



YUSUFU BALA USMAN INSTITUTE

END OF THE YEAR REPORT

2
0
2
5

16 Circular Road, GRA Zaria Kaduna State, Nigeria
t: +234 805 346 5324 and +234 806 860 9088
e: info@YBU-institute.org
P.O. Box 52, Zaria





IN A WORLD AT WAR, WHERE IS THE PATH TO PEACE IN NIGERIA?
Symposium Presented by the
YUSUFU BALA USMAN INSTITUTE
in partnership with SPRING
to Celebrate WORLD PEACE DAY

DATE: Wednesday 24th September, 2025 **TIME:** 11:00am - 1:00pm **VENUE:** 16 Circular Road, GRA, Zaria

Presenters	Discussions
1. Ambassador Sani Bako MFR (International Issues)	1. Prof. Bello S.Y. Alhassan
2. Dr. Nufaisa Garba Ahmad (Domestic Issues)	2. Dr. Rabi Bara'u
	3. Mrs. Habiba Saddiq
	4. Mrs. Adama Adamu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Research on Land Governance Ecology and Insecurity in Northern Nigeria	1
2.0	Wilton Park Conference	2
3.0	Activities Marking The 20 th Anniversary of The Death of Yusufu Bala Usman	3
4.0	The Institute Website	5
5.0	The Archives	5
6.0	World Peace Day	6
7.0	The Institute Brochure	6
8.0	Kano to Maradi Rail Project	7
9.0	Capacity Building Training For Fire Prevention	7
10.0	Conclusion	8

2025 END OF YEAR REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2025 has been a very tumultuous year-- in the world and in Nigeria. With wars and conflicts occurring in so many places: from Gaza to Sudan, to Ukraine, to the Congo, to Venezuela; the specter of Donald Trump, and others, it is sometimes difficult to focus on the situation here at home in Nigeria where we are faced with many serious problems – the failing economy with its increase in poverty and hopelessness, intensifying insecurity, and daily crises of all sorts. But despite everything, we have tried to concentrate on our work, and hopefully we have managed to succeed in achieving many of our objectives.

We have had a very busy year. We were engaged in a major research programme, as well as a number of other activities. In all, we feel the year has been very productive and we have expanded our skills in a number of areas.

1.1 RESEARCH ON LAND GOVERNANCE, ECOLOGY and INSECURITY IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.

Throughout the year we have been involved in a major research project on Land Governance, Ecology and Insecurity in Northern Nigeria, focusing on four states: Kaduna, Katsina, Jigawa and Bauchi. The impetus for this research stemmed from our findings in previous projects like the ESIA for the Kano to Maradi Railway line and the Face of Poverty in Nigeria, that the issue of land grabbing was an important contributor to rural poverty. We therefore decided to investigate the issue further to document it in its various dimensions. We were fortunate to receive

a grant from the British FCDO (Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office) under the Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria (SPRING) programme, administered by Tetra Tech, an international development organization. We were given a 2-year grant beginning in November, 2024.

In the closing months of 2024, we held an initial meeting at the Institute to organize the work, which involved constituting teams to conduct fieldwork in the four states selected. Before the end of 2024, some of the teams had already deployed to the field to collect necessary data and the fieldwork continued throughout 2025. The teams conducted an initial 3 weeks of fieldwork in the dry season, and once rains began in 2025, another 3-4 weeks of fieldwork was conducted in the selected areas in each of the four states.



Figure 1 Organising meeting

This research constitutes one of the first systematic investigations in Northern Nigeria to combine land use analysis, climate and ecological observations, security mapping and community-led narratives from farmers, herders, women, youth, and persons with disabilities. In 2025, our teams conducted over 2900

interviews, focus group discussions and quantitative-based surveys, accompanied by on site observations. The study sought to understand the interplay between land alienation as evidenced by land grabbing, farmer-herder relations, gender dynamics and rising threats of banditry and rural displacement.

Tetra Tech closely monitored our research in the field, and checked regularly for expenditure control, so we had numerous meetings with their team throughout the year to give them feedback on the progress of the work.



Figure 2 Interviewing in the field

At the end of the project, we intend to disseminate our findings by compiling a comprehensive report, publishing articles in relevant journals highlighting the results of the research, and producing a documentary film to make the issues known to a broad audience in Nigeria and beyond.

Other intervention projects are also being prepared to be delivered in 2026 including informative radio programmes in Hausa and Fulfulde; a pilot programme in partnership with the Institute of Agricultural Research, ABU, Zaria, for the mitigation of ginger pathogens which have decimated ginger production in many communities in Kaduna State leading to

high levels of poverty; and a programme introducing communities to the techniques and benefits of biogas as a fuel in order to reduce the dependence on charcoal and firewood which have devastating effects on the environment.

We feel that the issues involved in this research are of critical importance to the well-being of farmers and pastoralists in the northern part of Nigeria and we hope that our findings and recommendations will go some way to mitigate the numerous injustices that they are subjected to by government agencies, traditional rulers, politicians, and wealthy individuals who take advantage of their powerlessness to deprive them of the land that is their sole means of subsistence.



Figure 3 Pastoralists relocating due to loss of grazing area

2.0 WILTON PARK CONFERENCE

In March, our Director Attahiru Usman and Dr. Adam Higazi (our Associate and a lead researcher on the Project), were invited by the British FCDO (Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office) to participate in a roundtable discussion on the issue of security in the Nigerian Sahel region, to be held in Wilton Park, in Sussex. At the three-day meeting, they presented a paper

outlining some of the findings from our research on Land Governance, Ecology and Security entitled “Land Governance and Sustainable Livelihoods in Nigeria”. Adam was chosen to be the rapporteur for the meeting.



Figure 4 Attahiru with British and Nigerian Ministers of Foreign Affairs at Wilton Park Conference.

The report was well received. Further opportunities for cooperation with the FCDO were established, leading to a follow-up meeting held in Abuja in October where Adam represented the Institute. He was nominated to be the rapporteur for the proceedings as he was for the previous meeting at Wilton Park.

3.0 ACTIVITIES MARKING THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF YUSUFU BALA USMAN:

(1) THE BOOK

Yusufu Bala Usman died on the 24th of September 2005. As this year was the 20th anniversary of that event, we felt it was appropriate to memorialise him in various ways. Since 2024, we had decided to produce a volume of essays in his honour, with the theme of historiography. A three-person editorial committee was constituted consisting of the Director, and

Professors Ibrahim Abdullah of Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Sierra Leone and Samaila Suleiman of Bayero University, in Kano. A title for the volume was selected: *History as Praxis: Essays in Honour of Yusufu Bala Usman*. Our long-time book designer in London, Glenda Pattenden, produced a cover. We sent out a call for papers to a wide range of scholars who we thought could produce the type of chapters we wanted, i.e., ones that engaged seriously with Bala’s ideas rather than focusing on his person, and that made truly original contributions to the topic of historiography.

We received abstracts from a number of scholars, but many of them did not meet the standards we had set, so we were forced to reject them, including some from established professors. Initially we had hoped to have the book ready for the anniversary date in September, but that did not happen. We have now received a number of papers that we believe are outstanding, from international as well as African scholars. As of this writing, we are still waiting for a few others that we expect will be submitted very soon. Once these have been submitted, we will put the book together and arrange for publication, hopefully in the first quarter of 2026.

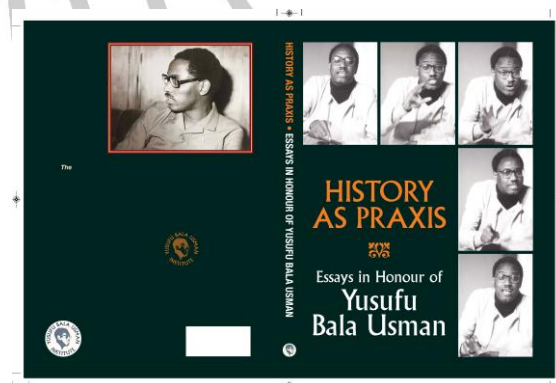
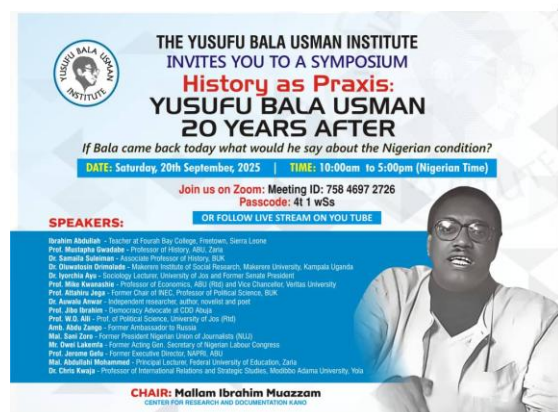


Figure 5 The book cover

(2) THE SYMPOSIUM

To commemorate the occasion, we organised a symposium on the 20th of September. To tie it in with the theme of the book, we entitled it: History as Praxis: Yusufu Bala Usman 20 Years After. We posed the question: “If Bala came back today, what would he say about the Nigerian condition?”



We selected a number of subjects that Bala had written about and requested the presenters to make a short oral presentation on their assigned topic, referencing Bala's thoughts and ideas, and allowing time for discussion from those in the audience in Zaria and virtually. For the speakers, we chose a range of scholars and political activists including a number of former students, comrades and associates who had worked with Bala in his political activities in the PRP and elsewhere. These included Ibrahim Abdullah, Dr. Samaila Suleiman, Dr. Oluwatosi Orimolade, Amb. Abdu Zango, Mallam Sani Zorro, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, Prof. Mike Kwanashie, Prof. Attahiru Jega, Dr. Auwalu Anwar, Prof. Jibo Ibrahim, Prof. W. O. Ali, Mr. Owei Lakemfa, Prof. Jerome Gefu, Mal. Abdullahi Mohammed and Dr. Chris Kwaja.

The symposium was a day-long event, running from 10 a.m. to about 6 p.m. Many

of the participants came physically to Zaria, while others participated virtually on Zoom. Special guests were invited to the venue at the Institute to view and participate in the discussion. The attendees spent the time between and after the presentations re-connecting with old friends who they hadn't seen for many years. The symposium was widely advertised on social media and was viewed on Zoom and live streamed on YouTube.



Figure 6 Speakers giving their presentations



Figure 7 Director presenting her welcoming remarks

The presentations were consistently fascinating and profound. All felt that it could have gone on much longer but of course hunger and fatigue set in by the end of the day, which was assuaged by a lavish dinner held in the evening.

Everyone agreed that it was a wonderful occasion and most of those who came expressed hope that the Institute would organize many more such events in the future.

It was decided that the speakers would send in written copies of their oral presentation so that the Institute could compile them and publish them as a pamphlet or small book in order to have a lasting reminder of the exciting discussions. This process is currently going on and we expect to publish the collection in early 2026. Meanwhile, the video recording of the event will be uploaded to the Yusufu Bala Usman Institute YouTube channel so that everyone will be able to watch it. Information on the symposium and other activities can be accessed on our website.

4.0 THE INSTITUTE WEBSITE

During 2025 we updated the Institute website and gave it a new look and expanded content. We included a section on the library, which enables prospective users to register for library access. We included more sections where you can view our activities, our reports, all issues of the *Analyst*, video and audio tapes, and online purchases of the books we have published. The website can be accessed at: www.YBU-Institute.org or via the QR Code



5.0 THE ARCHIVES

The Yusufu Bala Usman Institute Archive continued its mission in 2025 to preserve and enhance public access to Nigeria's valuable historical documents, with a particular focus on political movements and radical intellectual history.

During 2025, the archive successfully sorted, indexed, and digitized 703 files in chronological order, encompassing a total of 33,281 individual documents. In addition, 2,002 files were sorted but remain undigitized, while 220 files are yet to be sorted and digitized. These achievements reflect the archive's commitment to systematic preservation and improved accessibility.

A major milestone was the commencement of the digitization project's second phase, supported by the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) Abuja in collaboration with IFRA-Nigeria. This phase enabled the recruitment of additional skilled personnel, enhancing the archive's capacity for cataloguing and digitization. Professional preservation techniques were also introduced to safeguard fragile documents, ensuring their longevity for future research.

Notably, over 50 folders containing more than 550 documents were digitized and hosted on the Archives of Nigerian Left website(<https://archivesofnigerianleft.ng>). This digital hub is rapidly becoming a key resource for scholars and the public interested in Nigeria's radical and political history.

The year also saw the establishment of a multimedia unit within the archive, dedicated to converting old VHS video and audio cassettes into MP3 formats. This

initiative will further enrich the archive's offerings and contribute to a deeper understanding of Dr. Yusufu Bala Usman's role in Nigeria's political history.

Finally, the Institute's archivists participated in a two-day training session, "Archiving the Nigerian Left," held in Abuja, further strengthening professional capacity and collaboration within the archival community.

6.0 WORLD PEACE DAY

In September the Institute celebrated the World Peace Day with a symposium designed to inform the public, and particularly the youth, of the issues involved in creating and sustaining peaceful existence in Nigeria and in the world. The theme of the meeting was: "In a World at War, Where is the Path to Peace in Nigeria?"



Figure 6 Presenters at Peace Day Symposium

We engaged presenters to speak on both local and international issues, and show the connections between them. The speakers were Ambassador Sani Bako, MFR and Dr. Nufaisa Garba Ahmed. Prof. Bello S. Y. Alhassan, Dr. Rabi Bara'u, Mrs. Habiba Saddiq and Mrs. Adama Adamu were the discussants. All did an excellent job of presenting the issues in a straightforward way to make them

understood to the audience which comprised students from selected primary and secondary schools in the Zaria area and some undergraduates from Ahmadu Bello University. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the presentations and engaged in a very lively discussion, which indicated to us that the aim of the meeting had been achieved.



Figure 7 A section of the audience at the symposium

7.0 THE INSTITUTE BROCHURE

We created a brochure for the Institute to be able to showcase our achievements and our capacities to share with organizations that we could apply to for grants to enable us to carry out various projects in future. We worked diligently with the firm that we had engaged to produce a design for the brochure and after some weeks of detailed input from our side, we finally achieved a product that we hope will be useful in achieving our objectives.

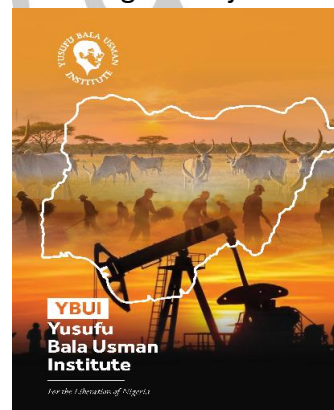


Figure 8 YBUI Brochure Cover Page

8.0 KANO TO MARADI RAIL PROJECT

Since producing Social Impact Assessment for the Kano to Maradi Rail Project in 2021 and 2022, the Institute has occasionally been called on to utilize the experience and knowledge gained from that activity to help in additional data collection that was necessary for project implementation. In February, when the original route of the train was realigned, we were asked gather data that would be needed for the RAP (Resettlement Action Plan) in the new areas that were added to the original route. Our team developed the necessary questionnaires and survey instruments and went to the specified areas in Kano, Katsina and Jigawa to interview inhabitants and collect the necessary information. The data was then analysed by our data specialist Mukhtar Abdulhameed and a report produced for the team overseeing the RAP.

9.0 CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING FOR FIRE PREVENTION

In April, the home of one of our Directors, Prof. Gideon Tseja, in the Wusasa area of Zaria, was destroyed by fire. We were thankful that he managed to escape with only slight injuries, but all of his belongings, including records of decades of published books as well as everything else in the building was totally destroyed. This incident demonstrated to us the need for fire prevention equipment and training, especially as we were aware of the irreplaceable nature of our properties in the YBUI Library and the Archives. Consequently, we engaged the services of the Federal Fire Service to train all of our staff in firefighting and prevention techniques and to install fire extinguishers in the Institute building and the homes of

our directors. At the time the Institute building was constructed we had installed fire extinguishers, but we realized that these were not adequate for the protection we required, and the need for more up to date equipment was recognized.

Training was conducted in the Institute and suitable fire extinguishers installed. After the exercise, all of our staff were issued with Certificates of Attendance, and the Institute was issued with a Certificate stating that were in compliance with all of the requirements deemed necessary for fire prevention by the Fire Service which we can apply towards our application of a Fire Insurance policy.



Figure 9 Fire Prevention Training

10. CONCLUSION

As 2025 comes to an end, we look forward to next year with realistic but hopeful expectations and also some trepidation. As I am writing this, at the end of December, the normal harmattan weather of cold, dusty and windy conditions that usually comes at this time of the year has not been

experienced. Instead, we have been having abnormally warm and clear weather. This is an indication that climate change is truly upon us, and we should therefore expect a very hot season from February and March until the rains hopefully begin in May. This will impact so much of our lives, including challenges for farmers, for animal rearers, and all of us to find ways of coping with these extreme conditions.

We also fervently hope that many of the wars and conflicts throughout the globe will be peacefully resolved, but the prospects of this seem rather dim. On our part, we will endeavour to do what we can to help resolve some of the numerous problems that the people of this country face, in furtherance of the Institute's objective of helping to create a more equitable and just life for the people of Nigeria.

We wish all of our friends and supporters a very happy holiday season and hopes for a peaceful New Year.

Norma Perchonock, Director YBUI

31 December 2025

