilorin is approximately 72 kilometers. Yet Isin is not isolated. Eminent sons of the LGA have produced important political offices holders such as: former Governor and one-time Minister of Communications Chief Cornelius Adebayo; Deputy Governor Chief Joel Ogundeji; incumbent chairman of the Kwara State Chapter of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Akogun Oyedepo; Justice Sikiru Oyinloye of the Kwara State High Court; and Nigerian Army’s Major-General Shina Ogunbiyi.

ISIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: THE FINDINGS

In this context, the patriarchal nature of the Yoruba probably explains why there were more male respondents than female in the survey (see table 1). Majority of the respondents were married and between the age ranges of 31-40 years. Most of them were civil servants, self-employed and farmers. Furthermore, majority of the respondents had lived in Isin LGA for the number years covering the timeframe of the study.

SEX	N	%
Male	34	68.0
Female	16	32.0
Total	50	100
AGE	N	%
20-30 Years	12	24.0
31-40 Years	21	42.0
41-50 Years	15	30.0
51 Years and above	2	4.0
Total	50	100
MARITAL STATUS	N	%
Single	14	28.0
Married	26	52.0
Widow	10	20.0
Total	50	100
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	N	%
Civil Servants	15	30.0
Self Employed	10	20.0
Farming	11	22.0
Trading	6	12.0
Security	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0
YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN THE COMMUNITY	N	%
5-10 Years	16	32.0
11-15 Years	10	20.0
16-20 years	3	6.0
21 Years and above	1	2.0
Since Birth	20	40.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 1 - Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Isin LGA. Source: Fieldwork, November 2014

The study reveals that Isin is relatively peaceful: 72 % of the respondents did not consider the LGA to be violent and 82% were not aware of any clashes or breakdown of law and order in the area in the last ten years. However, some remembered the following fatal incidents:

S/N	DATE OF EVENT	COMMUNITY	CAUSE OF EVENTS	DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS	N° OF FATALITIES
1.	2006	Ijara-Isin	Political issue	Conflict about chieftaincy title between Iji-Isin, Oke-Igunsi and Ijara-Isin (Ile Olusin clan of king makers). A total of 15 died between 1992 and 2008.	3
2.	2006-2013	Oke-Onigbin	Land dispute	The chief of a king-maker family, the Esinkin Onigbin, is excommunicated from his palace. A total of 8 nobles die in a period of 9 years (2004-2013), including 5 from the Esinkin Onigbin clan.	5
3.	12 01 2011	Eleyin	Motor Accident	Due to brake failure	3
4.	14 01 2011	Eleyin	Motor Accident	n.a.	3
5.	05 02 2011	Oke-aba	Explosion, Oil	A petrol black market site	2

			distribution	exploded	
6.	05 03 2011	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A motorcyclist hit and killed an old man instantly	1
7.	27 03 2011	Edidi	Motor Accident	Crash between a car and a commercial motor cyclist	2
8.	11 06 2011	Edidi	Motor Accident	Crash of an eighteen-seater bus	6
9.	27 06 2011	Edidi	Motor Accident	A car slammed its brakes on a bursted tyre	2
10.	04 07 2011	Oke-onigbin	Crime	A young man found dead in a garage	1
11.	29 07 2011	Aba-kajola	Motor Accident	Car crash	1
12.	28 08 2011	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	Toyota Hilux crash	2
13.	19 09 2011	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A car had a head-on collision with a stationary Dangote truck. All on board died immediately	3
14.	19 09 2011	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	Two cars crash	3
15.	31 03 2012	Oke-onigbin/Edidi	Crime	A commercial bus belonging to El-ladoma Transit comprising of	1

GBEMISOLA ANIMASAWUN & FATAI A. AREMU – A STUDY OF VIOLENCE-RELATED DEATHS IN ISIN AND OKE-ERO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF KWARA STATE (2006-2014) 11

				twelve corps members and two business men was attacked by armed robbers. One of the business men was killed	
16.	07 10 2012	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A girl was hit by an over-speeding car	1
17.	09 04 2013	Oke-oyi	Motor Accident	Two vehicles had a head-on collision	1
18.	23 04 2013	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A commercial bus tried to avoid a pothole	1
19.	27 11 2013	Oke-Onigbin	Motor Accident	An Audi car dangerously overtook a truck	4
20.	2013	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	An old woman was killed	1
21.	2013	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A female primary school student was hit by a vehicle and died immediately	1
22.	2013	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A man was hit simultaneously by	1

				two cars and died instantly	
23.	2013	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A Markurdi man was hit by a car and died immediately	1
24.	26 05 2014	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	An old woman hit by a car died instantly	1
25.	04 06 2014	Oke-onigbin	Motor Accident	A ten years old boy ran into a moving car and died instantly	1
26.	06 06 2014	Isanlu	Motor Accident	A commercial motor cyclist was hit by a car	1
27.	10 08 2014	Oke-onigbin/Edidi	Motor Accident	A security van lost control	3

Table 2: Violent Events in Isin LGA, 2006-2014`Source: Fieldwork, November 2014

The table 2 reveals that fifty-five (55) violent deaths occurred in Isin LGA from 2006 to 2014, including forty-three (43) from accidents. The investigation shows that most of the fatalities were caused by motor accidents involving cars, busses and motorcycles. Data gathered from the FGD also suggested that these incidents often resulted from over speeding on the federal road that leads to Abuja through Isin. The problem has led to the building of speed breakers on the roads in Edidi and Oke-Onigbin communities.

According to the survey, 96% of the respondents also expressed the view that national dailies did not report violence in Isin LGA, as against 4% who thought the contrary. The situation was perceived as resulting from the rustic and bucolic nature of the area, as well as the lack of economic impetus that could have attracted pressmen. Conclusively, residents believed that Isin was relatively peaceful, so there was not much to report anyway. Furthermore, it should be noted that throughout the course of the study, the researcher did not encounter any correspondents of national newspapers in the area.

OKE-ERO LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THE CONTEXT

With headquarters at Ilofa, Oke-Ero LGA is located in the Kwara South senatorial zone and was excised out of the defunct Ekiti Local Government on the 4th December, 1996. It shares boundaries with Irepodun LGA to the west, Moba LGA in Ekiti State to the south, Ekiti LGA of Kwara State to the east, and Ifedayo LGA in Osun State to the south. Oke-Ero covers an area of 445 Square Kilometers and had a population of 56,970 at the 2006 census. There are three political districts and ten wards: Ekan (consisting of Ekan, Aiyedun, Imoji/Ilale/Erinmope), Ilofffa / Odo-Owa (consisting of Ilofffa, Imode/Egosi, Odo-Owa I and Odo-Owa II) and Idofin (consisting of Idofin Igbona I, Idofin Igbona II and Idofin Ado Ashe). By road, the distance from Ilofa to Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, is approximately 84 kilometers.

The inhabitants are predominately Yoruba traders and farmers specialized in the production of cassava, sugar cane, yam, kola nut, cocoa, cashew, and palm oil. Oke-Ero is also endowed with tourist attractions like the Imole-Boja Rock Shelter at Iloffa/Odo-Owa District, the Ero-Omola Waterfall and Ojokolo Hill in Idofin District, and the Royal Accessories Manufacturing Industries in Ekan-Meje District. In Kwara State, the area has produced reputable politicians such as former Commissioners for Agriculture and Water resources, respectively Barrister Anthony Towoju and Dr. Abraham Ashaolu. Since the creation of the Local Government in 1996, there have been two sole administrators appointed during military rule and six elected chairmen. However, residents complain of government neglect.

OKE-ERO LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THE FINDINGS

In this context, the patriarchal nature of the Yoruba probably explains why there were more male respondents than female in the survey (see table 3). As in Isin, majority of the respondents were married and between the age ranges of 31-40 years and 41-50 years. Most of them were civil servants, while significant percentages were self-employed and farmers. Furthermore, majority of the respondents had lived in Oke-Ero LGA since birth and were conversant with the fatal events during the period under review.

SEX	N	%
Male	29	58.0
Female	21	42.0
Total	50	100
AGE	N	%
20-30 Years	2	4.0
31-40 Years	21	42.0
41-50 Years	15	30.0

51 Years and above	12	24.0
Total	50	100
MARITAL STATUS	N	%
Single	4	8.0
Married	41	82.0
Widow	50	10.0
Total	50	100
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	N	%
Civil Servants	15	30.0
Self Employed	11	22.0
Farming	11	22.0
Trading	7	14.0
Security	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0
YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN THE COMMUNITY	N	%
5-10 Years	11	22.0
11-15 Years	12	24.0
16-20 years	7	14.0
21 Years and above	7	14.0
Since Birth	13	26.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 3 - Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Oke-Ero LGA - Source: Fieldwork, November 2014

The study reveals that Oke-Ero LGA is quite peaceful. Majority of the respondents (90%) do not consider the place to be violent and 84% are not aware of any clashes or breakdown of law and order in the area in the last ten years. However, some remembered the following fatal incidents:

S/N	DATE OF EVENT	COMMUNITY	CAUSE OF EVENT	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT	NO. OF FATALITIES
1.	2006	Iloffa	Motor Accident	A truck loaded with cement killed a motor cyclist	1
2.	2007	Odo-owa	Cattle Grazing	A farmer was killed on his farm by Fulani herdsmen	1
3.	01 03 2008	Ilale	Other Accident	A man died instantly after falling from a palm tree	1
4.	2008	Odo-owa	Motor Accident	A Dangote truck hit a motor cyclist who died immediately	1
5.	2008	Ekan	Other Accident	A young girl was bitten by a snake and died on the way to hospital	1
6.	10 2009	Iloffa, Odo-owa	Motor Accident	A drunkard found dead	1
7.	2009	Iloffa, Odo-owa	Land Issue	Boundary dispute between Iloffa and Odo-Owa	6
8.	2009	Iloffa, Odo-owa	Land Issue	Another boundary dispute between Iloffa and Odo-Owa	6

GBEMISOLA ANIMASAWUN & FATAI A. AREMU – A STUDY OF VIOLENCE-RELATED DEATHS IN ISIN AND OKE-ERO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF KWARA STATE (2006-2014)

9.	10 2010	Ayedun	Cattle Grazing	Fulani herdsmen invaded a farm and killed a man and his son	2
10.	2010	Odo-owa	Cattle Grazing	A man was killed in his farm by Fulani herdsmen	1
11.	04 08 2012	Ilofffa	Motor Accident	A mad man was killed by a vehicle	1
12.	2012	Odo-osi	Crime	A man's dead body was found on his farm	1
13.	2012	Ilofffa	Motor Accident	A motor cyclist hit a commercial bus	6
14.	02 2013	Odo-owa	Crime	The dead body of a drunkard was found	1
15.	21 07 2013	Kajola	Motor Accident	An old farmer was killed by a car	1
16.	07 09 2013	Ilofffa	Crime	An Igbo man's dead body was found right in his house with machete cut	1
17.	07 10 2013	Ilofffa	Motor Accident	Motorcycle crash	1
18.	10 2013	Ilofffa	Other Accident	A Benue man fell from a palm tree and died the following day in hospital	1
19.	2013	Ilofffa	Motor Accident	A jeep crashed very close to the Oke-Ero local government	2
20.	25 02 2014	Odo-owa	Motor Accident	A motorcyclist crossed the road	1

				carelessly	
21.	29 07 2014	Ekan	Motor Accident	Auto crash	1
22.	10 08 2014	Kajola	Motor Accident	A motorcyclist hit a young girl and killed her instantly	1
23.	04 09 2014	Odo-owa	Motor Accident	A motorcyclist hit a sand bag on the road	1
24.	09 2014	Iloffa	Motor Accident	A car killed an old farmer	1
25.	10 2014	Idofin-Igbona	Other Accident	A building under construction collapsed	1
26.	11 2014	Egosi-Ayedun	Motor Accident	A commercial motorcyclist with two passengers had an accident and died instantly	1
27.	2014	Iloffa	Motor Accident	A car hit two pupils, killing one instantly while the other died later in a hospital	2

Table 4 - Violent Events in Oke-Ero LGA, 2006-2014 - Source: Fieldwork, November 2014

As shown in the table 4, respondents remembered about forty-five (45) violent deaths in Oke-Ero LGA between June 2006 and May 2014. A majority resulted from accidents and twelve (12) from boundary disputes. However, people were only able to remember fatal incidents that affected them or their relatives in one way or the other. As in the case of Isin LGA, these occurrences were not reported by the media.

According to the survey, 94% of respondents thought that violence in Oke-Oro LGA was indeed underreported by the national media, as against 2% who disagreed and 4% who did not know. To them, journalists were not attracted by the area because of underdevelopment, the distance from the state capital, and the lack of ethnic or religious crises. Conclusively, respondents also believed that their locality was moderately peaceful.

CONCLUSION

The two rural government areas under study confirm that motor accidents are a major problem in the country. They also show that certain fatalities do not get media attention and remain 'invisible'. Despite the development of information and communication technology, many acts of violence still go unreported because of paucity of funds and dearth of personnel in the national newspapers.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Isin LGA

Table 2: Violent Events Recorded in Isin LGA, 2006-2014

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Oke-Ero LGA

Table 4: Violent Events Recorded in Oke-Ero LGA, 2006-2014

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

FGD Focus Group Discussion

KII Key Informants Interview

LGA Local Government Area

NSCDC Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps