



Nigeria – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 7 March 2017

Do Yoruba in Nigeria face social and/or socio-economic difficulties in terms of integration into society when re-locating to provinces outside of Yoruba strongholds (Northern and South Western Nigeria)?

Information specifically referring to social and/or socio-economic difficulties faced by Yoruba who relocate to areas of Nigeria outside Yorubaland was not found among sources available to the Research and Information Unit.

Dr. Chikwe Agbakwuru of the University Of Port Harcourt, in a paper published by the European Scientific Journal, refers to ethnic prejudice in Nigeria as follows:

“One of the major impediments to peaceful co-existence in Nigeria is ethnic prejudice. It is negative feelings towards people based on their membership in a group (Brehim, Kassin & Fein, 2005). According to Iwe (1990), ethnic prejudice refers to derogatory stereotype, often very resistant to change which is cherished by one ethnic group against the other. Research reports (Iwe, 1990 & Agulanna 2008) as well as personal experience show that like in any other big nation or society, ethnic prejudice is entrenched in Nigeria as each ethnic group has some negative stereotypes it cherishes about other ethnic groups.” (Agbakwuru, Dr. Chikwe (February 2013) *Ethnic Prejudice and the Problem of Peaceful Co-Existence in Nigeria*, European Scientific Journal, Vol.9, No.5)

In a chapter titled “Background: Religion, Ethnicity, and Power in Nigeria” a report from Human Rights Watch states:

“Following Nigeria’s independence in 1960, the country’s three administrative regions—Northern, Western, and Eastern—were eventually divided into 36 states, including Plateau and Kaduna. State and local governments in Plateau and Kaduna—as well as in varying degrees other states across Nigeria—enforced divisive state and local government policies that discriminate against individuals solely on the basis of their ethnic heritage or in some cases religious identity. Ethnic groups that can trace their ancestry to those regarded as the original inhabitants of an area are classified as ‘indigene’ groups, while all other people in that area, regardless of how long they or their families have lived there, are referred to as ‘settlers,’ and relegated to permanent second-class status. Non-indigenes are often denied access to state and local government jobs and academic scholarships, while those who cannot find a local government in Nigeria to grant them an ‘indigene certificate’ are effectively ‘stateless’ and cannot apply for federal government employment, thus denying them access to some of the most important avenues of socio-economic mobility.” (Human Rights Watch (4 December 2013) *“Leave Everything to God”: Accountability for Inter-Communal Violence in Plateau and Kaduna States, Nigeria*, pp.34-35)

The 2016 US Department of State country report for Nigeria, in a section titled “National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities”, states:

“Members of all ethnic groups practiced ethnic discrimination, particularly in private-sector hiring patterns and the segregation of urban neighborhoods. A long history of tension existed between some ethnic groups.” (US Department of State (3 March 2017) *2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Nigeria*, p.37)

This section of the report also states:

“The law prohibits ethnic discrimination by the government, but most ethnic groups claimed to be marginalized in terms of government revenue allocation, political representation, or both.” (ibid, p.38)

Referring to discrimination against ethnic groups this section states:

“All citizens have the right to live in any part of the country, but state and local governments frequently discriminated against ethnic groups not indigenous to their areas, occasionally compelling individuals to return to a region where their ethnic group originated but where they no longer had ties. State and local governments sometimes compelled nonindigenous persons to move by threats, discrimination in hiring and employment, or destruction of their homes. Those who chose to stay sometimes experienced further discrimination, including denial of scholarships and exclusion from employment in the civil service, police, and military.” (ibid, p.38)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

Agbakwuru, Dr. Chikwe (February 2013) *Ethnic Prejudice and the Problem of Peaceful Co-Existence in Nigeria*, European Scientific Journal, Vol.9, No.5
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US Department of State (3 March 2017) *2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Nigeria*
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Sources Consulted:

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European Country of Origin Information Network
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Lexis Nexis
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
UK Home Office
UNHCR Refworld
US Department of State