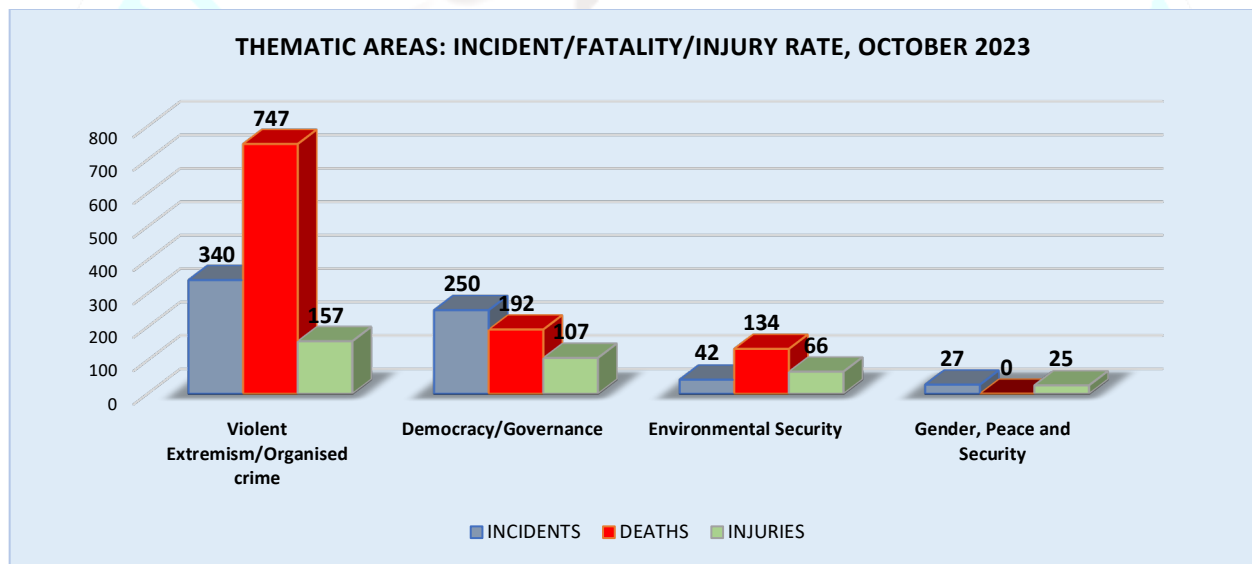




**I. INTRODUCTION**

As of October 2023, 659 incidents were recorded in the *Monthly Conflict Census* from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS).<sup>1</sup> A cumulative fatality of 1,073 and 355 injuries and infected cases emanating from criminal attacks, road accidents and diseases related incidents were recorded in October 2023.

As shown in the thematic graph below, Violent Extremism and Organised Crime recorded a total fatality of 747, accounting for the highest of the total number of fatalities (1,073) recorded in the reporting period while Democracy and Governance theme recorded 192 deaths<sup>2</sup>. Also, Environmental Security theme recorded 134 deaths while the Gender, Peace and Security thematic area recorded zero fatality in the reporting period.<sup>3</sup> (see annex for the monthly census).



Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>4</sup>.

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 unabated violence induced by Boko Haram and Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP) particularly in Borno and Yobe States of the North-East region continues to threaten food security and public safety of the affected communities. The reporting month witnessed series of attacks on farming communities following their alleged refusal to pay taxes and

<sup>1</sup> Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>2</sup> Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

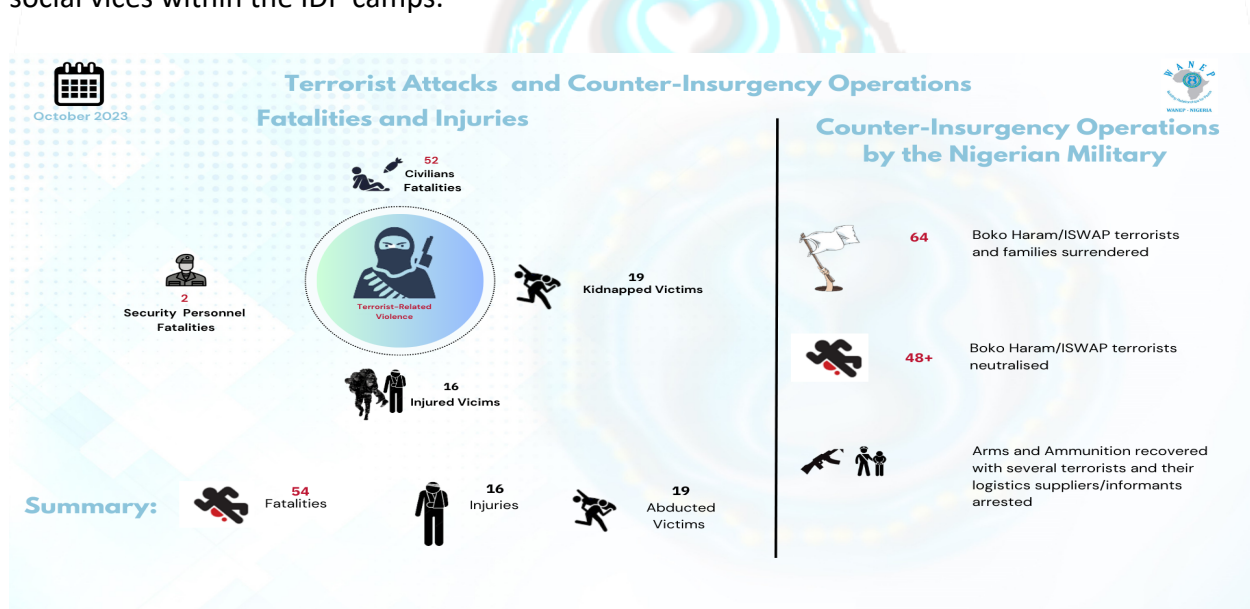
<sup>3</sup> ibid

<sup>4</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

harvest fees to terrorists to gain access to farmlands. Suspected security informants have also become target of terrorist attacks in the aforementioned states.

The WANEP NEWS further recorded 24 terrorist-related incidents including arson, inter-terrorist clash, kidnapping and counter offensive operations in Damboa, Kukawa, Kaga, Marte, Bama and Gwoza LGAs of Borno State; Geidam and Tarmuwa LGA of Yobe State. A total of 54 fatalities including 2 security personnel, 16 injured victims and 19 abducted victims were reported in the period<sup>5</sup>. The ongoing security offensive operations and pre-emptive airstrikes on terrorist enclaves yielded positive outcomes with over 64 Boko Haram/ISWAP terrorists and their families surrendering to the Nigeria Military. Moreover, over 48 terrorists were neutralised with arms and ammunition recovered in Borno and Yobe States<sup>6</sup>. Other major security interventions implemented by the Borno State Government to enhance security include a ban on all mining activities in the State<sup>7</sup>.

The continued existence of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in several Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Borno State, according to the Borno State Governor, Professor Babagana Zulum, remain a potential risk as they serve as recruitment ground for Boko Haram and ISWAP<sup>8</sup>, while also being exposed to sexual exploitation, drug/substance abuse and other social vices within the IDP camps.



Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>9</sup>

The month recorded an array of security challenges with devastating human and property losses in the affected States. The frequency of **Organised Crimes** including arms trafficking, drug and human trafficking, banditry, kidnapping, community-herder violence, cult violence and homicide raises concerns as communities continually increase local security presence following the dearth of security personnel in volatile areas. The WANEP NEWS recorded a total of 680

<sup>5</sup> Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>6</sup> Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.thecable.ng/borno-bans-mining-activities-over-fragile-security-situation#google\\_vignette](https://www.thecable.ng/borno-bans-mining-activities-over-fragile-security-situation#google_vignette)

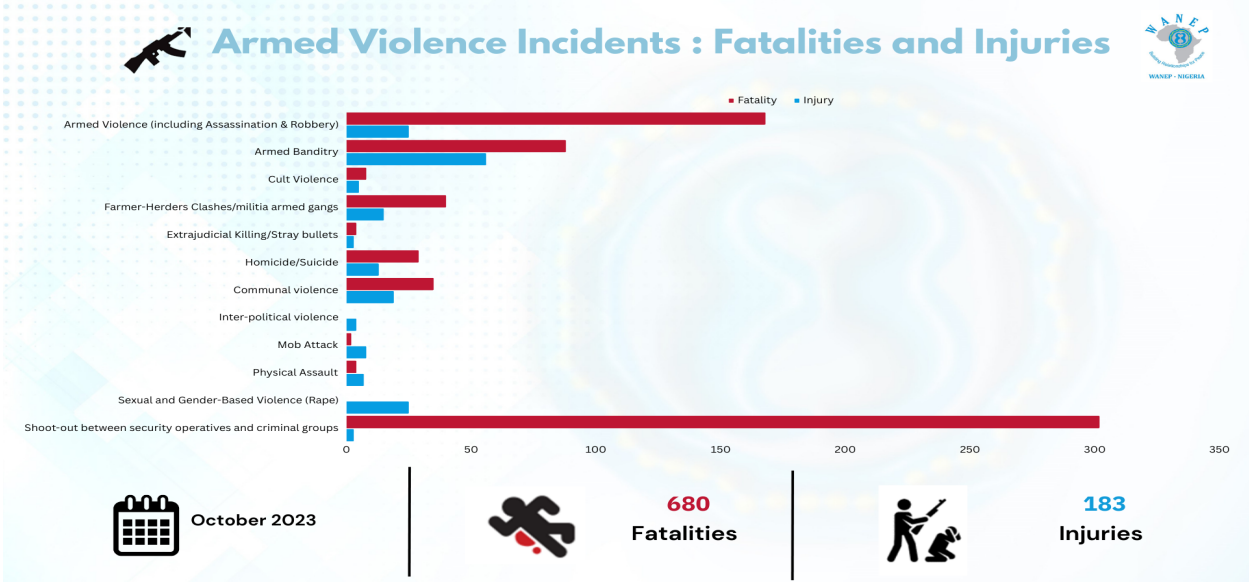
<sup>8</sup> <https://www.channelstv.com/2023/10/30/boko-haram-may-wipe-nigeria-off-the-map-zulum-raises-alarm-about-insurgency/>

<sup>9</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

fatalities **excluding fatalities emanating from terrorist related attacks**<sup>10</sup>. Out of the 680 recorded, 19 were females, 10 children and 29 security personnel including 18 local vigilantes. Also, out of the recorded 680 deaths, 302 were members of criminal gangs neutralized during counter offensive operations/airstrikes in Katsina, Zamfara, Imo, Delta, Lagos, Ogun, Sokoto, Niger, Kaduna, FCT-Abuja, Benue, Bauchi, Plateau, and Kebbi States.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the recorded fatalities, the discovery of 50 decomposing and 20 headless bodies including women, children and countless human skeletons in Lopkanta Cattle Market in Umunneochi Local Government Area of Abia State<sup>12</sup> has increased concerns over the safety and security of community residents in the South-East region. This is partly attributable to the incessant attacks on security personnel and community residents by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the Eastern Security Network (ESN). In continuation of the ongoing security offensive in the South-East, security agencies recorded considerable successes with several IPOB/ESN enclaves uncovered in Imo and Abia States.<sup>13</sup>

**Armed violence (including assassination & robbery)** accounted for the highest fatality of 168 people while **armed banditry** resulted in the second highest fatality of 88 people in Sokoto, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, Bauchi and Niger States.<sup>14</sup> Also, **community-herder conflicts/attacks by ethnic militia gangs** resulted in 40 deaths in Kebbi, Delta, Benue, Oyo, and FCT-Abuja, with **Culpable homicide** accounting for 26 deaths. The WANEP NEWS recorded incidents of cult violence that led to 8 fatalities while physical/armed assault, extrajudicial killing and mob violence led to 4, 4 and 2 deaths respectively. Below is the graphical representation of armed violence incidents and fatalities as documented by WANEP NEWS in October 2023.

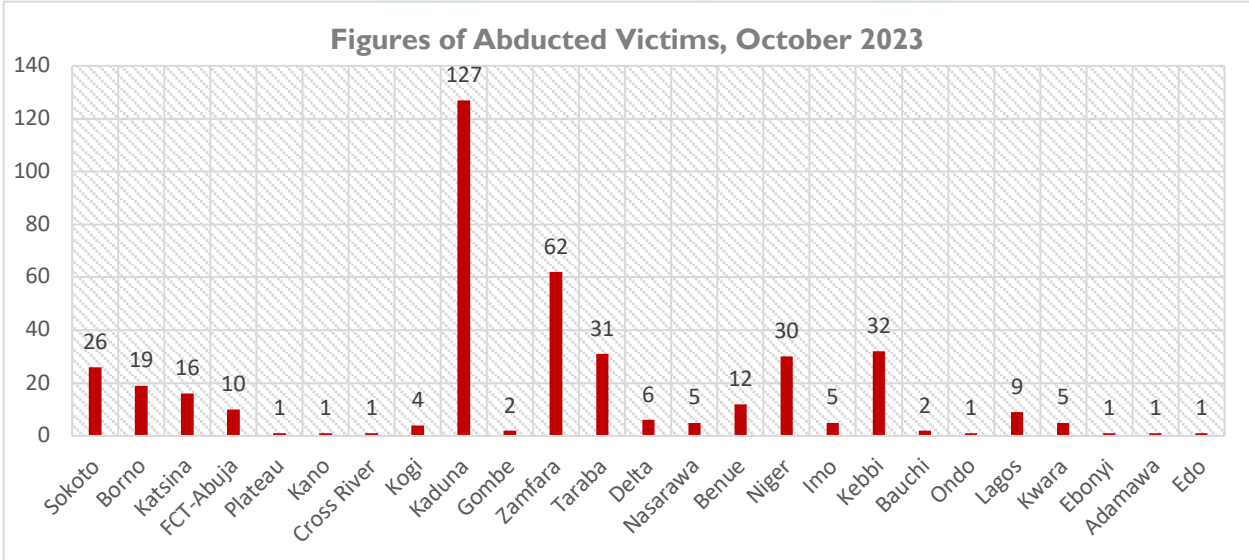


Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)  
<sup>11</sup> Ibid  
<sup>12</sup> <https://businessday.ng/news/article/over-50-decomposed-20-headless-bodies-discovered-in-lopkanta-cattle-market-otti/>  
<sup>13</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)  
<sup>14</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>15</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

The protracted violence between communities and ethnic groups in Osun and Cross River States over land ownership continues to undermine peaceful coexistence and socio-economic activities in the communities. A total of 35 deaths was recorded with several properties destroyed.<sup>16</sup> Other recorded violent clashes in the month include the clash between security operatives in Kogi State; and skirmishes over the impeachment proceedings against the Rivers State Governor, which resulted in several injured victims.<sup>17</sup>

Another major security concern is the recurrence in kidnapping across states in Nigeria. The month of October 2023 recorded 79 incidents across 25 states with a total of 410 people abducted in the period. Out of the 410 victims, 76 were females and 19 children.<sup>18</sup> The graph below illustrates the statistics of kidnapped victims per affected State in October 2023.



Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>19</sup>

The NEWS also recorded several arrest in 165 incidents across States in the month.<sup>20</sup> The arrest cuts across incidents of violent demonstrations, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), armed violence, terrorism, armed robbery, human/drug trafficking, arms smuggling, banditry, fraud/cybercrime, threat, culpable homicide, amongst other crimes in the country.

**3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:**

Given the high stakes in electioneering campaigns in the country, there are risks of heightened tension and violence in Bayelsa, Imo and Kogi States following the state-governorship elections. Despite this, the political landscape also witnessed an end to several months of legal proceedings from opposition political parties over the presidential election conducted in February 2023. The Supreme Court of Nigeria on October 26, 2023, upheld the presidential

<sup>16</sup> ibid  
<sup>17</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)  
<sup>18</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)  
<sup>19</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)  
<sup>20</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

election of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC), ruling against the oppositions' challenges of fraud and electoral breaches during the election.<sup>21</sup>

The WANEP NEWS recorded 34 incidents of public demonstrations in the month. Also, two (2) industrial strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP), Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Polytechnics and Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) were over the non-payment of salaries/allowances,<sup>22</sup> while the Parliamentary Staff Association of Nigeria (PASAN), Nasarawa State Chapter joined the nationwide strike to demand for financial autonomy of state legislature across the country.<sup>23</sup>

Other peaceful demonstrations recorded in the month include; demonstrations by community residents in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area (LGA) of Akwa Ibom State over the destruction of buildings and farmlands caused by frequent blasts and tremor from the activities of the Geo Seismic Survey Limited;<sup>24</sup> students protest over the increment in tuition fees and acceptance fees paid by newly admitted students of the Moshood Abiola Polytechnic and Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) in Ogun and Osun States.<sup>25</sup> Also, unpaid salaries of street sweepers, civil servants and pensioners in Kano, Enugu and Anambra States<sup>26</sup>; and the incessant criminal attacks and kidnapping in Delta, Benue and Zamfara States triggered series of demonstrations in the period.

Another major source of concern is the prevalence of boat mishaps and building collapses in the country as recorded by WANEP NEWS as it continues to reveal the weak enforcement of policies and laws in the country. The reporting period recorded 7 incidents of boat mishaps which resulted in the death of 76 people in Kebbi, Niger, Edo, Lagos, Bayelsa and Taraba States with 69 others unaccounted for in Taraba State.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, 4 fatalities and 7 injured victims were recorded from building collapses in Benue, Osun and Ekiti States while road accidents accounted for 108 deaths and 88 injured victims in the month<sup>28</sup>.

#### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:**

The reporting period recorded incidents of flood occasioned by heavy rainfall in Nasarawa, Adamawa, Taraba, Yobe, Enugu, Rivers and FCT-Abuja, resulting in internal displacements, fatalities, and destruction of houses and farmlands. Yobe, Enugu and FCT-Abuja accounted for 4 flood-related deaths in the month.<sup>29</sup> Aside the heavy rainfall, the incessant flood has also been attributed to the release of water from Lagdo Dam in Cameroun Republic.

Lassa fever remains a major public health challenge across the states of Nigeria, as poor environmental sanitation, poor awareness, and late presentation of suspected cases are reported to be fuelling the epidemic.<sup>30</sup> Despite the interventions of the National Lassa Fever

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/26/nigerias-supreme-court-affirms-tinubus-presidential-victory>

<sup>22</sup> <https://tribuneonline.ng.com/mapoly-workers-embark-on-indefinite-strike-over-nonpayment-of-salaries/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://dailypost.ng/2023/10/30/nasarawa-parliamentary-staff-join-nationwide-strike-demand-financial-autonomy-for-state-assemblies/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://punchng.com/a-ibom-communities-protest-destruction-of-buildings-farmlands-by-oil-firm/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/10/mapoly-students-protest-fee-hike-others/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/10/street-sweepers-stage-protest-over-5-months-unpaid-salaries-in-kano/>; <https://saharareporters.com/2023/10/04/workers-shut-enugu-state-teaching-hospital-protest-non-payment-seven-months-salaries/>; <https://tribuneonline.ng.com/anambra-pensioners-protest-non-payment-of-gratuities-for-four-years/>

<sup>27</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>28</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>29</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>30</sup> [https://punchng.com/ncdc-confirms-1095-lassa-fever-cases-188-deaths/#:~:text=The%20Nigeria%20Centre%20for%20Disease,2023\)%2C%20released%20on%20Tuesday.](https://punchng.com/ncdc-confirms-1095-lassa-fever-cases-188-deaths/#:~:text=The%20Nigeria%20Centre%20for%20Disease,2023)%2C%20released%20on%20Tuesday.)



Multi-sectoral Technical Working Group (TWG) in coordinating intensive response activities to mitigate the spread of the disease, it remains endemic with confirmed outbreaks and fatalities recorded in Edo, Ondo, Bauchi and Nasarawa states.<sup>31</sup> The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) reported over 170 suspected cases with 14 confirmed cases and 6 deaths in the month.<sup>32</sup>

## **5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:**

The WANEP NEWS recorded 22 incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), especially rape of minors in the month.<sup>33</sup> The affected victims were between the ages of 4 and 50 years old in Delta, Ebonyi, Benue, Edo, Yobe, Lagos, Ogun, Adamawa, Rivers, Jigawa, Plateau, Gombe and Ekiti states. Additionally, human trafficking cases were reported in Ondo, Edo, Anambra and Plateau states with over 18 underaged children rescued. The challenges associated with delayed justice for victims of SGBV particularly rape continues to hamper reportage. The Ministry of Women Affairs has revealed that over 8,540 reported cases of SGBV against women and children in Nigeria are still pending in courts and police stations between August 2021 and October 3, 2023.<sup>34</sup> With the passage of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law (VAPP) in Nigeria, the need to develop and enhance the capacities of state agencies to effectively implement the provisions of the law is critical to mitigating the human rights violation. With the exception of Katsina, Kano, Taraba, and Zamfara states, all other states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have assented to the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), which was passed in 2015.<sup>35</sup>

### **Implications for Peace and Security in Nigeria**

Besides the relative gains attained by security agencies in countering armed violence and other social vices, the frequency in criminal attacks across states continue to pose a threat to human and food security in the country. In the month under review, the WANEP NEWS recorded a total of 288 armed violence incidents which accounted for a total of 432 civilian fatalities and 410 kidnapped victims in the period. Moreover, the vulnerability of farmers to constant threats and armed attacks by terrorists and bandits following their inability to pay levies to access their farmlands has further increased food insecurity in vulnerable localities within the states.

The humanitarian challenges occasioned by the rising insecurity continues to increase the rate of internal displacement of communities and closure of schools in vulnerable communities. As schools resume for the 2023-2024 academic session in the month, an instance was recorded in Zamfara State where 75 schools in the red zone remained shut down due to recurring threats of kidnapping and banditry.<sup>36</sup> According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), an estimated 20 million children are currently out-of-school in Nigeria.<sup>37</sup> The exposure of these out-of-school children and internally displaced persons, particularly women and children to the risk of sexual exploitations and criminal recruitment is rife, undermining the security and fundamental human rights of affected persons.

<sup>31</sup> <https://ncdc.gov.ng/diseases/sitreps>

<sup>32</sup> <https://ncdc.gov.ng/diseases/sitreps>

<sup>33</sup> Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : [www.wanep.org/news/](http://www.wanep.org/news/)

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.theable.ng/minister-over-8000-cases-of-sgbv-pending-in-police-stations-courts-since-2021>

<sup>35</sup> <https://guardian.ng/features/amid-prohibition-laws-domestic-sexual-violence-thrive-nationwide/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://dailypost.ng/2023/10/16/insecurity-75-zamfara-schools-in-red-areas-remain-shut-as-others-resume/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/551804-breaking-nigeria-now-has-20-million-out-of-school-children-unesco.html?tztc=1>

Protracted demonstrations emanating from poor citizens welfare, human right abuses and other social issues including public security may likely aggravate human frustration and aggression, compounding the fragile security situation in the country.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

- State Governments in collaboration with security agencies, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and traditional/religious institutions should increase collaboration and create avenues for improved interface between community early warning system and crime intelligence gathering for effective and timely alerts that would prevent or mitigate criminal attacks.
- The State and Local Governments should continually strengthen collaboration with security agencies, CSOs, faith-based organisations, women and youths groups and the media to sensitize communities on sexual and gender-based violence and the relevant gender laws including VAPP law. This should further create a space for the Local Governments and other Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) to increase advocacy and provide mentorship on the protection of women and girls in communities.

**CONCLUSION:**

As the country contends with increased insecurity, the need to strengthen collaboration among critical stakeholders including traditional and religious institutions to enhance peace and security in the country is crucial. This is not only critical to ensure safety and protection of the population, but also creates a conducive climate for international and national investments to thrive, thus promoting inclusive growth and social development.

**CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR OCTOBER 2023**

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
<b>VIOLENT EXTREMISM:</b> Boko Haram/ISWAP attacks/Inter-terrorist clash - Counter-Terrorist Attacks	24	- 54 (including one Boko Haram terrorist and 2 security personnel - 48 terrorists	16
<b>ORGANISED CRIME:</b> (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence, armed bandits, mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash)	117	266	94
Armed Action/Shoot-out between security operatives and members of criminal gangs	29	302	3

Abduction (evident across 25 States)	79	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	8	-	-
Extrajudicial killing/Accidental shooting	5	4	3
Physical/Armed Assault	11	4	7
Herder-Community Conflict/Militia Armed Gangs	16	40	15
<b>Violent Clash</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clash between community youths in Kwara state.</li> <li>• NDLEA and police operatives in Kogi state.</li> <li>• Kogi's Governor aides and military operatives in Kogi state.</li> <li>• Clash over the impeachment proceedings against the Rivers State Government in Rivers state.</li> </ul>	4	-	6
Illicit Drug Trafficking	22	-	-
Homicide	21	26	12
Suicide	4	3	1
<b><u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u></b>			
Demonstration ( <b>peaceful</b> )	33	-	-
Demonstration ( <b>violent</b> )	1	-	-
Politically-motivated attack/thuggery (Kogi state)	4	-	4
Intimidation and Threats	4	-	-
Arrest/Detention	165	-	-
Road Accident	30	108	88
Building Collapse	3	4	7
Boat Accident	7	76	8
Electrocution	1	4	-
Industrial Strike (Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics; Parliamentary Staff Association of Nigeria (PASAN))	2	-	-
<b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u></b>			
Communal conflict	5	35	13



<b>Pandemic/Epidemics:</b>			<b>Confirmed/Infected Cases</b>
a. Lassa Fever (Edo, Ondo, Bauchi, Nasarawa States)	4	6	Lassa Fever: 14
Fire Outbreak/Tanker Explosion	18	85	29
Flood	12	4	-
Other Accidents	3	4	10
<b>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</b>			
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape	22	-	25
Human Trafficking	5		

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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<b>Total</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>355</b>