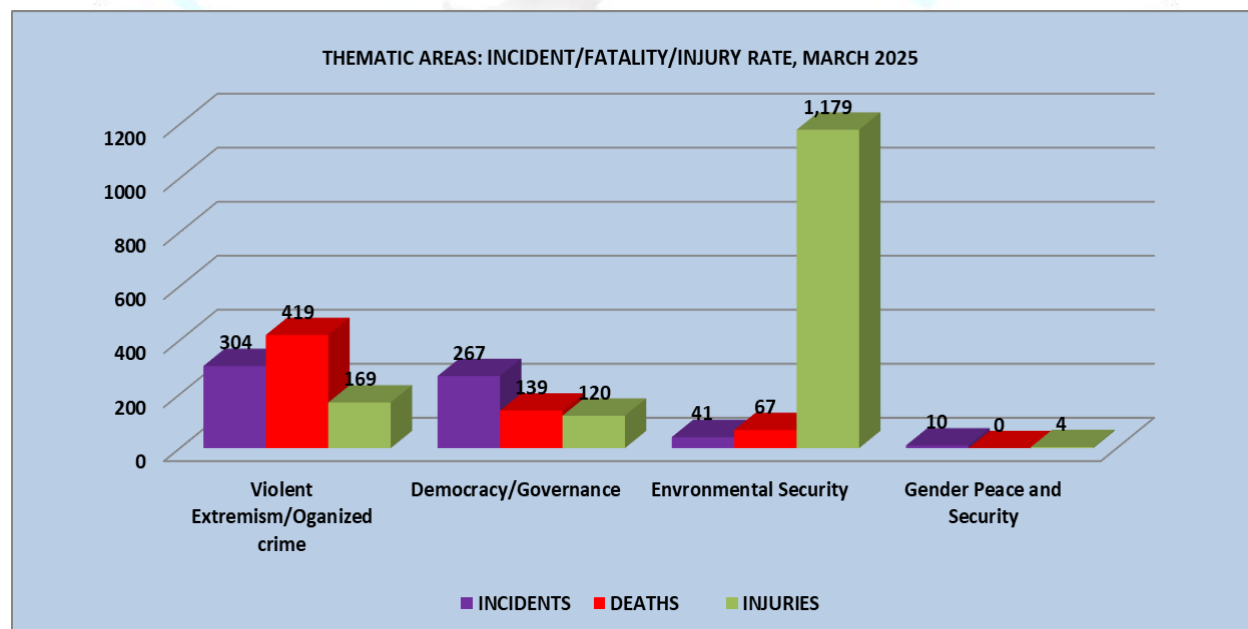


I. INTRODUCTION

In March 2025, 625 incidents were recorded in the *Monthly Conflict Census* from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS).¹ A cumulative fatality of 649 and 1,477 injuries and infected cases emanating from criminal attacks, road accidents and diseases related incidents were recorded.

As shown in the thematic graph below, Violent Extremism and Organised Crime recorded a total fatality of 419, accounting for the highest of the total number of fatalities recorded in the reporting period while Democracy and Governance theme recorded 139 deaths.² Also, the Environmental Security theme recorded 67 deaths while the Gender, Peace and Security thematic area recorded no death 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

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) continues to intensify its security clearance operations in the North-East region to mitigate terrorism, particularly in Borno and Yobe States. Despite the recorded successes in enhancing citizens' safety and security, coordinated terrorist

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

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

attacks including the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) persisted in the reporting period, with ripple effects on national peace and security stability.

WANEP NEWS documented terrorists attacks, instances of landmine explosion and kidnapping in Gubja, Damboa, Mungunu, Madagali, Mandara Mountain, Gwaza LGAs in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa States. These reported violent attacks resulted in 12 fatalities, including 5 security personnel and 2 local vigilantes with about 50 people abducted during the reporting period⁵.

Moreover, the Nigerian Military in collaboration with Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) have strengthened their partnership with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) to conduct intensified counterinsurgency and clearance operations across Adamawa, Yobe, and Borno States with over 47 terrorists neutralized. These efforts have also led to the arrest and the surrendering of 143 others including 5 males, 66 women, and 72 children in the period.⁶

Aside from the above, the security landscape remains significantly affected by organized crime, including weapons trafficking, armed banditry, human and drug trafficking, cult violence, kidnapping, and armed violence by militia gangs. In the reporting period, WANEP NEWS recorded 269 incidents of organized crime, resulting in 381 fatalities among civilians and security personnel. Of the recorded deaths, 81 were members of Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs), while over 16 were females, 13 were children, and 10 were security personnel, including members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and Vigilante Groups across Katsina, Zamfara, Kebbi, Kaduna, Lagos, Delta, Ogun, Niger, Osun, Ebonyi, Benue, Ondo, FCT, Nasarawa, Plateau, Ekiti, Oyo, Jigawa, Sokoto, Rivers, Kano, Edo, Imo, Cross River, Kogi, Abia, Kwara, Anambra, Adamawa, Enugu, Yobe, Gombe and Bauchi States.⁷

Armed violence incidents, including robbery, assassination and Violent communal clashes accounted for highest number of fatalities, with 104 deaths reported while **Armed banditry** accounted for the second highest fatalities of 73 people including a security personnel in Kaduna, Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto, and Kebbi States in the (North-West) region.⁸ These persistent attacks have exacerbated the humanitarian challenges in the region where rural banditry is linked to significant human rights violations and a range of criminal activities, including kidnapping, theft, cattle rustling, and arms trafficking.

Armed attacks by suspected ethnic militia/armed herders led to 66 deaths in Benue, Ondo, Borno, Abuja, Nasarawa and Plateau State. Other reported incidents included culpable homicide, extrajudicial killings/shooting, mob violence, and suicide which recorded 25, 11, 5, and 4 deaths, respectively in the reporting period.⁹

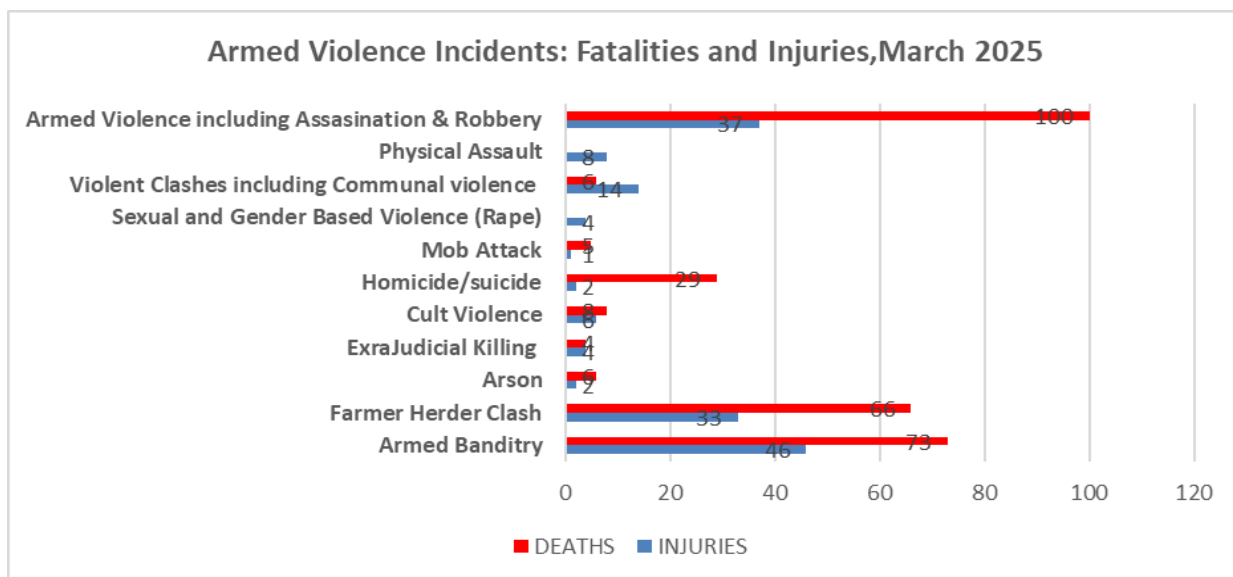
Below is the graphical representation of armed violence incidents and fatalities as documented by WANEP NEWS in March 2025.

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

⁶ <https://zagazola.org/index.php/breaking-news/nigerian-armed-forces-sustain-momentum-in-counter-terrorism-and-security-operations-across-the-country>

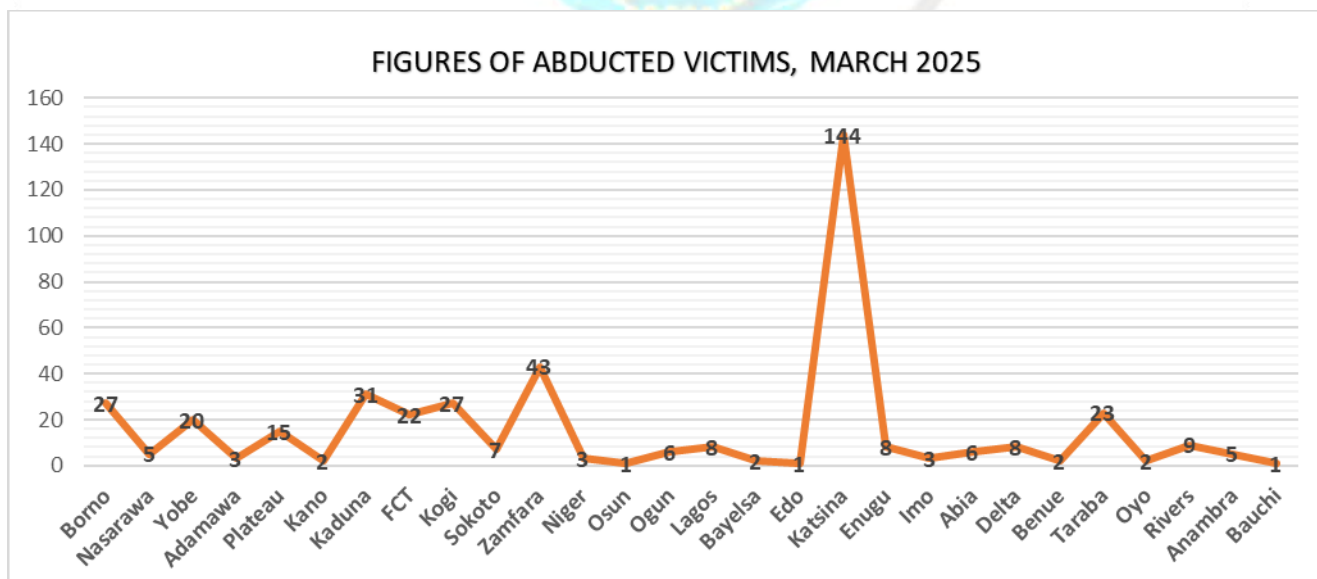
⁷ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

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



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁰

The activities of Kidnapping by armed criminal groups continue to undermine the peace and security across Nigeria. WANEP NEWS documented 89 incidents of kidnapping across 28 states with 434 people abducted. Out of the 434 abducted victims, over 62 were females, 42 children and 6 security personnel in the reporting month.¹¹ The prevalence of kidnapping not only disrupts daily activities also exacerbates existing socio-economic challenges, as communities grapple with the trauma and financial burdens associated with ransom demands and recovery efforts.



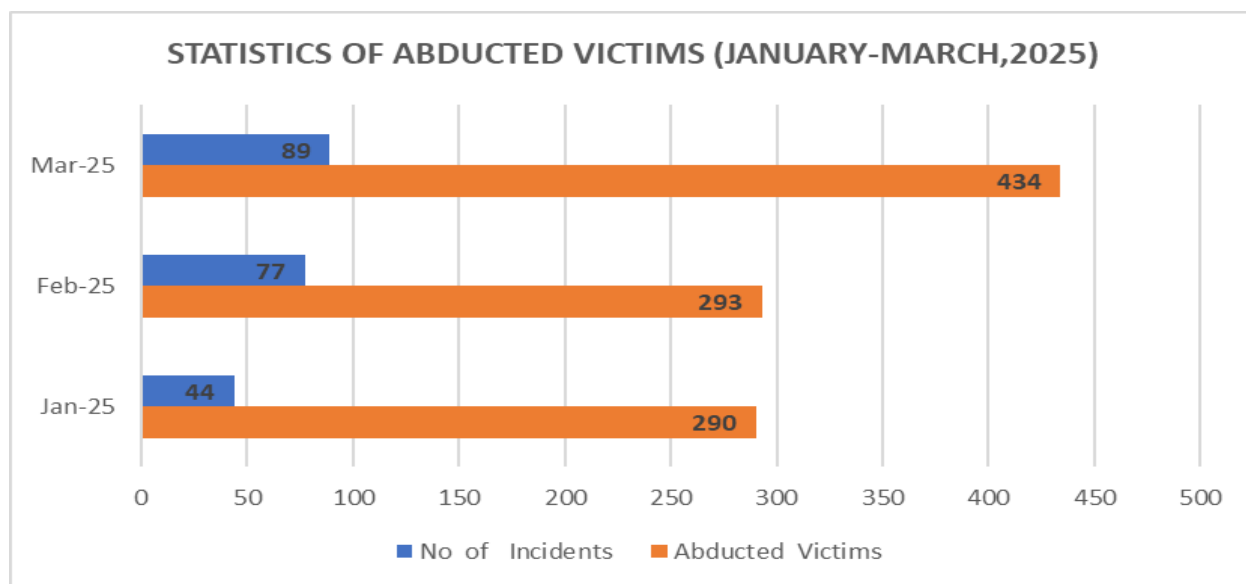
Source: WANEP-NEWS¹²

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

¹¹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

¹² Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

Likewise, between January and March 2024, a total 1,017 people were kidnapped. Out of the 1,017 victims, 75 were children, 139 females and 15 security personnel. The graph below illustrates the statistics of kidnapped victims across the affected States in the period.¹³



Source: WANEP-NEWS¹⁴

The coordinated joint security operations across states in Nigeria led to the arrest of several criminal suspects. In the reporting period, WANEP NEWS documented 193 arrests across diverse criminal activities.¹⁵ These arrests encompass a range of offenses, including kidnapping, drug and human trafficking, arms and ammunition trafficking, violent demonstrations, physical assaults, robbery, banditry, terrorism, vandalism and destruction of public infrastructure. Additionally, the recorded incidents include fraud, cyber-crime, murder, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), reflecting a broad spectrum of both criminal and civil offenses.

In March 2025, security agencies made significant progress in their efforts to combat drug trafficking across various states. Notable successes included numerous arrests and the interception of substantial quantities of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, such as Indian hemp, skuchies, opioids, fentanyl, codeine, tramadol, cocaine, and methamphetamine. These operations were conducted in Oyo, Kano, Abia, Benue, Osun, Edo, Taraba, Kaduna, Kwara, Osun, Niger, Gombe, Katsina, Enugu and Akwa Ibom States in the reporting month.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:

The WANEP NEWS recorded 16 public demonstrations and one strike, out of which two demonstrations degenerated into violence protests. One of these involved angry community youths in Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State, who staged a violent protest in response to the killing of three community guards by armed militia. The protest led to the

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

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

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

burning of both the local government secretariat and the traditional ruler's palace.¹⁶ Amid the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, members of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) held a peaceful demonstration at Banex Plaza in Wuse 2, Abuja, in solidarity with the people of Palestinas. However, the demonstration escalated into a violent clash with security operatives, resulting in the deaths of eleven people, including one security personnel, and injuring several others.¹⁷ Additionally, resident doctors at the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) Teaching Hospital in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, initiated an indefinite strike action due to unresolved issues with the state government and hospital management. The protest was triggered by issues arising from non-payment of minimum wages, significant shortfalls in February salaries, unauthorized insurance deductions, dilapidated call rooms, and a shortage of medical staff.¹⁸

Other recorded peaceful demonstrations include: In Jos, Plateau State, truck drivers and owners staged a peaceful protest against the frequent killings of their members by suspected members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The protest also addressed concerns about intimidation, harassment, and the burning of their vehicles.¹⁹ In Benin City, Edo State, members of the Concerned Market Women Association held a peaceful protest demanding justice for the murder of a 38-year-old female resident.²⁰ Similarly, supporters of Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan from Kogi Central organized a public demonstration at the National Assembly in Abuja, urging Senate President Godswill Akpabio to step down pending an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment made against him.²¹ Furthermore, students of the National Association of Ogun State Students (NAOS) in Lagos State conducted a peaceful protest to express their dissatisfaction with the mysterious disappearance of a 28-year-old recent graduate from Lagos State University.²² In Akure, Ondo State, Hundreds of women and youths staged a peaceful protest demanding the release of nine surveyors abducted by an armed gang. The protesters also called for greater efforts from security forces to address the growing rate of kidnappings in the area.²³ Women from the Eha-Ohala community in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State organized a peaceful protest against the continued attacks, rape, and killings of community members by suspected armed herders on farmlands. The demonstration took place along the Nkalagu-Eha-Amufu-Ikem-Obollo-Afor Federal Highway.²⁴ Over 30 civil society groups, led by the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), conducted a peaceful protest in Bori, Rivers State, opposing the Nigerian government's plans to resume oil exploration in Ogoniland. The protesters demanded justice for Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni 8, and insisted that MOSOP must be involved in any decisions related to oil exploration in the region.²⁵ Peasant farmers in Guyuk Local Government Area of Adamawa State held a peaceful protest at the Dangote Sugar factory, accusing the company of land grabbing and demanding an end to the expansion of its sugarcane farm in the Kola, Dumna, and Zakawon districts.²⁶

¹⁶ <https://dailytrust.com/protesters-burn-benue-lg-secretariat-palace-over-killing-of-community-guards/>

¹⁷ <https://businessday.ng/news/article/violent-clash-between-security-shiite-in-abuja-leaves-11-dead-32-injured/>

¹⁸ <https://saharareporters.com/2025/03/08/nigerian-university-lautech-resident-doctors-begin-indefinite-strike-oyo/>

¹⁹ <https://www.channelstv.com/2025/03/03/truck-drivers-protest-in-plateau-over-members-killing-in-south-east/>

²⁰ <https://dailypost.ng/2025/03/03/benin-women-protest-over-murder-of-pregnant-housewife-by-husband/>

²¹ <https://businessday.ng/uncategorized/article/pictures-pro-natasha-akpabio-supporters-protest-at-national-assembly/>

²² <https://punchng.com/ogun-students-block-lagos-ibadan-expressway-over-missing-lasu-graduate/>

²³ <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2025/03/12/protest-rocks-ondo-over-abduction-of-another-nine-surveyors/>

²⁴ <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/03/enugu-council-clarifies-eha-amufu-women-protest/>

²⁵ https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/03/ogoni-mosop-31-groups-demand-justice-for-saro-wiwa/#google_vignette

²⁶ <https://saharareporters.com/2025/03/11/breaking-protest-erupts-dangote-sugar-refinery-adamawa-peasant-farmers-reject-companies/>

In Kalabari, Rivers State, Ijaw women vandalized billboards featuring the image of Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, in a protest aimed at denying him access to their community due to ongoing political conflicts between the state governor and the minister.²⁷ Similarly, community youths in Obitti, Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area of Imo State conducted a peaceful protest against Sterling Global Oil Company, accusing it of corporate negligence, intimidation, and the continued detention of a community leader.²⁸ In Abuja, protesters gathered at the headquarters of the National Judicial Council (NJC) to demonstrate against the relocation of the Benue State Local Government Election Petitions Tribunal from Makurdi to Abuja. The protestors decried the move as a violation of territorial jurisdiction and Benue State electoral laws.²⁹

In Eha-Amufu, Enugu State, community women staged a public demonstration accusing a local resident of leaking information to suspected herdsmen, which led to violent clashes. The protest turned violent following intervention by joint security forces, resulting in three injured protesters.³⁰ Similarly, students under the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) in Ondo State organized a peaceful protest to raise awareness about the deteriorating security situation in the region, demanding urgent government intervention to address the increasing insecurity in Akure.³¹ Finally, members of the Catholic Diocese of Auchi in Edo State held a peaceful protest to condemn the killing and abduction of their priests. The demonstrators called on the state government to declare a state of emergency to ensure the safety of lives and property in the state.³²

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:

In the reporting month, Nigeria faced recurring public health emergencies, including Lassa fever, Unknown disease outbreak and Diphteria. As documented by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), a total of 22 deaths, 120 confirmed cases, and 1,036 suspected cases of Lassa fever were recorded in Ondo, Bauchi, Edo, Taraba, Ebonyi, Kogi, Gombe, Plateau, Nasarawa, Delta, Cross River, Enugu, Anambra, Jigawa, Yobe, Borno, Abia, Oyo, Kano, Kaduna, FCT, Katsina, Kwara, Ekiti, Ogun, Lagos, Niger, Akwa Ibom, Osun and Rivers States.³³ While incidents of diphteria was also recorded in Lagos, with 1 fatality and 5 hospitalized during the reporting period. Reports of an unknown disease outbreak in Kebbi State resulted in 5 death in the period. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) highlights the challenges of late presentation of cases and poor health-seeking behavior due to the high cost of treatment, which results in an increasing fatality rate. Other challenges include poor environmental sanitation practices, contaminated water, and low awareness in high-burden communities, amongst others. These instances of disease risks further undermine the health security of vulnerable populations and the already weak healthcare systems in the affected areas.

²⁷ <https://dailytrust.com/rivers-crisis-angry-protesters-destroy-wikes-billboards/>

²⁸ <https://dailypost.ng/2025/03/18/police-wade-in-as-imo-community-protests-against-oil-company/>

²⁹ <https://punchng.com/benue-lg-tribunal-relocation-sparks-protest-in-abuja/>

³⁰ <https://zagazola.org/index.php/breaking-news/community-women-protest-over-herdsmen-attacks-abduct-local-leader-in-enugu>

³¹ <https://guardian.ng/news/students-group-protest-insecurity-in-ondo-say-enough-is-enough/>

³² <https://punchng.com/catholic-church-members-protest-kidnapping-killings-in-edo/>

³³ <https://ncdc.gov.ng/diseases/sitreps/?cat=5&name=An%20update%20of%20Lassa%20fever%20outbreak%20in%20Nigeria>

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:

The WANEP NEWS recorded 8 incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Nigeria, particularly involving the rape of female adults and minors in Niger, Rivers, Ogun, Osun, Kano, Enugu, the FCT, and Adamawa States, as well as in Ekiti, Sokoto, and Nasarawa States. Additionally, the FCT recorded one incident of human trafficking, with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) actively prosecuting cases related to SGBV and human trafficking, resulting in the rescue of 7 female victims during the period.³⁴ In response to persistent incidents of SGBV, the Nigerian government, along with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and development partners, is intensifying efforts to address these critical issues. A key focus has been the effective implementation of legal frameworks, particularly the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act, to ensure enforcement. In the period, 34 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) had domesticated the VAPP Act, contributing to greater public awareness and an increase in the reporting of SGBV cases.

Implications for Peace and Security in Nigeria

Nigeria's persistent insecurity remains a major challenge, rooted in complex socioeconomic conditions and other factors including proliferation of violent conflict, criminality, and state fragility. These security threats continue to undermine human security, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and children, who are increasingly exposed to risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), trafficking, radicalization, and other forms of exploitation.

Additionally, recurring armed attacks and the looming threats of violence and kidnapping have significantly disrupted farming and rural livelihoods, particularly in regions where agriculture forms the backbone of local economies. This disruption has critical implications for food security and nutrition, and household income. With restricted access to farmland and markets, many communities face deepening poverty and hunger. According to the Federal Government's food security outlook, an estimated 25.8 million people across 26 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) are projected to experience acute food and nutrition insecurity between March and May 2025.³⁵ This reflects the worsening humanitarian crisis fueled by violence, displacement, and weakened resilience in affected communities.

Limited access to education and economic opportunities in volatile areas continues to compound vulnerability, especially among youth and women. The absence of inclusive development strategies leaves these groups marginalized, increasing the likelihood of exploitation and social unrest. The compounding effects of conflict, poverty, and exclusion further entrench cycles of insecurity.

Public frustration is also manifesting in frequent demonstrations, strikes, and civil disobedience, driven by widespread perceptions of injustice, poor governance, and inadequate public service delivery. The growing trust deficit between citizens and the state has intensified, with public protests often triggered by insecurity, economic hardship, extrajudicial killings, and other human rights abuses. Addressing these infrastructural and security challenges is crucial to

³⁴ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) : www.wanep.org/news/

³⁵ <https://thenationonline.net/fct-26-states-at-risk-of-food-crisis/>

ensuring the well-being and safety of vulnerable populations. The rise in Lassa Fever cases, coupled with outbreaks of diphtheria and an unidentified disease, underscores the persistent challenges facing Nigeria's public health security. These outbreaks are intensified by weak healthcare infrastructure, particularly in rural and underserved areas, where limited access to early diagnosis and treatment hampers effective response. As a result, transmission continues to rise, with increasing mortality in the affected states. This situation highlights the urgent need for robust disease surveillance systems, strengthened primary healthcare services, and focused public health interventions to mitigate risks and safeguard vulnerable populations.

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 prioritize strengthening the operational capacity of security agencies and scaling up their presence in high-risk and vulnerable communities. These efforts should be complemented by increased community engagement and collaboration with local stakeholders to enhance early warning systems and promote trust between citizens and security personnel.
- State and Local Governments, in collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), traditional and religious leaders and groups, women and youth groups, and the media, should intensify collaboration to ensure the effective implementation of the Child Rights Act (CRA) and the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act across all levels. Strengthening enforcement of these legal frameworks is essential for addressing the rising incidence of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and ensuring the safety and dignity of women and children nationwide.
- State and Local Governments, in partnership with the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), traditional and faith-based institutions, and the media, should enhance public health awareness campaigns, particularly in remote and underserved communities. These initiatives should focus on promoting hygiene, disease prevention, and community health practices to curb recurring outbreaks of diseases such as diphtheria and Lassa fever, as well as emerging infectious threats. Parallel to these efforts, investments should be made in strengthening rural healthcare infrastructure and establishing early warning and rapid response systems to better manage public health risks.

CONCLUSION:

Nigeria's security landscape is marked by pervasive challenges such as violent extremism, terrorism, organized crime, and deep-rooted socio-economic issues. Addressing these multifaceted problems requires a comprehensive and inclusive strategy that involves continuous evaluation of the nation's security frameworks. This strategy should prioritize active engagement and collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), local communities, and other key stakeholders. It will promote stronger cooperation, strengthen local peace

infrastructure to augment the Government's efforts to combat threats to peace and security, and build community resilience ultimately helping to mitigate the widespread impacts of insecurity across the country.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR MARCH 2025

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
VIOLENT EXTREMISM: Boko Haram/ISWAP attacks/ IED Explosion in Borno & Yobe States	8	16 people including 4 security operatives	Over 20 people injured
ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed robbery/theft, murder, armed violence, armed bandits, mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash).	81	191	102
IED Explosion (Niger State)	1	1	-
Violent Clash: a. Clash b/w secondary school students and some community youths (Niger State) b. Clash b/w rival suspected armed bandits (Kaduna State) c. Clash b/w Police operatives and Local vigilantes (Taraba State). d. Clash b/w traditional worshipers & Muslim youths (Plateau State). e. Clash b/w Custom operatives & community youths (Adamawa State).	5	1	14
Security Clearance Operations - Shoot-out between security operatives and criminal gangs.	49	128	Several others injured
Abduction (evident across 28 States)	89	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	8	-	-
Extrajudicial killing	4	11	4
Physical/Armed Assault	8	-	8
Herder-Community Conflict/Ethnic Militia Attacks	8	66	33
Illicit Drug Trafficking	17	-	-

Homicide	19	25	2
Suicide	6	4	-
<u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u>			
Demonstration (peaceful)	15	-	-
Violent demonstration	2	11	4
Strike	1	-	-
Arrest/Detention	193	-	-
Prison break	1	1	-
Road Accident	41	106	Over 72 injured
Boat Accident	1	6	-
Building Collapse	1	2	14
Drowning	1	1	-
Electrocution	2	2	-
Gas Explosion	6	3	33
Pipeline Explosion	2	-	
Stampede	1	7	3
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u>			
Communal clash	5	5	9
Explosion (Ogun) State	1	7	-
Rainstorm	4	5	9
Thunderstorm	1	1	-
<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u>			<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u>
a. Lassa Fever Outbreak	4	22	Lassa Fever: 1,156
b. Unknown disease outbreak	1	5	-
c. Diphtheria	1	1	5
Fire Outbreak	18	1	-
Tanker Explosion	5	19	-
Generator Fume	1	2	-
<u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u>			
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape	8		4
Human Trafficking	2	-	-
Child Abuse/Domestic Violence	3	-	
Total	625	649	1,478

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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