



NEWS SITUATION TRACKING – NIGERIA

NATIONWIDE PROTESTS IN NIGERIA – AUGUST 4 -7, 2024

Vol. 1

Location: NIGERIA

Issue: #ENDBADGOVERNANCE NATIONWIDE PROTEST IN NIGERIA

Date: August 7, 2024

COMMUNITY PROFILING

CRITICAL

INCIDENT PROFILING

STAKEHOLDERS

Population: Nigeria has a population of over 229,152,217².

Basic Demography and Geography of Hotspots:

Nigeria shares land borders with the Republic of Benin, Chad, Cameroun, Niger and the Gulf of Guinea of the Atlantic Ocean. The country has 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). There are 774 Local Government Areas (LGA's) divided across six (6) geo-political zones.

Ethnicity: Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups with Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, Yoruba³ in the majority.

Similar Nationwide Demonstration - #EndSARS in October 2020:

In October 2020, Nigeria recorded similar widespread demonstration (#EndSARS) over the prevalence of human rights abuses perpetrated by the Nigeria Police Force (NPF).

The WANEP NEWS documented over 90 incidents of EndSARS demonstrations across States, out of

Direct Actors:

Nigerians (especially youths)

Affected Persons:

Nigerians and officers of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF).

Interested Actors:

Federal and State Governments, Amnesty International, Civil Society Organisations, International Agencies, National/State House of Assembly, House of Representative, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC), Law Enforcement Agencies, National

The ongoing nationwide demonstrations against the current economic crisis in Nigeria continue to gain momentum, with violence recorded across some states. The demonstrations are driven by widespread discontent with the current administration's economic reforms, which continue to have a profound effect on livelihoods of the population.

As the demonstration reaches Day 7, several states including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT-Abuja) continue to record protesters compliance. Between Day 4 and 6, some cities and states including Edo, Oyo, Adamawa, Lagos, Osun, Rivers, Ogun, Akwa-Ibom, and Taraba have maintained a relatively peaceful protest, while others including Kano, Zamfara, Borno, Gombe, Bauchi, Kaduna, Plateau, Katsina, and Jigawa states witnessed recurring incidents of casualties, arson, violent confrontations, looting and destruction of private and public infrastructures by suspected hoodlums.⁷

Also, there were recorded incidents of shooting by police operatives to disperse protesters suspected to have exploited the insecurity created by the protest to perpetrate criminal activities. Reports of individuals and journalists allegedly hit by stray bullets and tear gas canisters fired by police and military operatives were recorded in FCT-Abuja, Nasarawa, Kano, and Kaduna States between Day 4 and 6.⁸ On the other hand, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) confirmed cases of unprovoked attacks on security personnel in FCT-Abuja, Kano, Kaduna and Gombe states with a total of nine (9) police officers reported injured since the commencement of the protest.⁹ Similar attempted attack on operatives of the Nigerian Army was also reported in Kaduna state on August 6, 2024, which resulted in the death of an 18-year old boy¹⁰.

According to the Amnesty International, 13 people were allegedly killed in clashes with the law enforcement agencies since the start of the protest.¹⁰ These claims of fatality have been refuted by the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), who put the death toll at 7, stating that some of the fatalities recorded in the period were caused by accidents and explosive devices.¹¹

¹ <https://www.google.com/search?xsrf=ALeKk024WZQdV9kevtu8o3POhTqEE6KSdQ:1602836211476&source=univ&tbm=isch&q=map+of+Nigeria&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjQ-SGY1rjsAhURCWMBHXBQDDQ7A16BAgBEHE&biw=899&bih=578>

² <https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/NGA/nigeria/population#:~:text=United%20Nations%20projections%20are%20also,a%202.41%25%20increase%20from%202022.>

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

⁶ [ibid](#)

⁷ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news

⁸ Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS); www.wanep.org/news; <https://dailytrust.com/police-make-u-turn-say-officer-igp-claimed-was-killed-survived-miraculously/>; <https://apnews.com/article/nigeria-protests-abuja-secret-service-police-33c66e9ecf4d9ba144e4cc7cf897607> ; <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/08/soldiers-security-operatives-enforce-24hr-curfew-in-kaduna/#:~:text=As%20operatives%20battled%20hoodlums,at%20the%20Hayin%20Danman%20community.&text=Two%20young%20men%20in%20the,rice%20processing%20mill%20to%20steal>;

⁹ [https://www.channelstv.com/2024/08/03/protests-policeman-reported-dead-miraculously-survived-force-pro/#:~:text=%E2%80%99CNine%20\(9\)%20police%20officers,in%20a%20statement%20on%20Saturday,https://dailypost.ng/2024/08/07/nigerian-army-arrest-officer-who-gunned-down-16-year-old-protester-in-kaduna/](https://www.channelstv.com/2024/08/03/protests-policeman-reported-dead-miraculously-survived-force-pro/#:~:text=%E2%80%99CNine%20(9)%20police%20officers,in%20a%20statement%20on%20Saturday,https://dailypost.ng/2024/08/07/nigerian-army-arrest-officer-who-gunned-down-16-year-old-protester-in-kaduna/)

¹⁰ <https://www.businesslive.co.za/world/africa/2024-08-05-nigerian-protests-fizzle-out-after-deadly-police-crackdown/>

¹¹ [ibid](#)

¹² Source : WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news; <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/08/protests-commercial-activities-halted-as-pro-anti-govt-groups-clash-in-lagos/>

¹³ <https://dailytrust.com/breaking-russia-breaks-silence-on-use-of-its-flag-by-protesters/>; <https://dailytrust.com/breaking-we-wont-accept-treason-defence-chief-warns-protesters-flying-russian-flag/>

¹⁴ <https://www.channelstv.com/2024/08/05/dss-arrests-tailors-suspected-to-be-mass-producing-russian-flags-in-kano/>; <https://punchng.com/endbadgovernanceinigeria-police-arrest-russian-flag-producer-30-protesters/>; https://www.arseniv.com/protests-police-arrest-39-suspects-with-russian-chinese-flags-in-kaduna/#google_vignette; <https://punchng.com/police-arrest-10-with-russian-flags-10-for-violent-protest-in-gombe/>

¹⁵ [ibid](#)

¹⁶ <https://dailypost.ng/2024/08/05/timbu-hosts-security-council-meeting-at-presidential-villa/>

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

¹⁸ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/718759-spotlight-beyond-economic-hardship-these-are-other-issues-protest-organisers-have-raised.html>; <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/08/protests-kaduna-zaria-boil-over-n700bn-lost-in-5-days-asbn-kaccima/>

which 56 were violent³. The demonstrations further degenerated as suspected hoodlums exploited the insecurity created by the protest to perpetrate criminal activities including, jailbreak, robbery, extortion and physical assaults on commuters/motorists, arson, looting, rape and revenge attacks on security officers. A total of 155 deaths and 125 injuries were recorded by WANEP NEWS. Out of the total number of fatalities (155), 32 were police officers and 6 military officers. In addition, out of the total injured victims, 43 were police officers⁴.

During the weeks-long demonstration, 82 police stations and outposts were vandalised and burnt down, while 2083 inmates escaped from Correctional facilities in Edo (1993), Ondo (58) and Delta (32) States⁵. Lagos and Abia States also recorded failed jail break attempts with several food items and properties in ware houses, shops, hospitals, Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), looted by community residents and suspected hoodlums in Edo, Lagos, Kwara, Osun, Ondo, Plateau, Akwa Ibom, Oyo, Cross River, Kogi, Kaduna, Adamawa, Taraba, Abuja, Ekiti, Ogun, Anambra, Enugu and Abia States, as recorded in WANEP NEWS in October 2020⁶.

Human Rights Commission, Police Service Commission, Federal Ministry of Justice, opposition political parties, Organised Labour, media, traditional and religious leaders.

The prevailing volatile security situation in Nigeria compounded by the violent agitations in some states have continued to raise citizens apprehension of plausible breakdown of law and order as witnessed during the #EndSARS nationwide protest in October 2020. As monitored by the WANEP NEWS, there are alleged claims of sponsored hoodlums infiltrating the protest to cause chaos.¹²

As protesters demand effective socio-economic and institutional restructuring to alleviate the nationwide hardship occasioned by the rising inflation, there are allegations that the protest against the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, has religious, ethnic and/or political undertones. A semblance of these allegation is evident in some northern states, particularly in Kano, Zamfara, Bauchi, Katsina, Gombe and Kaduna, where protesters are seen clamouring for military rule and others flying the Russian and Chinese flags¹³. While the latter is considered a treasonable offence undermining Nigeria's sovereignty and unity, it has generated increased concerns about external interference. The Russian Embassy in Nigeria on August 5, 2024, has stated that the protesters' actions do not reflect any official Russian Government policy or position.¹⁴ As the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, pledged to defend democracy and ensure that democracy thrives in Nigeria, security operatives have also apprehended over 49 protesters and tailors with Russian and Chinese flags in Kano, Kaduna and Gombe states.¹⁶ The motive behind protesters flying the flags of other sovereign nations, however, remains unclear.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's broadcast on August 4, 2024, aimed to reassure Nigerians of government's commitment while urging protesters to suspend demonstrations and create space for dialogue, has generated mixed reactions. Others have cited perceived insensitivity to the current economic burden, as the president's speech failed to highlight concrete measures in addressing the underlying issues. This has the potential to escalate tensions and may likely aggravate violent tendencies during demonstrations. Subsequently, on August 5, 2024, the President of Nigeria, Bola Tinubu, hosted a Security Council meeting with service chiefs and the Inspector General of Police (IGP), to further address the ongoing #EndBadGovernance protest.¹⁵

As the protest progresses, three (3) additional states including Kaduna, Plateau and Bauchi states declared a 24-hour curfew between August 4 and 5, 2024, to strengthen public safety and de-escalate tension with several protesters apprehended for destroying public assets.¹⁶ Additionally, due to the potential threat of attacks on correctional facilities, security measures have been significantly increased across these facilities to prevent jail breaks.

The reinstatement of subsidies for petrol and electricity; measures to combat insecurity; enthronement of credible electoral and judicial systems for accountability and justice; re-opening of national borders to stimulate trade/prioritise made-in-nigeria goods to bolster local economies; revival of local industries; and access to free and quality primary and secondary education, amongst others, represents the generic demands of the populace.¹⁷

RISK ANALYSIS

- The ongoing nationwide demonstrations reflect deep-seated socio-political and economic issues in the country. While these demonstrations are a manifestation of the populace's demand for accountability, transparent governance, economic reforms, and social support systems, the recorded violence and criminalities associated with the protest in some states pose significant risks to the country's security, stability, and development.
- The protests, which is similar to the #EndSARS demonstration in October 2020, have resulted in the disruption of economic/business activities and vehicular movements with several offices shut down due to fear of looting, harassment, and destruction of properties. Such disruption may likely exacerbate existing supply chain issues, leading to shortages and further increase in the cost of goods and services. Moreover, economics experts have estimated losses at over 700 billion within the first five days of the protest.¹⁸
- A notable aspect of the ongoing demonstration is the active involvement of young people and the elderly. This mobilization reflects a growing political consciousness and willingness to demand accountability. As this can lead to positive change in governance, there is also the risk of these demonstrations and agitations being co-opted by political interests.
- The continued demonstrations amid several interventions by the Federal and State Governments to put a halt to the protest and dialogue, reveal the existing trust deficit amongst the citizenry for the government. This distrust threatens the fabric of Nigerian democracy, as an increasing number of citizens have become disillusioned with the capacity of the state and federal governments to stabilize the economy and address the ensuing hardship fuelled by the high inflation rate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Federal and State Governments should foster broader national collaboration with youth and women groups, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), opinion leaders, traditional/religious leaders, and other relevant groups to create space for broader and inclusive dialogue to address the citizens' concerns.