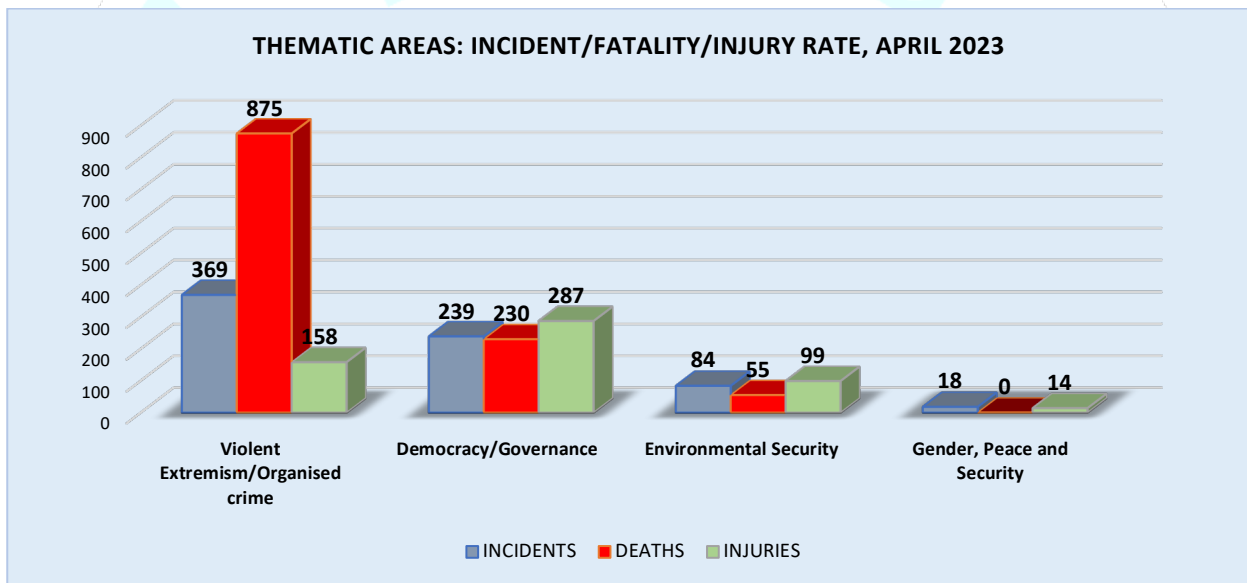




I. INTRODUCTION

As of April 2023, 710 incidents were recorded in the *Monthly Conflict Census* from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS).¹ A cumulative fatality of 1,160 and 558 injuries/infected cases emanating from criminal attacks, road accidents and cases of environmental security related incidents, especially Lassa Fever were recorded in April 2023².

As shown in the thematic graph below, Violent Extremism and Organised Crime recorded a total fatality of 875, accounting for the highest of the total number of fatalities (1,160) recorded in the reporting period, while Democracy and Governance theme recorded 230 deaths³. Also, Environmental Security theme recorded 55 deaths while the Gender, Peace and Security thematic area recorded no fatality in the reporting period.⁴ (see annex for the monthly census).



Source: WANEP-NEWS⁵.

The *Monthly Bulletin* presents an analysis of the security challenges identified from monitoring trends of incidents through the WANEP NEWS and the mass media. It also offers recommendations for stakeholders' interventions and mitigation.

2. ORGANISED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

The threat of terrorism continues to impact negatively on social cohesion and stability in the North-East region of Nigeria. This is largely due to the recurrence in terror attacks by Boko Haram and the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP). Communities in Adamawa (Hong LGA), Borno (Bama, Gwoza, Ngala, Kaga LGAs) and Gujba LGA of Yobe State recorded incidents of terror attacks which resulted in the fatality of 20 people including a military operative.

¹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

² Ibid.

³ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

Additionally, 5 people including 3 humanitarian workers were abducted in the reporting period⁶.

However, the sustained military operations against Boko Haram/ISWAP insurgency through intense aerial and ground patrols in the North-East has led to the continuous surrender and arrest of terrorists. The WANEP NEWS documented the surrender of over 1,159 terrorists and their families (231 males/351 females/577 children) with over 118 Boko Haram/ISWAP terrorists neutralised during security clearance operations in the region⁷. Also, over 257 victims including 2 Chibok school girls abducted by terrorist groups several months and years ago were rescued (95 females, 162 children), arms and ammunition recovered with several terrorists and their logistics suppliers arrested in the reporting period.⁸



Source: WANEP-NEWS⁹.

Again, the prevalence of **Organised Crimes** remains a critical human security concern across States in Nigeria with incidents of armed banditry, kidnapping, herder-community conflicts, human/drug trafficking, mob violence, homicide, amongst other crimes recorded in the month. These armed violence incidents resulted in the death of 741 people¹⁰. Out of the total recorded fatalities (741), 37 were security personnel, 12 children and 11 females. Additionally, out of the 741 recorded fatalities, 141 were criminal suspects neutralized during security counter-offensive operations in Kaduna, Edo, Lagos, Zamfara, Katsina, Adamawa, Niger, Nasarawa, Imo, Delta, and Kebbi States, amongst others.

⁶ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/; [https://dailytrust.com/iswap-abducts-3-aid-workers-2-security-guards-in-borno/#:~:text=22%3A39%20WAT-Three%20humanitarian%20staff%20working%20with%20an%20international%20non%2Dgovernmental%20organization,\(LGA\)%20of%20Borno%20State.](https://dailytrust.com/iswap-abducts-3-aid-workers-2-security-guards-in-borno/#:~:text=22%3A39%20WAT-Three%20humanitarian%20staff%20working%20with%20an%20international%20non%2Dgovernmental%20organization,(LGA)%20of%20Borno%20State.)

⁷ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/; <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/05/troops-rescue-131-abductees-additional-chibok-girls-dhq/>;

⁸ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/;

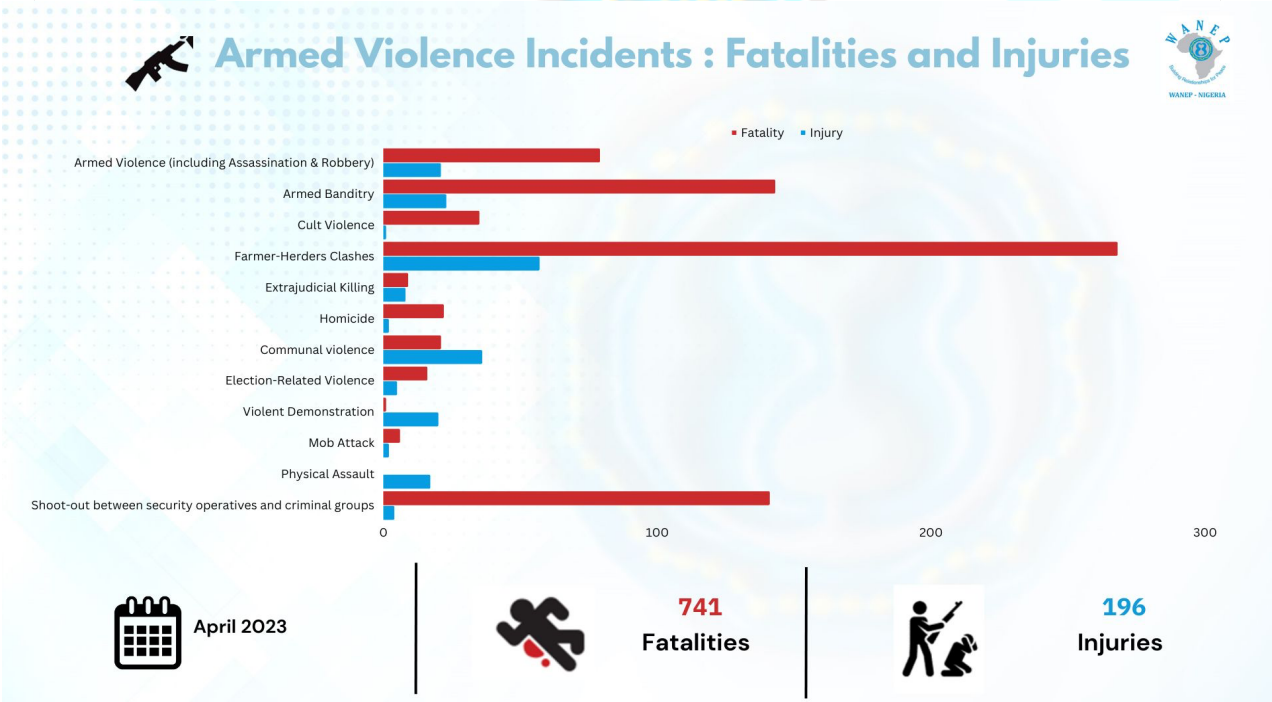
⁹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/;

¹⁰ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

In the reporting period, **herder-community conflicts/attacks by armed herders** accounted for the highest fatality of 268 in Kogi, Taraba, Benue, Enugu, Plateau, Nasarawa, and Ondo States.¹¹ Out of the recorded fatalities (268) emanating from herder-community conflicts, Benue State recorded the highest fatality of 171 in the month¹². With regards to the frequency of attacks by armed herders, the Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom, has raised concerns of connivance between some native criminal elements and armed herders to perpetuate violence in Benue State¹³. Apa, Otukpo, Gwer-West, Guma, Logo, Kwande and Agatu LGAs of Benue State have been identified as major flashpoints in the State.

Armed banditry resulted in the second highest fatality of 143 while **armed violence (including assassination, robbery)** emanating from criminal gangs recorded the third highest fatality of 79 in the month¹⁴. Other recorded armed violence incidents including **cult violence, homicide, election-related violence, extrajudicial killings and mob violence** led to the death of 35,22,16,9 and 6 people respectively¹⁵.

Below the graphical representation of armed violence incidents and fatalities recorded by WANEP NEWS in April 2023.



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁶.

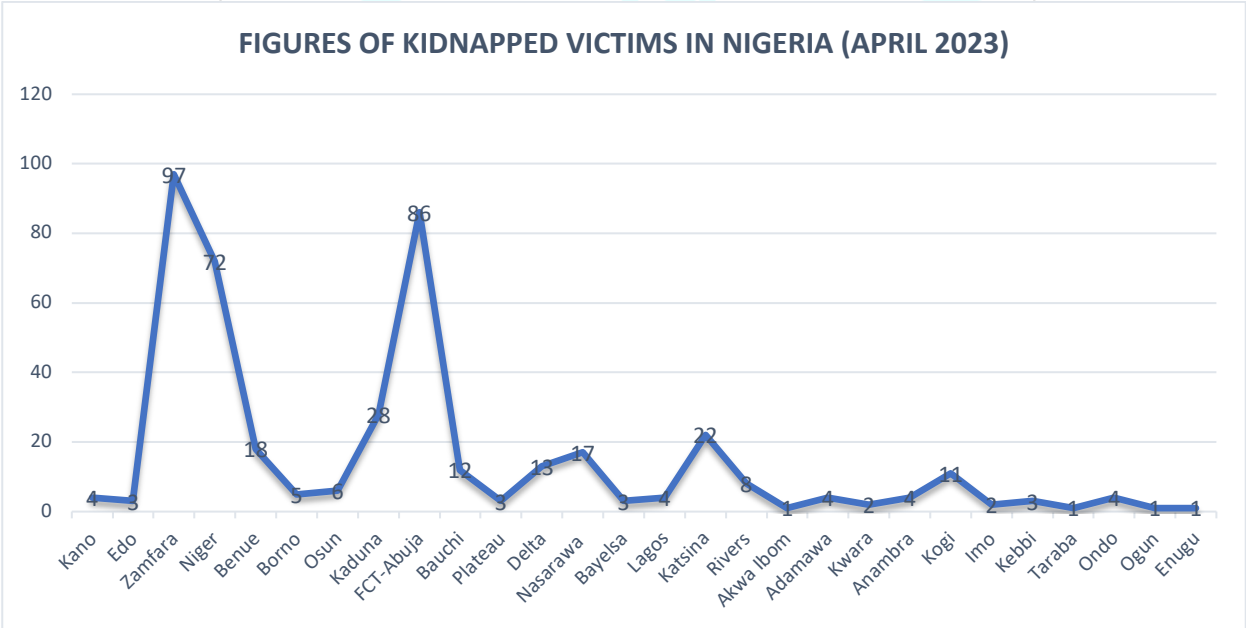
Communal violence emanating from supremacy tussle over chieftancy title, land and fish pond, amongst other underlying causes were recorded by WANEP NEWS¹⁷. This resulted in the death

¹¹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
¹² ibid
¹³ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/04/police-arrest-alleged-local-accomplice-in-planned-herders-attack-on-benue-community/>
¹⁴ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
¹⁵ Ibid.
¹⁶ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

of 21 people and 36 others injured in Sokoto, Ebonyi, Bauchi, Ondo, Niger, Kwara, Lagos, Imo, FCT-Abuja, Oyo, Niger and Nasarawa States¹⁸.

The spate of kidnapping continues unabated with 28 States in Nigeria documenting at least a kidnapping case in the month. The WANEP NEWS recorded a total of 75 kidnapping incidents which accounted for 435 kidnapped victims. Out of the 435, 78 were females, 74 children and 6 security personnel¹⁹.

The graph below illustrates the statistics of kidnapped victims per affected State in April 2023.



Source: WANEP-NEWS²⁰

In the reporting month, over 122 incidents of arrest were recorded by WANEP NEWS.²¹ The arrest cuts across cases of drug/human trafficking, robbery, kidnapping, cult violence, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), violent demonstration, physical assaults, extrajudicially killing, armed banditry, cattle rustling, communal clashes, terrorism, amongst other criminal activities.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on April 15, 2023, concluded the 2023 general elections with supplementary elections conducted in 2,660 polling units across 185 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of 24 States in Nigeria²². The supplementary elections which

¹⁷ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
¹⁸ ibid
¹⁹ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
²⁰ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
²¹ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
²² [https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/591171-inec-to-conduct-supplementary-elections-in-over-2000-polling-units-across-24-states-full-list.html#:~:text=Nigeria's%20electoral%20commission%2C%20INEC%2C%20will,\(LGAs\)%20of%2024%20states.](https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/591171-inec-to-conduct-supplementary-elections-in-over-2000-polling-units-across-24-states-full-list.html#:~:text=Nigeria's%20electoral%20commission%2C%20INEC%2C%20will,(LGAs)%20of%2024%20states.)

included the Governorship, State Houses of Assembly, Senatorial and House of Representatives were held in constituencies where they were previously suspended due to violence and circumstances where the votes margin between the winner and the first runner up was less than the cancelled votes²³. The WANEP NEWS also recorded incidents of organized crime including hijack of electoral materials and voters' intimidation during the elections. This accounted for a fatality of 16 people with several others injured in Kebbi, Akwa-Ibom, Imo, Adamawa and Kano States²⁴. In addition to the casualty rate, the WANEP NEWS recorded election-related demonstrations in Adamawa, Nasarawa and Rivers State²⁵

Strike actions and demonstrations over poor welfare of civil servants and public security were prevalent in April 2023. The WANEP NEWS recorded over 28 demonstrations in the reporting period out of which one (1) deteriorated into violent attacks in FCT-Abuja²⁶. Members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) had accused the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) of killing a 15-year-old boy and injuring 20 other IMN members during a procession to commemorate the International Quds day in solidarity with Palestinians²⁷. Similar reports of casualties during IMN processions by security operatives have been recorded in the past with allegations of human rights abuses perpetuated by security agencies.

Other recorded peaceful demonstrations include; protest over criminal attacks and extrajudicial killings in Benue²⁸, Plateau and Ondo States²⁹; eviction of over 10,000 farmers from Oluwa Forest Reserve in Ondo State; non-payment of salaries of city sweepers and workers of Momar Marines Ltd by the Cross River Government and the Nigeria Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) respectively³⁰; as well as the annexation and demolition of properties on a parcel of community land by the University of Uyo. Reports of poor welfare, inadequate water and electricity supply at the campus of Adeyemi College of Education and communities in Ondo, Osun and Nasarawa States triggered series of demonstrations in the States.

Strike actions linked to poor welfare and the non-implementation of conditions of service and entitlements were embarked upon by the aviation union, which disrupted flights movement in the reporting month. The aviation unions include the National Union of Air Transport Employee (NUATE), Air Transport Services Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (ATSSSAN), National Association of Aircraft Pilots and Engineers (NAAPE) and Association of Nigerian Aviation Professionals (ANAP). The recurring cases of demonstrations by government agencies and citizens are manifestations of the socio-economic situations in States, which has the potential to increase tension and violence. Constant agitations and protest by communities over

²³ ibid

²⁴ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

²⁵ <https://www.channelstv.com/2023/04/17/adamawa-pdp-protesters-demand-announcement-of-gov-poll-results/>

²⁶ ibid

²⁷ <https://humanglemedia.com/police-kill-15-year-old-at-shia-procession-in-abuja/>

²⁸ <https://dailypost.ng/2023/04/07/protest-rocks-apa-as-youths-block-federal-road-over-killing-in-benue-community/>

²⁹ <https://leadership.ng/protest-in-ondo-as-amotekun-allegedly-kill-futa-final-year-student/>

³⁰ <https://leadership.ng/street-sweepers-block-cross-river-governors-office/>; <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/04/unpaid-salaries-pipeline-surveillance-shut-down-oil-facilities-in-delta/>

insecurity will continuously contribute to the proliferation of local security outfits to reinforce community security.

The menace of building collapse was evident in the reporting month. Several factors ranging from poor compliance with building specifications, poor structural design, amongst other defects have been attributed to the buildings collapse in Kwara, Lagos, FCT-Abuja, Anambra, Oyo and Cross River States. A total of 4 deaths and 31 injuries were recorded from building collapse in Kwara, Lagos and FCT-Abuja³¹. Also, road accidents accounted for 210 deaths and 227 injuries in April 2023³².

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:

The WANEP NEWS recorded casualties from flood/rainstorm incidents in Ogun and Delta States with several properties destroyed including crops and farmlands in Lagos, Taraba, Abia, Ogun, Delta, Yobe and Akwa-Ibom States. The reporting period recorded 8 deaths with several injured victims³³. Despite the early warning forecast by the Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NiMET) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on early onset of rainfall accompanied by flooding, the rate of destruction and disruption of human settlements in affected communities suggests poor preparedness and mitigation strategies by communities and States. Moreover, inadequate drainage systems and poor maintenance culture of the drainages by citizens coupled with compliance challenges with town planning regulations has the potential to increase flooding in the country.

As infected victims of Diptheria, Cerebro Spinal Meningitis (CSM), Lassa Fever and Cholera undergo medical treatments, the WANEP NEWS recorded 8 deaths from Lassa Fever and 73 infected cases in Edo, Ondo, Bauchi, Taraba and Gombe States in the month. Although no COVID-19 related deaths or infected cases were recorded in the period, a total of 73,252,066 million people have been fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccines³⁴.

The interventions of the Federal/State Government and health agencies through enhanced surveillance (contact training and active case findng) and risk communication activities (press releases, social media contents and awareness programs) have contributed to the rapid mitigation of the various health challenges highlighted in this month's bulletin.

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:

The WANEP NEWS recorded 14 incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), particularly rape in Adamawa, Lagos, Delta, Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States, while human trafficking cases were reported in Kano, Borno and Rivers States with underaged children rescued as documented by NEWS.³⁵ In Maiduguri LGA of Borno State, the Nigerian Military shut down a juvenile sex brothel at Kasuwan Fara in the Shagari low-cost area³⁶.

³¹ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³² Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³³ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³⁴ www.ncdc.gov.ng

³⁵ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³⁶ <https://tribuneonlineng.com/military-shuts-underage-brothels-in-maiduguri/>

Nevertheless, the Nigerian Government in collaboration with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) continue to intensify efforts to end gender-based violence through awareness creation utilizing the gender laws. For instance, as of April 2023, the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law has been domesticated by all 36 States and the FCT-Abuja, while only 34 out of the 36 federating States have domesticated the Child Rights Acts (CRA)³⁷. Kano and Zamfara States in the northern region where child marriage is prevalent are yet to domesticate the CRA since its passage into law by the Federal government in 2003. GBV advocates have attributed the delay to the existing socio-cultural factors in the northern region.

Implications for Peace and Security in Nigeria

The protracted armed violence by several non-state armed groups creates a climate of fear and insecurity that continue to undermine peace and developmental efforts across States in Nigeria. Particularly, the re-emerging trends in the pastoralist-community conflict in Taraba, Benue, Plateau and Nasarawa States has raised concerns regarding the perceived inactions of the government and security agencies to early warning signals. As highlighted above, the WANEP NEWS recorded incidents of premeditated attacks by armed herders almost on a daily basis in Benue and Plateau States with accusations and counter accusations between farming communities and pastoralist groups on the identity of the attackers.

Besides the humanitarian consequences of internal displacements of communities and human rights abuses during armed violence situations, the unabated criminal attacks continues to dwindle social cohesion, trust and confidence deficits in the security sector. The effect is seen in the proliferation of local security outfits as alternative security in hard-to-reach communities. Also, the vulnerability of women and children in violence prone communities remain a major security concern due to their exposure to the risk of radicalization, criminal recruitment, and sexual exploitations. As reported in the case of the juvenile sex brothel shut down in Borno State, most of the juvenile sex workers engaged in prostitution for survival (sex-for-food) and arrested are survivors of the Boko Haram insurgency³⁸.

Demonstrations and strike actions remain commonplace. The inadequacies and delay of the government in addressing these recurring socio-economic challenges continues to dampen citizens' trust for the State, further straining state-citizens relations. More so, the recurrent labour strikes continue to impact negatively on social service delivery, as access to social services particularly by vulnerable populations are impeded.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In view of the human security threats and the analysis highlighted, the following recommendations are proposed for response and mitigation by stakeholders:

- The Federal and State Governments should continue to strengthen the capacity of security agencies and increase security presence in vulnerable local communities. This

³⁷ <https://independent.ng/states-and-the-child-rights-act-3/>

³⁸ <https://dailytrust.com/investigation-inside-maiduguri-juvenile-sex-trade/>

should be linked with community policing to bolster security particularly in hard-to-reach communities;

- The Federal Government should address the challenges in the effective implementation of the gender-based laws (VAPP Act and CRA) across States in Nigeria. This should be supported with continuous advocacy by CSOs, NGOs and the media in States yet to domesticate the Child Rights Act (CRA).
- The Federal, State and Local Governments should increase support to enhance the capacity of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and other disaster management agencies to respond effectively to the incidents of floods in communities. This should necessarily include sensitization campaigns on early warning flood alerts and disaster preparedness and response in local communities and States in Nigeria.
- The efforts of the NCDC, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and the Federal/State Ministry of Health with support from international/local health agencies in curbing the spread of epidemics is commendable. In view of this, the State Government should enhance its local coordination and surveillance systems particularly in rural communities for proactive response.

CONCLUSION:

Despite the growing insecurity in vulnerable communities, counter-offensive security operations by the Nigerian Government has yielded some positive outcomes including the surrender of terrorists and rescue of some abducted victims. However, to achieve sustainable peace, it is imperative for the country to regularly review and align its peace and security strategies with current dynamics and trends in existing and emerging threats to enhance resilience in local communities. Also, the commitments of the Federal Government to commence the local production of Lassa Fever vaccine since its first outbreak in 1969 in Nigeria is imperative to assuage the spread of the epidemic among populations and strengthen health security of the country.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR APRIL 2023

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
VIOLENT EXTREMISM: Boko Haram/ISWAP attacks - Counter-Terrorist Attacks	17	- 20 (19 civilians and 1 military operative) - 118 terrorists	-

ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence, armed bandits, mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash)	117	269	47
Armed Action/Shoot-Out between security operatives and members of criminal gangs	28	141	4
Abduction (evident across 28 States)	75	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	8	-	-
Election-related violence	12	16	5
Extrajudicial killing	11	9	8
Physical/Armed Assault	15	-	17
Herder-Community Conflict/Militia Herders	34	268	57
Violent Clash			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Officers and Motorcycle riders (Lagos) • Police Officers and suspected internet fraudsters (Oyo) • National Union of Road Transport Workers Union (NURTW) clash (Oyo), etc. • 	9	8	17
Drug Trafficking	16	-	-
Homicide	22	22	2
Suicide	5	4	1
DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:			
Demonstration (peaceful)	27	-	-
Demonstration (violent)	1	1	20
Intimidation and Threats	9	-	-
Arrest/Detention	122	-	-
Road Accident	68	210	227
Building Collapse	7	4	31
Electrocution/Mining Collapse (Abia State)	2	3	3
Boat mishap (Taraba, Bayelsa, Kano States)	3	12	6
ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:			
Communal conflict	5	13	19

<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u>			<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u>
a. Lassa Fever	1	8	Lassa Fever: 73
Fire Outbreak Flood/Rainstorm	69 9	26 8	1 6

Through its National Early Warning System (NEWS), the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP- Nigeria) develops and disseminates a monthly bulletin on Human Security at the end of each month to inform the different actors and / or partners and formulates recommendations to different decision-makers for targeted responses to the given alerts. This monthly monitoring is based on information gathered from the field by the WANEP-NIGERIA field monitors, and also information gathered from the various national and international media.

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<u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u>			
Sexual Assault/Rape	14	-	14
Human Trafficking	4	-	-
Total	710	1,160	558