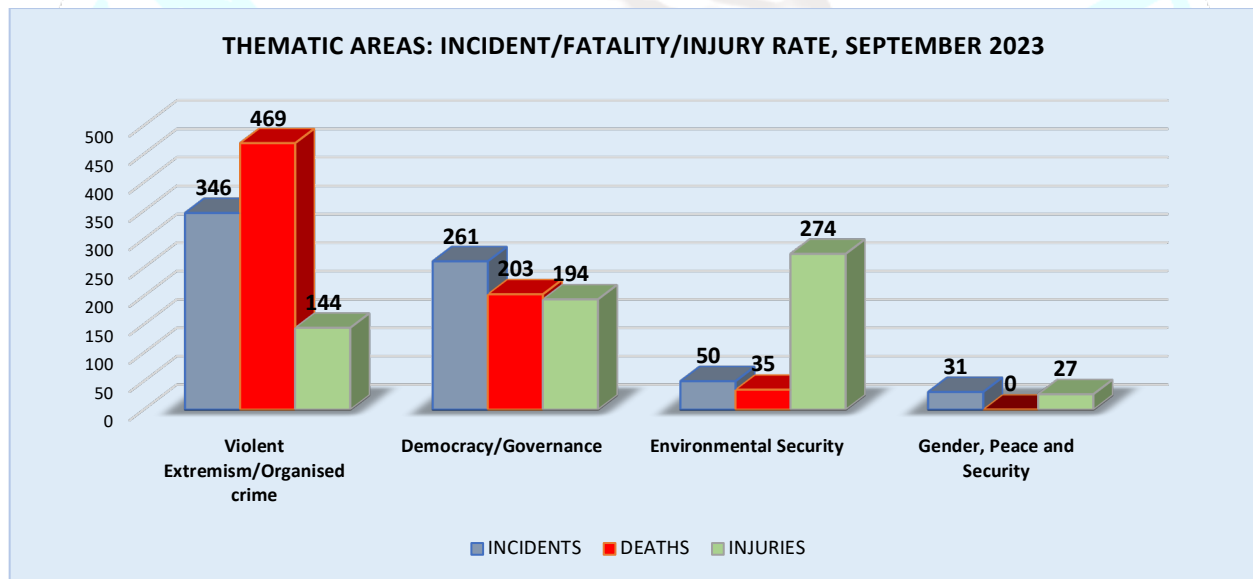




I. INTRODUCTION

As of September 2023, 688 incidents were recorded in the *Monthly Conflict Census* from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS).¹ A cumulative fatality of 707 and 639 injuries/infected cases emanating from criminal attacks, road accidents and cases of environmental security related incidents, especially Lassa Fever and Cholera were recorded in September 2023.

As shown in the thematic graph below, Violent Extremism and Organised Crime recorded a total fatality of 469, accounting for the highest of the total number of fatalities (707) recorded in the reporting period while Democracy and Governance theme recorded 203 deaths². Also, Environmental Security theme recorded 35 deaths while the Gender, Peace and Security thematic area recorded zero fatality in the reporting period.³ (see annex for the monthly census).



Source: WANEP-NEWS⁴.

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

Terrorist attacks by Boko Haram and Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP) remains prominent in the rural communities of Borno State and on the fringes of Lake Chad Axis of North-East, Nigeria, with fishermen and farmers constituting major targets in the affected communities. Aside allegations of farming and fishing communities acting as informants to

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

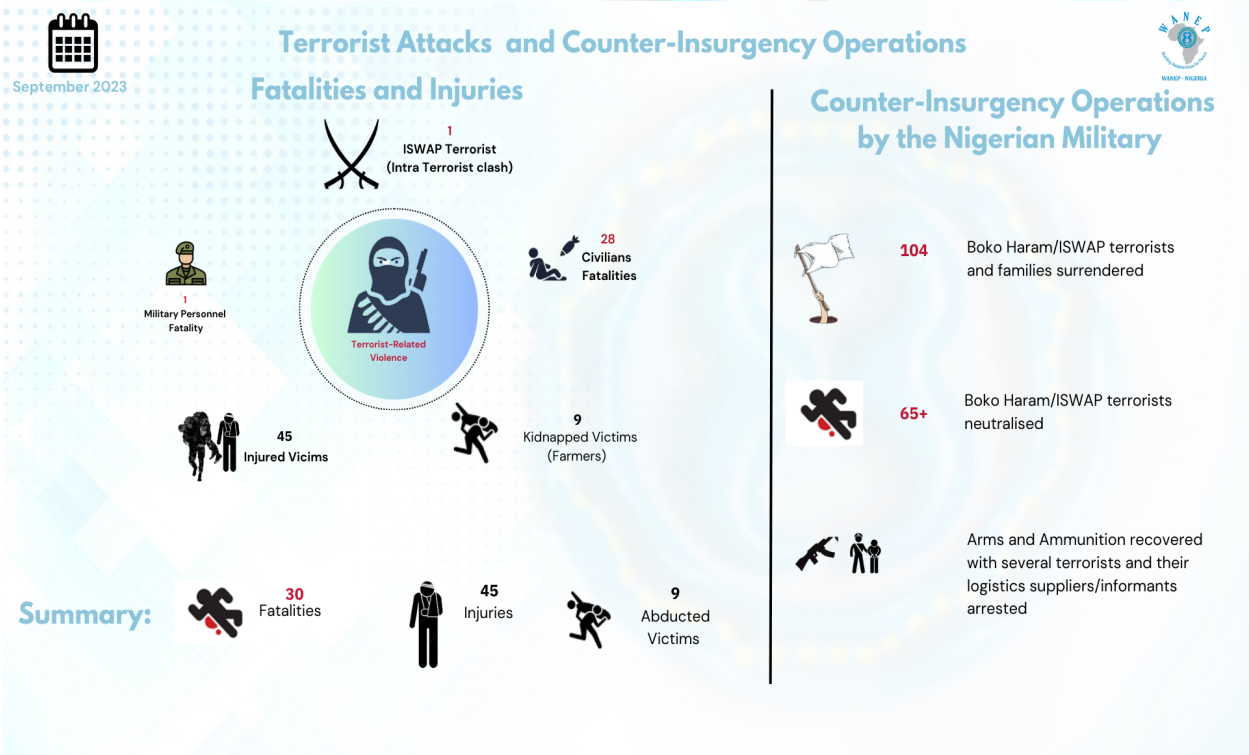
² Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³ ibid

⁴ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

security and aiding terrorists to escape and surrender to the Nigerian military, supremacy tussle between ISWAP and Boko Haram over rights to tax collection from fishermen has the potential to affect food security, household consumption and income. An instance of the supremacy tussle resulted in the fatality of 2 fishermen with over 40 others injured in Falinkime, Madangwiyya, Daban Wanza and Tumun Barebari Axis of Lake Chad in Borno State⁵. Also, over 100 fishing boats were seized by ISWAP with an estimated 2,000 fishermen affected⁶.

In the reporting month, the WANEP NEWS documented 18 terrorist-related incidents including intra-terrorist clash, kidnapping and counter offensive operations in the remote communities of Gwoza, Mafa, Damboa, Askira-Uba, Magumeri, Kala Balge, Bama and Marte LGAs of Borno State. A total of 30 fatalities including a military personnel, 45 injured victims and 9 abducted farmers were reported in the period⁷. Due to sustained security offensive by the Nigerian Military, over 65 terrorists were neutralised, several terrorist collaborators arrested with arms and ammunition recovered in Jere, Maidguri, Biu LGAs of Borno State and Gujba LGA of Yobe State.⁸ Also, 104 Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorists and their families surrendered in the month⁹.



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁰

The recurrent trend in **Organised Crimes** continues to increase the fragility of the affected States and human security in the country. According to the 2023 Global Organized Crime Index, Nigeria ranked sixth globally out of 193 countries, second highest in Africa and first in West

⁵ https://dailytrust.com/iswap-kills-2-fishermen-seizes-over-100-canoes-after-clash-with-b-haram/#google_vignette
⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/
⁸ Ibid.
⁹ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/629070-nigerian-military-troops-kill-191-terrorists-apprehend-184-dhq.html>
¹⁰ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

Africa for organized crime¹¹. The grading also underscores the inadequate resilience measures of the Nigerian Government in mitigating security threats. Incidents of armed banditry, kidnapping, culpable homicide, cult violence, arms/drug/human trafficking, farmer/herder clashes, amongst others criminal violence perpetuated by armed militia gangs were recorded in the reporting period. The WANEP NEWS recorded a total of 387 deaths **excluding fatalities emanating from terrorist related attacks**, out of which 21 were females, 15 children and 29 security personnel including 12 members of local security outfits. Also, out of the recorded 387 deaths, 141 were criminal suspects neutralized during security clearance/offensive operations in Bauchi, Enugu, Benue, Adamawa, Anambra, Rivers, Ebonyi, Abia, Edo, Akwa Ibom, Kebbi, Yobe, Nasarawa and Delta States.¹²

The imposition of protection levies on communities by bandits to avert attacks remains a common denominator. The situation further increases tension and disrupts farming activities as well as other livelihood engagements of affected communities. An additional threat as evidenced in Zamfara State is the surge in food prices and shortage in urban areas due to a combination of factors including the ongoing activities of bandits in the state.¹³ This continues to threaten the economic welfare of the urban dwellers that rely on rural communities for food supply. Data generated by WANEP NEWS reveals a fatality rate of 77 people in Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Niger States, with reports of bandits expansion in Bauchi and Taraba States¹⁴.

Armed violence (including assassination & robbery) resulted in the second highest fatality of 74 people while **cult violence** accounted for 32 fatalities in Kwara, Anambra, Osun, Lagos, and Ogun States¹⁵. Also, **community-herder conflicts/attacks by ethnic militia gangs** resulted in 22 deaths in Plateau, Enugu, FCT-Abuja, Benue and Nasarawa States. The WANEP NEWS also documented reports of cattle rustling and farm destruction during cattle grazing activities in Delta, FCT-Abuja, Plateau States.¹⁶ **Culpable homicide** led to the death of 10 people, while mob violence and extrajudicial killing resulted in the fatality of 4 each respectively.¹⁷ To further mitigate the threat of insecurity as well as regulate mining activities in the country, the governments of Zamfara, Kebbi, Taraba, Borno, Enugu, Nasarawa, and Osun States have suspended mining activities in the states.¹⁸

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

¹¹<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/628789-nigeria-ranked-sixth-in-world-for-organised-crime.html>

¹² ibid

¹³ <https://businessday.ng/news/article/food-prices-soar-in-zamfara-as-bandits-disrupt-supply-chains/>

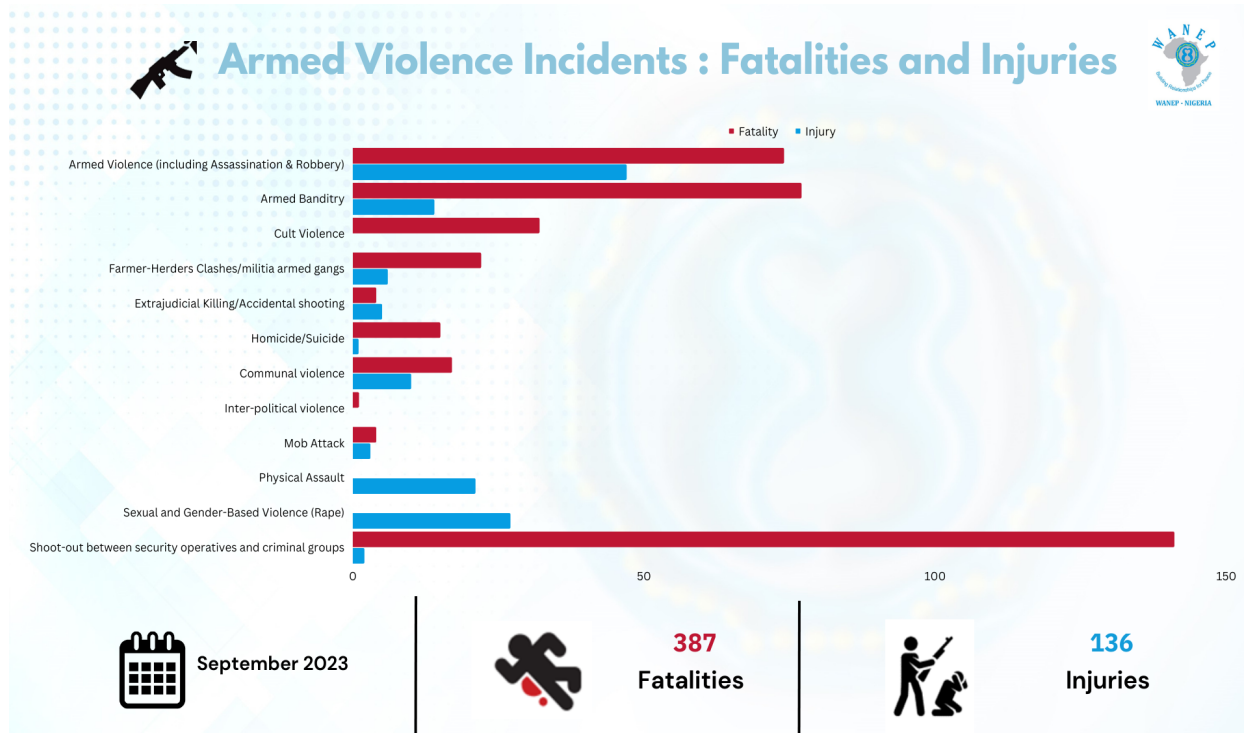
¹⁴ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

¹⁷ ibid

¹⁸ <https://www.thecable.ng/orno-bans-mining-activities-over-fragile-security-situation>



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁹

Unclear boundary delineation of land has continued to generate disputes and heightened tension amongst communities claiming historical rights to farmland and/or other landed properties. The WANEP NEWS recorded series of violence over land ownership in Cross River and Osun States accounting for a fatality of 12 people with several people and properties injured and damaged.²⁰ Other recorded violent clashes in FCT-Abuja between factions of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW); truck drivers and suspected hoodlums in Lagos State; mining company and community residents in Kwara State led to the death of 5 people²¹.

The reporting period recorded 87 incidents of kidnapping across 26 States with a total of 609 people abducted in the month. Out of the total (609) recorded, 98 were females and 23 children.²² The States in the Northern region recorded the highest kidnapped victims of 534, while the southern axis accounted for 75. The quarter (July-September 2023) has witnessed a surge in the statistics of kidnapped victims with 1,397, compared to the previous quarter (April –June, 2023) with 1,225.

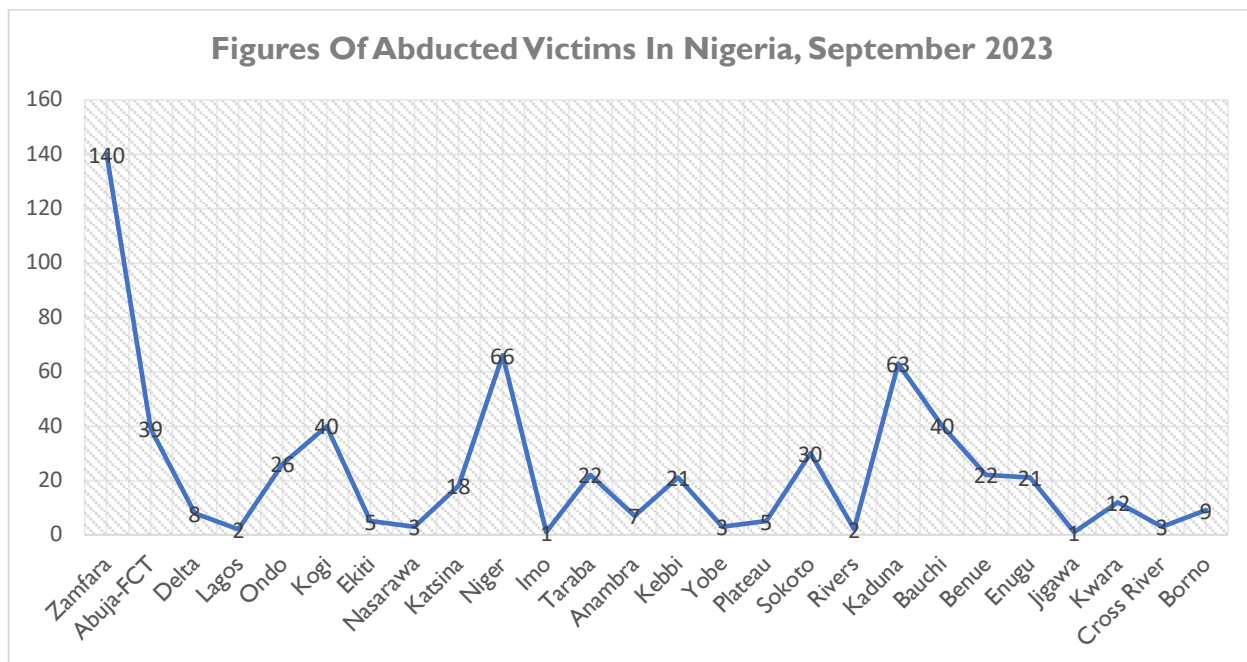
The graph below illustrates the statistics of kidnapped victims per affected State in September 2023.

¹⁹ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

²⁰ ibid

²¹ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

²² Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/



Source: WANEP-NEWS²³

The NEWS also recorded 146 cases of arrest across states in the reporting period.²⁴ The arrest cuts across various criminal incidents such as communal clash, human/drug/arms trafficking, armed robbery, fraud/cyber crime, murder, violent demonstrations, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), amongst others.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:

Rising inflation occasioned by a number of factors including the fuel subsidy removal continues to impact negatively on the livelihoods and economic well-being of citizens. According to the World Bank, the subsidy removal has adversely affected the poor and economically insecure Nigerian households²⁵. To cushion its effects on the populace and businesses, the Federal Government announced the provision of several palliative measures for low-income households and farmers, loan facilities for female traders and higher education students, as well as allowances for Federal Government workers. However, the delay in the implementation of the palliatives in the reporting month led to a two-day nation-wide warning strike by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in the country.²⁶

The WANEP NEWS recorded 40 public demonstrations and industrial strikes in the reporting period²⁷. The recurrent challenges of poor welfare packages and remuneration of teachers continues to impede adequate service delivery, effectiveness and productivity within the educational sector. An instance was evident in the strike by the FCT chapter of the Nigeria

²³ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

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

²⁵ <https://punchng.com/fg-may-spend-n3-27tn-on-palliatives-loans/#:~:text=To%20cushion%20the%20effect%20of%20subsidy%20on%20states%2C%20the%20Federal,and%20180%20trucks%20of%20rice.>

²⁶ <https://saharareporters.com/2023/09/05/informal-workers-union-fiwon-backs-nlc-nationwide-strike-says-giving-states-n5billion>

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

Union of Teachers (NUT) over the non-payment of teachers 25 months arrears and non-implementation of 40 percent peculiar allowance by the Local Government Council Chairmen.²⁸

Other peaceful demonstrations recorded in the month include; demonstrations by students of tertiary institutions in Edo, Lagos and Plateau States, over alleged increment in tuition fees²⁹; protest by residents of Kosofe and Mushin Local Government Areas (LGA) over the continued demolition of houses by the Lagos State Government³⁰; indiscriminate shooting by personnel of the Department of State Services (DSS) in FCT-Abuja; and the recurring security challenges in Mangu LGA of Plateau State.³¹ Staff members of Ugwunagbo Local Government Council of Abia State have also conducted demonstrations over the non-payment of their 4-months salaries; alleged land grabbing by community leaders in Njikoka and Akwa North LGAs of Anambra State.³²; as well as protest in IDP camps in Benue State over the alleged looting and diversion of relief support by suspected officials of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA)³³. In addition, youths in Lagos, Delta, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, FCT-Abuja, amongst other States in Nigeria conducted series of demonstrations demanding justice for the death of a music artist in Lagos State. Further, the judgment of the Kano State Governorship Election Petitions Tribunal, which sacked Governor Yusuf Abba of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) as winner of the March 18, 2023 Governorship elections and declared the All Progressives Congress (APC) candidate as the winner generated reactions, threats and demonstrations by supporters of the NNPP in the State³⁴.

Moreover, members of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) in the South East and South South, conducted demonstrations against their profiling by some Nigerians as criminals and kidnappers³⁵. The ethnic profiling of crimes have continued to increase mutual suspicion and fuelling disunity across communities, thereby creating tension and hampering social cohesiveness of communities.

As highlighted in the *'August 2023 Monthly Bulletin'*, multiple risk factors have been attributed to road accidents including the deplorable conditions of the roads. Road accidents accounted for 116 deaths and 146 injuries in the month³⁶. The non-availability and poor compliance of safety precautions, particularly the use of life jackets increases the risk of drowning during boat mishaps. In the reporting month, the WANEP NEWS recorded 71 fatalities from boat mishaps in Adamawa, Niger, Nasarawa and Kebbi States.³⁷ Another major compliance issue associated with building collapses in the country constitutes a major risk to public safety. Reports of building/bridge collapses were recorded in Ekiti, Enugu, Anambra, Ogun, Delta and Lagos States, accounting for the death of 9 people with 18 others injured³⁸.

²⁸ <https://leadership.ng/fct-primary-school-teachers-begin-indefinite-strike/>

²⁹ <https://dailytrust.com/edo-varsity-students-protest-75-tuition-hike/>; <https://punchng.com/unilag-why-we-are-protesting-same-day-with-pept-verdict-students/>

³⁰ <https://saharareporters.com/2023/09/05/oworonshoki-residents-protest-lagos-state-house-assembly-over-illegal-demolition>

³¹ <https://dailytrust.com/plateau-killing-women-protest-arrest-of-district-head-others/>

³² <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/09/women-threaten-to-protest-naked-in-anambra-community-over-land-grabbing/>

³³ <https://saharareporters.com/2023/09/26/only-96-out-200-bags-rice-were-shared-protests-benue-displaced-persons-accuse-government>

³⁴ <https://saharareporters.com/2023/09/22/protests-kano-state-residents-nppp-supporters-reject-tribunal-judgment-which-sacked>

³⁵ <https://leadership.ng/miyetti-allah-protests-profiling-as-criminals-kidnappers/>

³⁶ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³⁷ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³⁸ Ibid.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:

The weather forecast by the Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NiMet) has continued to support states' preparedness to mitigate the negative impact of extreme weather conditions, while enhancing communities' resilience for response. To address nature-induced disasters, particularly flooding and mitigate its impact, the National Economic Council (NEC) resolved to develop a roadmap for intervention across states.³⁹ The WANEP NEWS documented incidents of flooding in Yobe, Lagos, Kogi, Ogun, Niger, Kano, Kebbi, Cross River, Benue, Ekiti, Anambra, Delta, Plateau, Abia, Nasarawa, Bayelsa and Kwara States with recorded fatalities, property destruction and internal displacements. Yobe, Kebbi, Lagos, Abia, and Kwara States recorded human casualties with 11 deaths and 18 injured victims⁴⁰. A further breakdown of the casualty statistics indicate that the injured victims included 4 children and 5 Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in Yobe and Lagos States.

The dissemination of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidelines and kits by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) in partnership with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to prevent and mitigate the spread of epidemics remains a major public health responsibility to the populace. The reporting month recorded an outbreak of cholera disease in Ijebu North, Abeokuta North and South LGAs of Ogun State resulting in the death of 12 people and 236 infected cases. The outbreak has been linked to open defecation, poor waste management and water sources.⁴¹ In addition, no record of deaths from Lassa Fever disease in the reporting month. However, 9 infected cases and 164 suspected cases were recorded in Edo, Ondo and Bauchi States.⁴²

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:

The WANEP NEWS recorded 27 incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), especially rape of minors in the month.⁴³ The affected States include Rivers, Delta, Ondo, Anambra, Adamawa, Nasarawa, Kebbi, Ogun, Edo, Katsina, and Lagos States.⁴⁴ The reporting month also recorded series of demonstrations by community women of Ekakpamre in Ughelli South LGA of Delta State following the incessant attacks and gang raping of women by suspected herders on farmlands⁴⁵. This has further prevented their access to farms due to fear of being attacked. According to the Ministry of Women Affairs, the country continues to record incessant cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other harmful practices. In the reporting period, 24,720 Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases were reported in the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).⁴⁶ As part of efforts to address cases of SGBV and other vices in the country, the Federal Government, through the Ministry of Women Affairs, has set in motion plans to introduce mobile courts⁴⁷.

Furthermore, human trafficking incidents were reported in Bayelsa, Anambra, Imo and Ekiti States with suspected child traffickers arrested and over 8 children and pregnant teenage girls

³⁹ <https://punchng.com/fg-orders-nema-to-provide-reliefs-to-flood-victims/>

⁴⁰ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news

⁴¹ <https://punchng.com/ogun-records-238-cholera-cases-decries-open-defecation/#:~:text=Ogun%20State%20has%20in%20the,three%20deaths%20had%20been%20recorded.>

⁴² <https://ncdc.gov.ng/themes/common/files/sitesreps/bc53df7ced2c21974a9973e0ce17965.pdf>

⁴³ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

⁴⁴ <https://tribuneonline.ng/military-shuts-underage-brothels-in-maiduguri/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/09/delta-women-protest-incessant-herdsmen-attack-rape/>

⁴⁶ <https://dailypost.ng/2023/10/03/24720-gender-based-violence-cases-reported-nationwide-in-one-month-minister/>

⁴⁷ <https://punchng.com/fg-to-introduce-sgbv-mobile-courts/>

rescued⁴⁸. The abduction of female students at the Federal University Gusau in Zamfara State poses security concerns around safe spaces within institutions of learning. This brings to the fore the need to review and upscale the operational base of the Safe School Initiative (SSI) to include tertiary institutions⁴⁹. Currently, the Safe School Initiative (SSI) caters only for primary and secondary schools in the country.

Implications for Peace and Security in Nigeria

The recurrent deaths, internal displacements and loss of livelihoods associated with criminal attacks continue to increase fragility in affected States and human security in Nigeria. Moreover, limited access to farming and fishing activities in violence prone communities as highlighted above, increases the risk of food insecurity and food price volatility. This also has implication on low income earning population and poor households.

The prevailing insecurity brings to the fore the effectiveness of security measures in schools, as community vulnerability to attacks hampers the regularity of students' attendance in schools, and in most cases schools are shut down. For instance, the attack by bandits on the Federal University Gusau resulting in the kidnap of students generated concerns and recommendations for an extension of the Safe School Initiative (SSI) to ensure the security of tertiary institutions.

Nevertheless, the sustained commitment of the Federal Government to tackle the availability and proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) resulted in several Improvised Explosives Device (IED)/gun manufacturing factories being uncovered in Cross River, Kaduna and Edo States with several arms and ammunition recovered as documented in WANEP NEWS in the month⁵⁰. Further, to guarantee public safety and security of citizens, the government of Osun and Oyo States initiated efforts to facilitate the voluntary surrender of firearms to reduce the circulation of illicit firearms as well as ensure proper review of firearms licensing and regulations for citizens.⁵¹ This initiative by the State Police Commands is in line with the directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP), to curb arms proliferation.

As mentioned in the *August 2023 Monthly Bulletin*, grievances over the negative impact of the fuel subsidy removal on citizens and livelihood support prompted the continuation of a nationwide warning strike by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in September 2023. The frequency in demonstrations and strikes increases the security fragility in the country and vulnerability to crime. Statistics documented by WANEP NEWS reveal that over 40 public demonstrations were recorded in the month.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

⁴⁸ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

⁴⁹ <https://punchng.com/kidnapping-police-nsdc-to-extend-safety-initiative-to-tertiary-institutions/#:~:text=Findings%20showed%20that%20no%20fewer,State%20on%20September%2022%2C%202023.>

⁵⁰ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

⁵¹ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/09/oyo-police-moves-to-mop-up-illegal-firearms-warns-against-proliferation-of-illicit-light-weapons/>

- There is the need for relevant stakeholders including traditional and Faith-Based Organisations, CSOs, Local Governments, security agencies, youth and women groups to continue to strengthen and sustain dialogue processes to address the underlying causes of conflicts, especially in communities and enhance existing mechanisms for peace and security to bolster resilience.
- The Federal and State Governments should continue to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies in intelligence gathering and surveillance to prevent and mitigate crime. This should include enhancing the effectiveness of community security systems especially in schools to protect school children and populations in vulnerable communities.
- The State Governments should continue to increase funding and relief support to relevant disaster management agencies and flood prone communities to mitigate the impact of flood-induced disasters in the country. Also, security surveillance cameras should be installed in IDP camps to prevent the diversion of relief materials at the camps.

CONCLUSION:

Given the myriad security challenges in Nigeria, sustained dialogue amongst diverse ethno-religious leadership, civil society, conflict actors and security agencies to foster social cohesion and resilience in communities still serves as a panacea to insecurity in the country. Additionally, there is the need for stakeholders including civil society organisations to increase public education on epidemic outbreaks, particularly Cholera as well as increasing awareness on the adherence to health prevention mechanisms to enhance mitigation and resilience against the spread of diseases pandemic in the country.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
VIOLENT EXTREMISM: Boko Haram/ISWAP attacks/Inter-terrorist clash - Counter-Terrorist Attacks	18	- 30 (including 1 military personnel and 1 ISWAP terrorist) - 65 terrorists	45
ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence, armed bandits, mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash)	142	187	64
Armed Action/Shoot-Out between security operatives and members of criminal gangs	20	141	2

Abduction (evident across 26 States)	87	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	3	-	-
Extrajudicial killing/Accidental shooting	7	4	5
Physical/Armed Assault	18	-	21
Herder-Community Conflict/Militia Armed Gangs	9	22	6
Violent Clash			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining Company and Orogbangbo community in Kwara state • Supremacy tussle between suspected hoodlums in Lagos state • Leadership tussle between members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) in Abuja-FCT. • Truck Driver and suspected hoodlums in Lagos State. 	4	5	-
Illicit Drug Trafficking	23	-	-
Homicide	10	10	1
Suicide	5	5	-
<u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u>			
Demonstration (peaceful)	37	-	-
Demonstration (violent)	1	-	-
Politically-motivated attack/thuggery (Kogi state)	4	1	-
Intimidation and Threats	6	-	-
Arrest/Detention	146	-	-
Road Accident	42	116	146
Building Collapse	7	9	18
Bridge/Road Collapse	3	-	-
Boat Accident	8	71	30
Electrocution	5	6	-
Industrial Strike (Nigeria Labour Congress; Federal Capital Territory (FCT) chapter of the Nigeria Union of Teachers)	2	-	-
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u>			
Communal conflict	2	12	10

<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u> a. Lassa Fever b. Cholera	3 3	- 12	<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u> Lassa Fever: 9 Cholera: 236
Fire Outbreak Flood/Rainstorm	6 36	- 11	1 18
<u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u> SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape Human Trafficking	27 4	-	27

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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Total	688	707	639