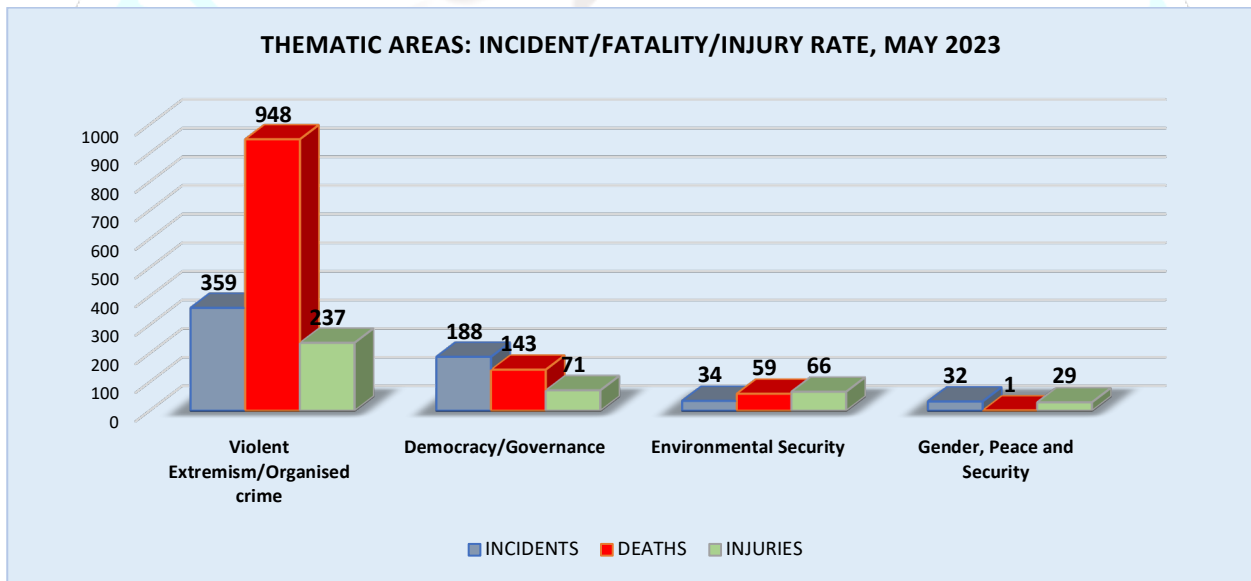




I. INTRODUCTION

As of May 2023, 613 incidents were recorded in the *Monthly Conflict Census* from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS).¹ A cumulative fatality of 1,151 and 403 injuries/infected cases emanating from criminal attacks, road accidents and cases of environmental security related incidents, especially Lassa Fever were recorded May 2023².

As shown in the thematic graph below, Violent Extremism and Organised Crime recorded a total fatality of 948, accounting for the highest of the total number of fatalities (1,151) recorded in the reporting period, while Democracy and Governance theme recorded 143 deaths³. Also, Environmental Security theme recorded 59 deaths while the Gender, Peace and Security thematic area recorded one (1) 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 security situation in the North-East region of Nigeria remains challenging particularly in the remote communities of Borno State, due to the recurrence in isolated terror attacks by Boko Haram and Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP). In the reporting month, terrorist

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

² Ibid.

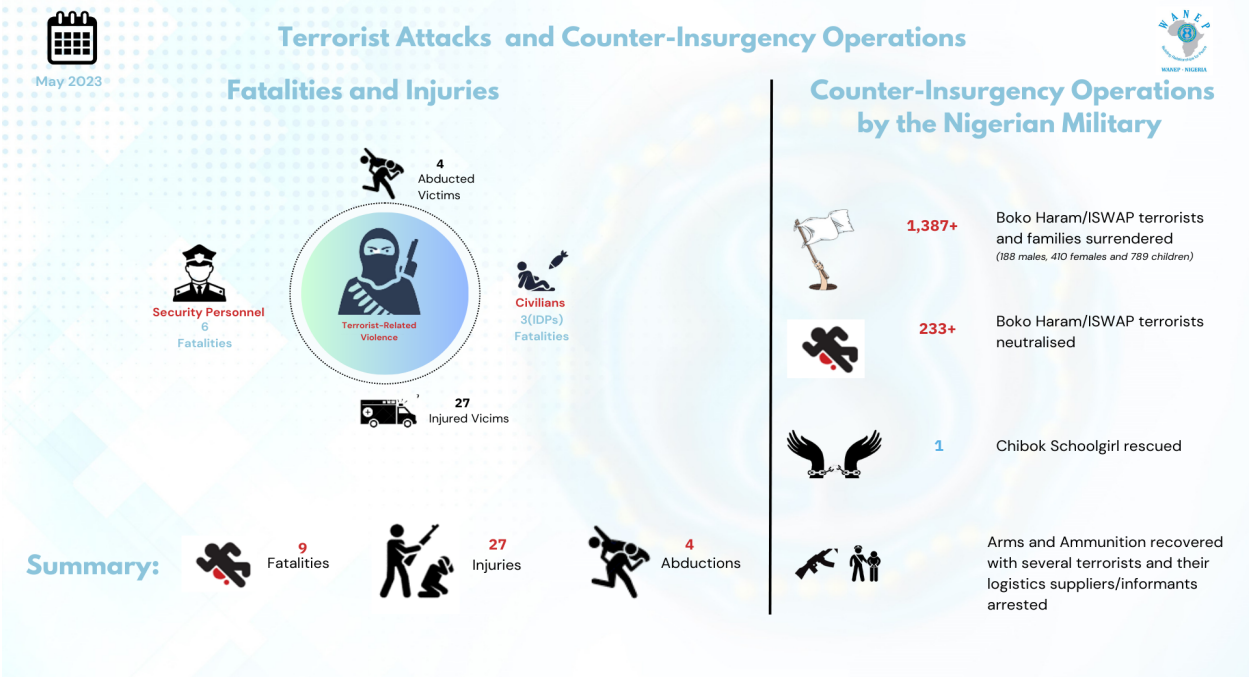
³ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

⁴ Ibid

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

attacks accounted for 9 deaths (including 6 security personnel), 27 injured victims and 4 kidnapped victims in Damboa, Abadam, Mafa and Konduga LGAs of Borno State⁶.

Despite these isolated attacks, the Nigerian Army sustained its security offensive operations in the month to identify terrorists hideouts, enclaves, camps, villages, forests and mountains of Konduga, Abadam, Guzamala, Ngala, Bama, Dikwa, Gubio, Damboa, Jere, Kukawa, Magumeri , Monguno LGAs (Borno State), Damaturu and Gujba LGAs of Yobe State⁷. These counter offensive operations resulted in the arrest of several terrorists and their logistics suppliers/informants, rescue of kidnapped victims and recovery of arms and ammunition. In the reporting month, one of the Chibok school girls was rescued by the Nigerian Army on May 6, 2023. Out of the 276 Chibok school girls abducted on April 14, 2014, 76 have so far escaped, while 107 were released by Boko Haram in 2018. Currently, 93 abductees are still in captivity by the terrorists as of May 2023⁸. In addition, over 233 terrorists (Boko Haram/ISWAP) were neutralized, while an estimated 1,387 terrorists and their families (188 males/410 females/789 children) surrendered in the reporting period as documented in the WANEP NEWS⁹.



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁰.

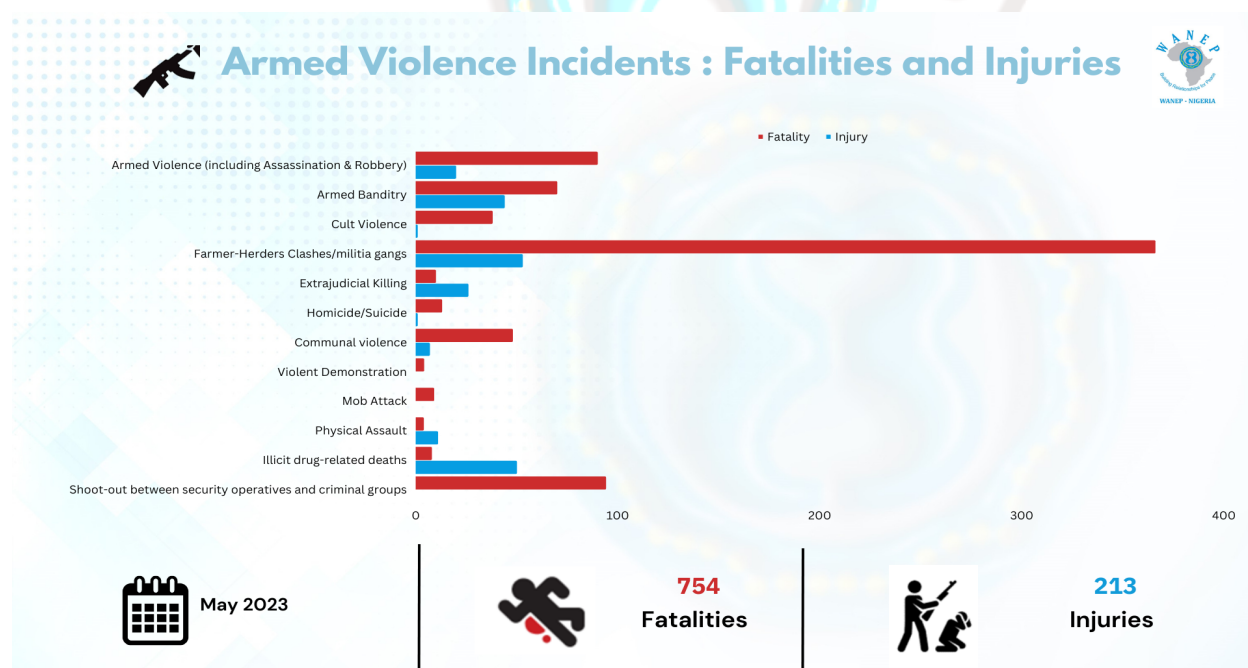
The frequency in **Organised Crimes** continues to heighten insecurity in the affected States and human security in Nigeria. The month recorded incidents of kidnapping, armed banditry, herder-community conflicts, human/drug trafficking, mob violence, homicide, amongst other crimes in the month. These armed violence incidents resulted in the fatality of 754 people¹¹. Out of the total recorded fatalities (754), 23 were security personnel, 15 children and 48

⁶ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
⁷ <https://www.channelstv.com/2023/06/02/troops-kill-63-terrorists-in-various-operations-across-nigeria-biweekly-report/>
⁸ <https://punchng.com/another-chibok-girl-escapes-from-boko-harams-den/#:~:text=The%20Nigerian%20Army%20has%20rescued,Dauda%20on%20May%206%2C%202023>
⁹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
¹⁰ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
¹¹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

females. Also, out of the 754 fatalities, 94 were criminal suspects neutralised during security clearance operations in Adamawa, Delta, Benue, Niger, FCT-Abuja, Rivers, Kaduna, Anambra, Zamfara, Kebbi, Oyo, Kano, Lagos, and Katsina States.

According to WANEP NEWS, **community-herder conflicts/attacks by militia gangs** accounted for the highest fatality of 366 in Plateau, Benue (North-Central), Kaduna (North-West), Ondo, Oyo, Ogun (South-West), Enugu and Imo (South-East) States in the period¹². Out of the 366 deaths, Plateau State recorded over 209 deaths from Riyom, Bassa, and Mangu LGAs, while Guma, Agatu, Gwer-West and Apa LGAs of Benue States accounted for 80 deaths in the period¹³. Reprisal attacks emanating from decades-old dispute between communities and herders in Plateau and Benue States over access and use of natural resources (water and land) continued unabated with increasing humanitarian concerns. For instance, in Mangu LGA of Plateau State, 32 communities were affected in the crisis with over 20,000 people internally displaced to neighbouring communities and States.¹⁴ Also, **armed violence (including assassination, robbery)** emanating from criminal gangs recorded the second highest fatality of 90, while **armed banditry** attacks resulted in the third highest fatality of 70 in Kaduna, Zamfara and Niger States in the month¹⁵. Other recorded armed violence incidents including **cult violence, homicide, extrajudicial killings and mob violence** led to the death of 38, 12, 10 and 9 people respectively¹⁶.

Below the graphical representation of armed violence incidents and fatalities as documented by WANEP NEWS in May 2023.



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁷.

¹² ibid

¹³ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

¹⁴ <https://saharareporters.com/2023/06/10/plateau-state-killings-we-have-buried-150-people-last-three-weeks-governor-mutfwang/>; <https://humanglemedia.com/hundreds-killed-in-attacks-on-villages-in-nigerias-plateau/>

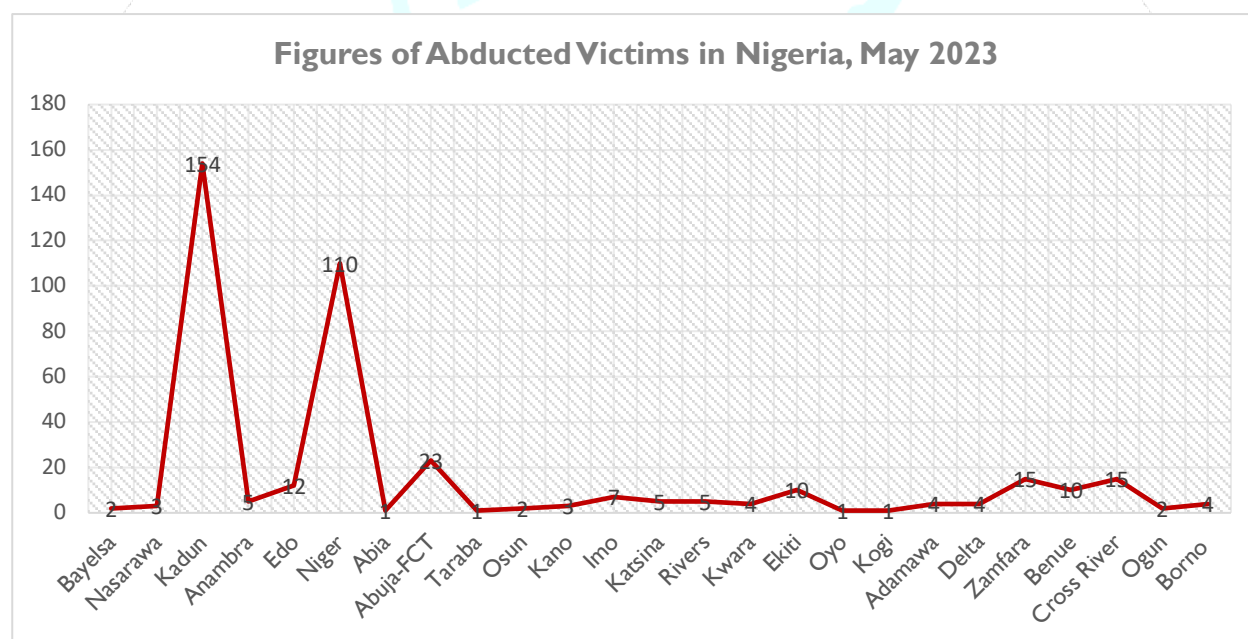
¹⁵ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

¹⁶ ibid.

¹⁷ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

Also, **inter/intra-communal conflict** over land ownership, chieftaincy/leadership tussle accounted for 46 deaths with several others injured and properties destroyed in Ebonyi, Niger, Akwa-Ibom, Taraba, Kaduna and Anambra States¹⁸. Other violent clashes between security operatives, traders and members of the Park Management System in Ekiti and Oyo States resulted in the death of 2 people and 4 injured victims¹⁹.

Data sourced from the WANEP NEWS shows that a total of 403 people were kidnapped across 25 States in the reporting period of May 2023, despite various security measures put in place to stem the crime. Out of the total (403) recorded, 43 were children and 28 females²⁰. Also, the northern States of Nigeria had the highest statistics of 337, while the southern region recorded 66. The graph below illustrates the statistics of kidnapped victims per affected State in May 2023.



Source: WANEP-NEWS²¹

The WANEP NEWS recorded over 122 incidents of arrest in May 2023.²² The arrest cuts across various criminal incidents such as terrorism, banditry, armed robbery, mob violence, physical assaults, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), extrajudicial killing, culpable homicide, kidnapping, cyber-crime/fraud, violent demonstrations, amongst others.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:

On May 29, 2023, Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC) political party was sworn in as the 16th President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The pronouncement by the new President of Nigeria on the removal of subsidy on

¹⁸ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

¹⁹ ibid

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

petrol in his inaugural speech generated mixed reactions and discourse with threats by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to embark on a strike following the negative impact on the populace including job losses, poverty and hunger. The directive which necessitated the upward review of fuel prices by over 300 percent per litre from N 185-N230 naira to between 488 and 557 naira²³, has increased cost of living amid persisting poverty and unemployment in the country.

An assessment conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) indicates that the Nigeria's fuel subsidy regime distorted the economy, entrenched corruption and criminality in the downstream petroleum sector, while discouraging new investments and growth²⁴. This was corroborated by the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), indicating that the Nigerian Government has expended over N13 trillion naira on fuel subsidy from 2005-2021, a figure equivalent to Nigeria's health, education, agriculture and defence budget combined in the last 5 years²⁵. The Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs Zainab Ahmed, has also indicated that the fuel subsidy removal would save Nigeria N3.36 trillion²⁶.

In the reporting month of May, the WANEP NEWS recorded demonstrations (peaceful and violent) and strike actions related to unpaid salaries, non-implementation of the Consolidated Legislative Salary Structure (CONLESS), poor welfare, insecurity and infrastructural development deficits by Federal and State institutions including health sector. A total of 19 demonstrations were recorded, out of which one (1) deteriorated into shooting by security operatives deployed to guard a facility operated by Conoil in Bayelsa State²⁷. Members of Sangana community in Brass LGA of Bayelsa State had conducted a protest to demand for the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Consolidated Oil and Gas (Conoil) Limited and the community when shooting occurred²⁸.

Other recorded peaceful demonstrations include: protest over the recurring armed violence and kidnapping incidents in Kaduna, Plateau, Enugu; demand for the resignation and arrest of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Godwin Emefiele²⁹; and protest by Ogbomoso indigenes in Oyo State over the planned relocation of the faculty of agricultural sciences at Ladoké Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso, to the newly established Iseyin campus of the institution.³⁰ Additionally, demonstrations by some groups requesting the Presidential Election Petitions Tribunal to stop the inauguration of the President-Elect, Bola Ahmed Tinuba were evident in the month³¹. Recurring citizens-led protest and institutional strikes demonstrates frustration and discontent with the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the country. However, this also has the potential to undermine public safety and security.

²³ <https://dailytrust.com/subsidy-removal-fg-must-commit-to-ameliorative-policy/>

²⁴ <https://dailytrust.com/subsidy-removal-fg-must-commit-to-ameliorative-policy/>

²⁵ <https://dailytrust.com/subsidy-removal-fg-must-commit-to-ameliorative-policy/> ; <https://dailypost.ng/2023/05/16/nigeria-spent-n13trn-on-fuel-subsidies-in-16-years-boss-mustapha/>

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

²⁸ <https://leadership.ng/sangana-killings-bayelsa-youths-threaten-to-shut-down-conoil/>

²⁹ <https://saharareporters.com/2023/05/03/breaking-naira-redesign-fresh-protests-central-bank-headquarters-nigerians-demand>

³⁰ <https://dailypost.ng/2023/05/23/lautech-again-protest-rocks-ogbomoso-over-relocation-of-agriculture-faculty/>

³¹ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/599520-protesters-demonstrate-near-presidential-election-petition-court.html> ; <https://saharareporters.com/2023/05/22/protesters-storm-presidential-election-petition-tribunal-abuja-demand-justice-ruling>

Road accidents remain commonplace in Nigeria with a number of contributing factors ranging from speed violations, over-taking, tiredness, distraction and bad roads, amongst other causes. The WANEP NEWS recorded over 108 deaths and 68 injuries from road mishaps in the month³².

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:

The Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) issued early warning reports of thunderstorms and flash floods in 12 Northern States of Borno, Taraba, Gombe, Bauchi, Adamawa, Yobe (North-East), Plateau, Nasarawa, FCT-Abuja (North-Central), Kaduna, Jigawa, Kano, and Katsina States in the North-West region of Nigeria³³. The WANEP NEWS documented devastating flood incidents in Lagos, Ogun, Imo, Delta, Yobe, Bauchi and Anambra States. Yobe, Bauchi, Akwa Ibom, Enugu, and Ogun States accounted for 7 fatalities and over 24 injuries, while Imo, Yobe, Bauchi, Lagos and Delta States recorded incidents of building/bridge collapse. Additionally, in Yobe State, 271 households with over 1,600 individuals were internally displaced³⁴ with 228 buildings and 336 families impacted by the flood incident in Lagos State³⁵. Besides the loss of human lives, livestock and destruction of properties and farmlands, the perennial flood heightens the likelihood of waterborne diseases.

The month of May 2023 recorded no COVID-19 deaths or infected cases. However, the COVID-19 vaccination program continues with a total of 75,498,454 million people fully vaccinated, while 11,891,471 were partially vaccinated in the month³⁶. Compared with the April 2023 vaccination statistics (73,252,066 million), an additional 2,246,388 million people were vaccinated in May 2023. Also, 6 deaths were recorded from Lassa Fever disease with 39 confirmed and 739 suspected cases in the month³⁷. As documented by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), a total of 106 Local Government Areas (LGAs) across 28 States have recorded at least one confirmed case in the country in 2023³⁸. To mitigate the spread, the National Lassa Fever multi-partner, multi-sectoral Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) continues to coordinate the response activities, while ensuring adequate surveillance in affected States.

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:

The WANEP NEWS recorded 30 incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), particularly rape of female minors between the ages of 4 and 19 years old in Benue, Lagos, Kogi, Kwara, Ogun, Oyo, Ekiti, Ondo, Bauchi, Adamawa, Delta, Bauchi, Jigawa and FCT-Abuja with a recorded fatality of an 80-year old female in Ondo State³⁹. Cases of human trafficking were also documented in Delta and Lagos States with 94 suspected female commercial sex workers arrested⁴⁰ and a 2-months old child rescued in Lagos State⁴¹.

Demonstrations over cases of defilement of minors and degrading widowhood practices were recorded in Lagos and Anambra States. An instance of unwholesome widowhood practice of

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

³³ <https://guardian.ng/news/nimet-warns-12-northern-states-of-thunderstorms-floods-in-may/>

³⁴ <https://dailypost.ng/2023/05/07/three-people-die-as-flood-sacks-271-households-in-yobe/>

³⁵ <https://guardian.ng/news/228-buildings-336-families-impacted-by-rainfall-in-lagos-nema/>

³⁶ www.ncdc.gov.ng

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ www.ncdc.gov.ng

³⁹ <https://tribuneonline.ng/military-shuts-underage-brothels-in-maiduguri/>

⁴⁰ <https://dailypost.ng/2023/05/07/police-arrest-59-male-suspects-94-female-commercial-sex-workers-in-delta/>

⁴¹ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

forcing widows to drink the water used in washing the deceased corpse to prove innocence persist in Atani Community of Ogbaru LGA of Anambra State⁴². However, a Bill to amend sections of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) to make provisions to safeguard widows from violent and evil customary practices, denial of property rights, rape, forced marriages and all other dehumanising acts that undermine the dignity of the widow was proposed in 2022 and have scaled second reading at the House of Representatives⁴³. Similarly, the Kano State House of Assembly passed the State Child Protection Bill in the reporting month, awaiting passage into law by the State Governor⁴⁴.

To mitigate the prevalence of SGBV cases including sex trafficking of young girls, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and International Development partners in collaboration with State Governments have continued to intensify awareness through the implementation of community initiatives that also empower victims to speak up.

Implications for Peace and Security in Nigeria

Rising insecurity in Nigeria remains an existential threat that continues to hamper social cohesion and sustainable development in affected States inspite of the gamut of intelligence and security services. In particular, threat of terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, community-herders crisis, cult violence, cattle rustling, ethno-religious supremacy tussle (Taraba) have resulted in human rights violations, food insecurity, casualties, internal displacements, loss of livelihoods and properties as highlighted above. Additionally, socio-economic challenges including unemployment, poverty and inadequate infrastructural development in the country have provided spaces for armed violence and crime to flourish in the country. The 2023 data from the World Poverty Clock pegged the number of extremely poor Nigerians at 71 million⁴⁵ with projections of a rise in unemployment rate to 40.6 percent in 2023 due to the continuing inflow of job seekers compared to the 37.7 percent in 2022.⁴⁶

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has projected that over 25 million Nigerians may likely be at risk of hunger between June and August 2023⁴⁷. For instance, as the farming season approaches, the recurring armed violence in affected communities of Kaduna, Nasarawa, Plateau and Benue States have halted farming activities due to forced internal displacement and fear of attacks. Likewise, the continued imposition of levies by bandits on some farming communities of Zamfara and Kaduna have impacted farming activities. This has multiplied effects in the rise of food insecurity in the country⁴⁸. The consequences of the prevailing security threats is also reflected in the forced closure of schools in vulnerable communities which exposes children to sexual exploitations and radicalization by armed groups.

⁴² <https://punchng.com/women-group-protests-against-harmful-widowhood-practices-in-anambra/>

⁴³ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/512130-reps-consider-bill-to-end-penalise-degrading-widowhood-practices-in-nigeria.html?tztc=1>

⁴⁴ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/05/kano-assembly-passes-child-right-protection-bill/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/06/over-71m-nigerians-in-extreme-poverty-world-poverty-clock/#:~:text=He%20said%2C%20%E2%80%9CNigeria%20has%20the,National%20Bureau%20of%20Statistics%20data.>

⁴⁶ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/business/business-news/591879-nigerias-unemployment-rate-projected-to-hit-40-6-kpmg.html>; <https://dailypost.ng/2023/04/11/nigerias-unemployment-rate-to-hit-40-6-per-cent-in-2023-kpmg/>

⁴⁷ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/604798-over-25-million-nigerians-to-face-acute-hunger-in-2023-wfp.html>

⁴⁸ <https://punchng.com/nigeria-a-great-nation-with-incessant-pains-of-insecurity/>

Amid the early warning forecast issued by NiMet and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the devastating effects of flood and thunderstorms resulted in casualties, internal displacements and destruction of livelihoods. The Presidential Flood Committee had stated that the country needs about N 3.4 trillion to tackle flood disasters across States⁴⁹. In view of the imminent flood threat and the need to cushion its impact on human lives and properties, the Federal Government issued a directive to States to submit their flood vulnerability status reports⁵⁰.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- The State and Local Governments should continuously review its dialogue and mediation processes through existing local peacebuilding structures to engage traditional and religious authorities, women and youth groups to resolve conflict and foster social cohesion. The dialogue and mediation processes should necessarily create a space for CSOs participation to enhance neutrality, synergy and sustainability.
- The House of Representatives should speed-up the review of sections of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) Act and ensure effective implementation targeted at widowhood to safeguard widows from degrading cultural rituals and practices as evident in most communities in the country. This should be supported with continuous advocacy by CSOs, NGOs and the media.
- The Federal and State Governments should continue to enhance the capacity of security agencies with high-tech equipments to tackle the pervasive insecurity and increase security presence in vulnerable local communities. This should be linked with community policing to bolster security particularly in hard-to-reach and violence-prone communities;
- The Federal and State Governments should increase funding to the relevant disaster management agencies including the National/State Emergency Management Agency (N/SEMA) to tackle flood disasters through sensitization campaigns, disaster preparedness and response across States. The submission of States' flood vulnerability status report to the Federal Governments would enhance support to flood-prone communities.

CONCLUSION:

A general assessment of Nigeria's security landscape indicates the need to constantly review and align the nations' peace and security architecture with changing security dynamics and trends. The smooth political transition witnessed in May 2023 provides opportunity to engage in constructive national dialogue and foster political will to address the prevailing multifaceted socio-economic, political and security challenges facing the country. Additionally, the partnership between the Federal, State Governments and international/national development partners needs to be continually strengthened to enhance state institutions and increased

⁴⁹ <https://punchng.com/nigeria-needs-n3-4tn-to-tackle-flood-disasters-presidential-council/>

⁵⁰ <https://dailypost.ng/2023/06/15/fg-gives-governors-one-week-deadline-to-submit-reports-on-flood-prone-states/>

public education on debasing cultural practices resulting in human rights abuses and preventive flood measures in the country.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR MAY 2023

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
VIOLENT EXTREMISM: Boko Haram/ISWAP attacks - Counter-Terrorist Attacks	17	- 9 (6 security operatives and 3 IDPs) - 233 terrorists	27 -
ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence, armed bandits, mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash)	122	207	65
Armed Action/Shoot-Out between security operatives and members of criminal gangs	37	94	-
Abduction (evident across 25 States)	55	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	11	-	-
Extrajudicial killing	8	10	26
Physical/Armed Assault	14	4	11
Herder-Community Conflict/Militia Herders	61	366	53
Violent Clash <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Tussle in Anambra State • Police Operatives and Members of Park Management System (PMS) in Oyo State • Student and Host Communities in Ogun State, etc 	4	4	4
Illicit Drug Trafficking/Illicit drug-related deaths	16	8	50
Homicide	13	12	1
Suicide	1	1	-
DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: Demonstration (peaceful)	18	-	-
Demonstration (violent)	1	4	-
Intimidation and Threats	9	-	-

Arrest/Detention	122	-	-
Road Accident	31	108	68
Bridge Collapse	2	-	-
Electrocution (Sokoto)/Gas Explosion (Edo and Lagos States)	3	7	3
Boat mishap (Sokoto and Zamfara States)	2	24	-
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u> Communal conflict	6	44	3
<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u>			<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u>
a. Lassa Fever	1	6	Lassa Fever: 39
Fire Outbreak	10	2	-
Flood/Rainstorm	17	7	24

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	30	1	29
Human Trafficking	2	-	-
Total	613	1,1151	403