**Gbemisola Abiola**

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**SUMMARY**

Dedicated andaccomplished qualitative research analyst with 10+ years of practical experience in academic and policy research, development, government, education, publishing and media organizations in Africa. I have extensive experience in designing and conducting qualitative research studies in terrorism, violent extremism, and displacement, utilizing ethnographic methods, including in depth interviews, usability studies, focus groups, and participant observation. In current role, I design, manage, and execute research projects on the effects of protracted displacement in northeast Nigeria, with a particular focus on the impact of aid interventions, and the resiliency tools deployed by internally displaced people. I am able to present and distill complex insights to diverse audiences, both in academic and public policy settings. I am keen on providing expertise, skills, and my deep knowledge of the economic and social character of Africa in future roles.

**EDUCATION**

**Harvard University -** Ph.D. *African and African American Studies* Expected May, 2022

**Harvard University** - A. M. *Anthropology* 2018

**University of Lagos** -M.A. *English* *and African Literature*  2010

**University of Lagos** - B.A. *English Arts*; *Second Class* *Upper* *with Honours* 2006

**FELLOWSHIPS**

**Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard –** *Graduate Associate* 2019 - present

**International Security Program, Belfer Center** – *Research Fellow* 2020 - present

**EXPERTISE**

Field research. Refugee crisis management. Insurgency and internal displacement. Gender analysis and gender informed strategies integrated in preventive diplomacy. Post-conflict reconstruction.

**RESEARCH, POLICY, AND CONSULTING EXPERIENCE**

**Projects**

**National Security Summit** February 2021 – May 2021

Security Consultant

* Conducted in-depth research on the spate of insecurity across Nigeria’s six geopolitical zones for the [National Security Summit](https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/05/security-summit-nigeria-under-attacks-gbajabiamila/) organized by the House of Representatives of Nigeria.
* Conducted KIIs and organized FGDs with relevant stakeholders across the country.
* Analyzed existing peace processes and agreements to determine future viability for addressing urgent security concerns in Nigeria.
* Provided technical expertise on the solutions to insecurity by deciphering, compiling, and documenting a compendium of salient solutions from suggested propositions made by relevant stakeholders.

**Search for Common Ground** January 2020 - present

Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation Consultant

Contract

**Harvard University** August 2018 - present

Graduate Associate/PhD Candidate**:**

* Designs and implements research projects on impact of extremism and internal displacement, from proposal conceptualization to execution and evaluation, ensuring that all data aligns with ethnographic frameworks and methodologies.
* Creates and validates research instruments for fieldwork and collects qualitative data using interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions. Trains, supports, and builds capacities of research team with the goal of ensuring efficiency in data collection and professionalism in engagement with relevant stakeholders.
* Engages and maintains regular communication with cross-sector stakeholders, including humanitarian personnel and State agents managing the crisis to assess program impact.

**Security and Global Health Group, Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School** June 2019 – Dec 2019

Researcher:

* Created research plan to address how security institutions and systems impact emergency response to the Ebola epidemic in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
* Designed methodology and evaluation parameters in collaboration with senior researchers and faculty advisor to execute research goals. Scope of assignments included engaging with health and policy experts and researchers to assess performance of health security systems in managing the Ebola crisis.
* Published policy analysis of health security systems in the DRC (see [published paper).](https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/weaponizing-digital-health-intelligence)

**WANGONET (West Africa NGO Networks)** March 2012 – May 2014

Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant:

* Developed key policy and manifesto metrics in collaboration with Persons in Office (PIO) project team to create an accountability template for political office holders.
* Evaluated data collection and data utilization methods used to assess PIO mandates.
* Provided technical assistance and proffered solutions that restructured established protocols and approaches to projects.
* Supported senior research team to organize capacity building workshops and trainings for staff.

**Lagos State House of Assembly, Nigeria**  Jan 2011 – Feb 2012Assistant Legislative Officer**:**

* Prepared reports and briefings on constituency meetings.
* Updated legislator on executive policies as they may impact legislator’s constituents.
* Transcribed briefings, debates, and committee hearings observed at the floor of the House.
* Tracked progress of bills by monitoring committee hearings and co-sponsorship developments.
* Conducted research to gather relevant data for crafting bills, and to ensure that legislator is prepared for committee consultations.
* Corresponded with agents of government and communicated urgent legislative directives to relevant ministries, departments, and agencies.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Harvard University** 2016 -2018

*Teaching Fellow*:

* Taught and facilitated tutorial sections in Anthropology and African/American Studies
* Advised students on course materials, research design, writing projects, and career plans.
* Prepared course syllabus and assisted faculty with administrative tasks.
* Planned and organized seminars, symposiums, and events.

**Yaba College of Technology, Lagos Nigeria** Nov 2011 - Jan 2013

*Lecturer and Department Research Assistant* (Adjunct staff): Taught communication in English courses to STEM undergraduate students.

**Government Girls Day Secondary School, Samaru, Gasau, Zamfara State.** 2007-2008

*National Youth Service English Teacher*: Taught high school courses in communication in English to high students.

**PUBLISHING AND PRINT MEDIA EXPERIENCE**

**40 Minutes (Online News Magazine)** February 2013 - Jul 2014

*Op ed Columnist and Contributor:*

* Edited draft manuscripts. Wrote papers, fiction pieces, and creative non-fiction pieces such as book reviews, op eds.

**Freelance Writer /Editor** Nov 2010 – Jan 2013

* Pitched story and article ideas to editors of print and online media.
* Conducted interviews and transcribed for magazine publications.

**CONFERENCES ATTENDED AND PAPERS PRESENTED**

*In the Shadow of Boko Haram: Why Emplacement Matters in the Study of African Mobilities.*

Presented at the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa. 2021

*Displacement in the wake of Boko Haram’s “Terror”: A Study of Hypermarginalized Women.* Presented atThe Africa Studies Association Conference 2019

*Rethinking Displacement: Centering Emplacement in the Study of African Mobilities.* Presented at The Future of Africa Studies Symposium, Rutgers University 2018

*Negotiating ‘Annoba’ Life in the Wake of Boko Haram’s Terror.* Presented at the American Anthropological Association Conference 2017

**LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE**

Resident Advisor, GSAS Residential Housing, Harvard University 2018 -2019

President, GSAS Graduate Student Council, Harvard University 2017

International Students Rep., GSAS Graduate Student Council, Harvard University 2014-2016

**REFERENCES:** Provided upon request.