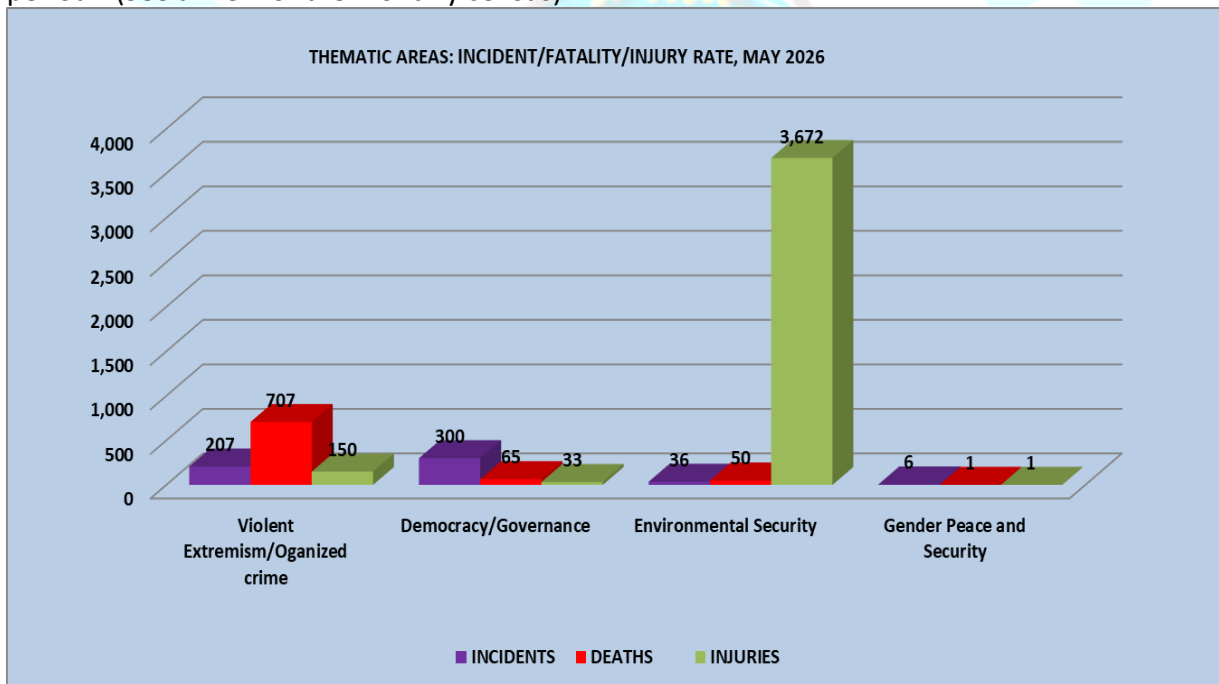


I. INTRODUCTION

In May 2026, 557 incidents were recorded in the Monthly Conflict Census by the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS). The reporting period documented a total of 832 deaths, with 415 attributed to non-state armed actors. Additionally, there were 3,672 injuries and infected cases resulting from criminal attacks, road accidents, and disease-related incidents.¹

As shown in the thematic graph below, Violent Extremism and Organized Crime recorded a total of 707 fatalities, representing the highest number among the total deaths (832) documented during the reporting period, while the Democracy and Governance theme accounted for 65 deaths. Additionally, the Environmental Security theme recorded 50 deaths, and the Gender, Peace and Security thematic area reported one death during the reporting period.² (See annex for the monthly census).



Source: WANEP-NEWS.³

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.

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/

2. ORGANISED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Terrorist attacks by Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) remain a major security concern in Nigeria, particularly in the North-East. The continued frequency of attacks, coupled with the sustained use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), reflects the groups' evolving tactics and their ability to disrupt security, instill fear, and undermine reconstruction, humanitarian assistance, and the safe resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Despite sustained counter-terrorism operations by the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the Nigerian Armed Forces, both groups continue to demonstrate operational capability through attacks on civilians, security forces, and critical infrastructure. These developments highlight the persistent threat posed by terrorist organisations and their continued adverse impact on peace, security, and stability in Nigeria.

WANEP NEWS recorded several terrorist attacks by Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) during the reporting period. The attacks primarily targeted civilians, including farmers, fishermen, and schoolchildren, across Askira/Uba, Gwoza, and Biu LGAs in Borno State, and Damaturu and Gujba LGAs in Yobe State. Overall, the incidents resulted in 35 fatalities, including security personnel, while more than 134 persons, including 42 schoolchildren were abducted, highlighting the persistent threat posed by terrorist groups to civilian populations in the North-East region. In response, the Nigerian Armed Forces, in collaboration with the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), and the Office of Security Cooperation Nigeria (OSC Nigeria), strengthened their partnership with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) to intensify counter-insurgency and clearance operations in the region.

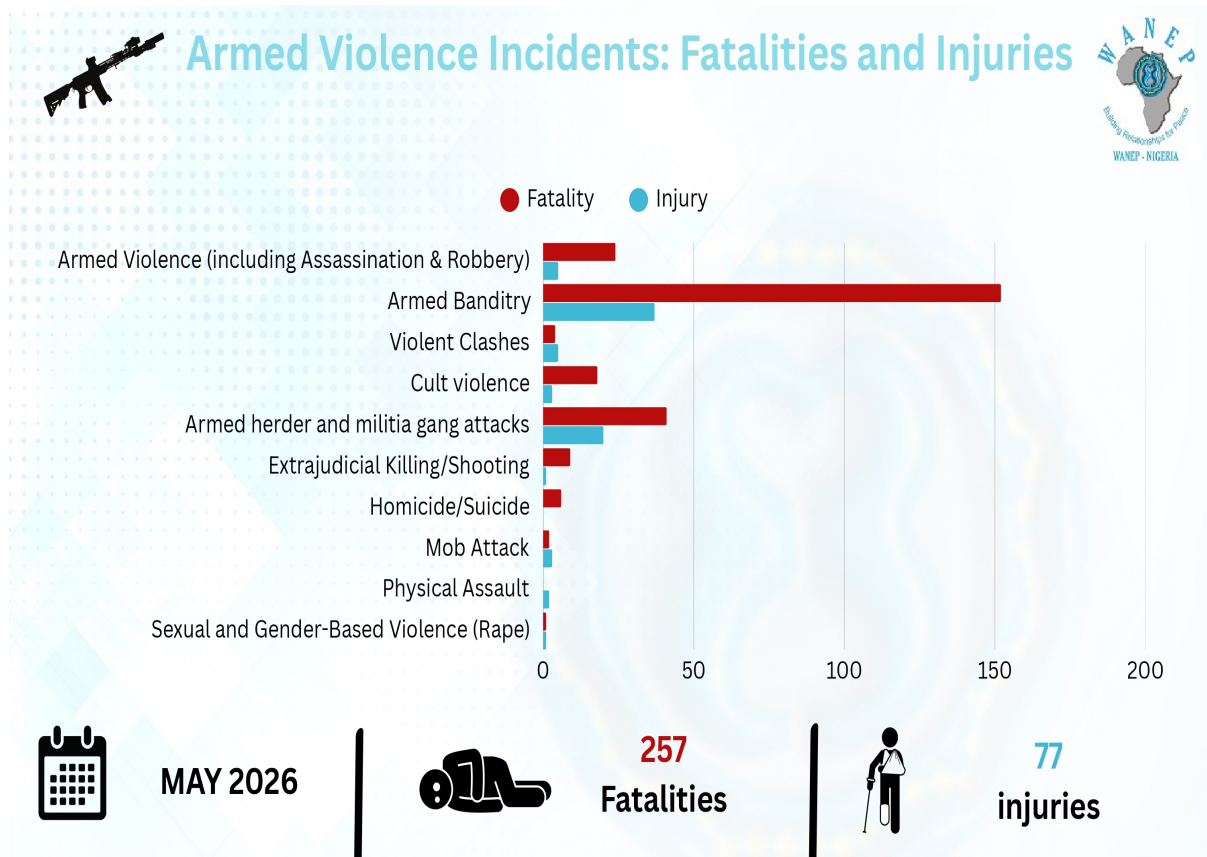
Additionally, **Organized Crime** including weapons trafficking, armed banditry, human and drug trafficking, cult violence, kidnapping, and armed violence by militia gangs, remains pervasive in the security landscape. During the reporting period, WANEP NEWS recorded 211 incidents of organized crime, resulting in 672 fatalities among civilians and security personnel. Of the recorded deaths, 415 were members of Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs), while over 30 were females, 11 children, 36 securitys personnel, including members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and Vigilante Groups.

Armed banditry attacks accounted for the highest fatality of 152 in Niger, Katsina, Kaduna and Kebbi, Kano, Kwara and Sokoto States. In addition to the loss of lives, the perpetrators engaged in a range of criminal activities, including kidnapping, cattle rustling, arms trafficking, large-scale looting, arson, and the destruction of several properties during the period under review.

While farmer-herd violence/attacks by militia armed herders resulted in the second highest fatality of 41 in the month, armed violence incidents, including robbery, assassination and Violent clashes, resulted in 28 deaths, Other reported incidents, culpable homicide, and Cult

clashes, extrajudicial killings/shootings and mob violence and suicide which recorded 4, 18, 9, 2 respectively, and 2 deaths in the reporting period.⁴

Below is the graphical representation of armed violence incidents and fatalities as documented by WANEP NEWS in May 2026.

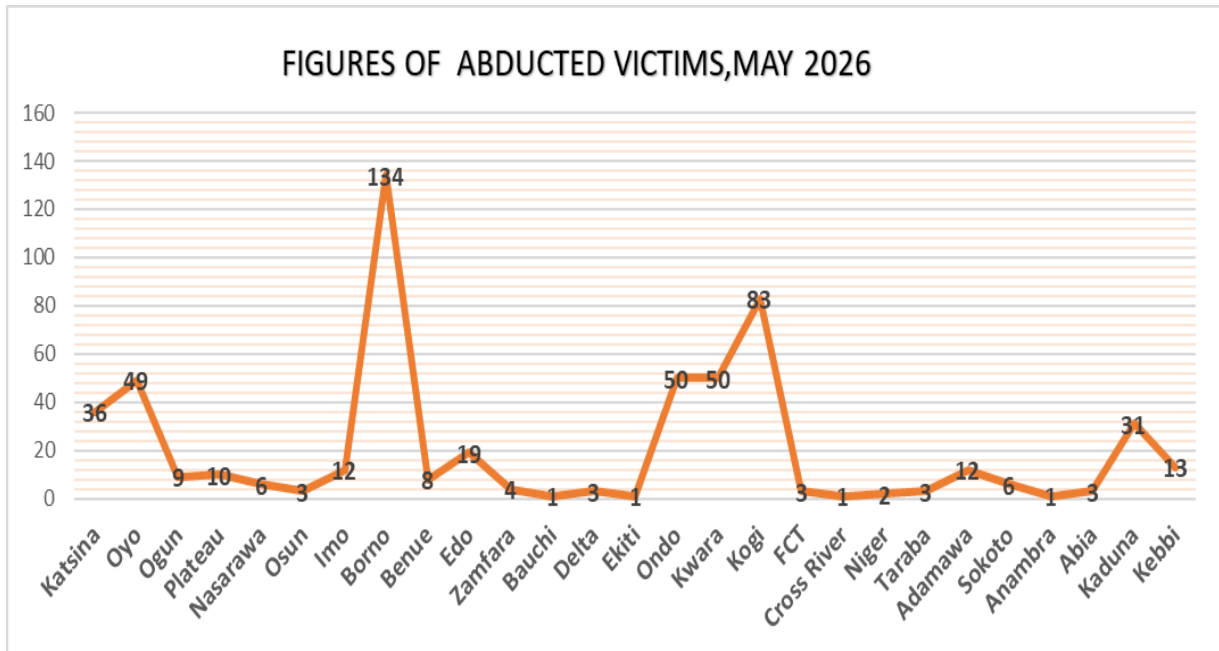


Source: WANEP-NEWS.⁵

Kidnapping by armed criminal groups remains a significant threat to peace and security across Nigeria. During the reporting period, WANEP NEWS documented 53 kidnapping incidents across 27 states, resulting in the abduction of 532 people. Among those abducted were more than 54 women and girls, 103 children, and two security personnel. The widespread nature of these incidents continues to heighten insecurity, disrupt livelihoods, and deepen humanitarian and socio-economic challenges.

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

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



Source: WANEP-NEWS

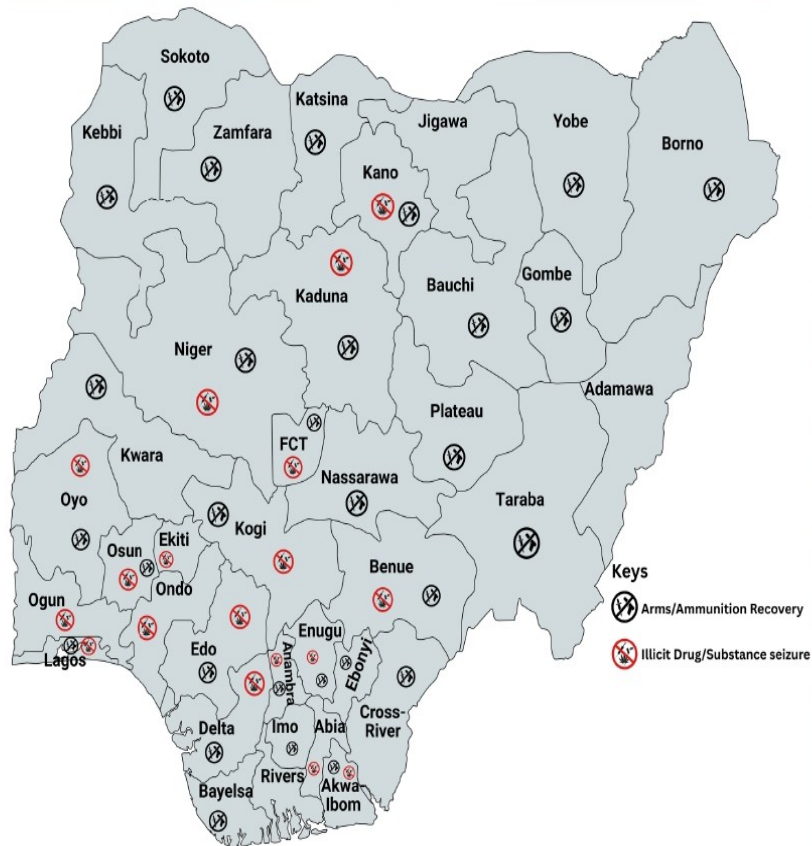
WANEP NEWS documented 245 arrests linked to diverse criminal activities, following coordinated joint security operations conducted across several states in Nigeria that led to the arrest of multiple criminal suspects. The arrests covered a wide range of offenses, including kidnapping, drug and human trafficking, arms and ammunition trafficking, violent demonstrations, physical assaults, robbery, banditry, terrorism, vandalism, and the destruction of public infrastructure. Additionally, the recorded incidents included fraud, cybercrime, murder, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), reflecting a broad spectrum of both criminal and civil offenses.

As reflected in the map below, security agencies intercepted several illicit drugs and weapons across states. Notable successes included numerous arrests and the seizure of substantial quantities of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, such as Indian hemp, skunk, opioids, fentanyl, codeine, tramadol, cocaine, and methamphetamine, as documented by WANEP NEWS.



MAY 2026

Weapons Recovery and Illicit Drug/Substance Seizure in Nigeria



Source: WANEP-NEWS.⁶

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:

WANEP NEWS recorded nine (9) public demonstrations and two (2) strike actions and a violent demonstration during the reporting period. Staff members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) at the University of Cross River (UNICROSS), Cross River State, reportedly commenced an indefinite strike over salary structure and staff welfare following the breakdown of negotiations with the university management, with no official response reported at the time of reporting. Similarly, resident doctors at the Delta State University Teaching Hospital (DELSUTH), Oghara, Delta State, embarked on an indefinite strike over the alleged assault of a colleague, citing worsening insecurity and unsafe working conditions within the hospital.

Teachers in some public schools in Oriire Local Government Area of Oyo State staged a peaceful protest demanding the immediate rescue of abducted colleagues and students following a recent armed attack along the Ahoro–Esiele/Yawota axis, while members of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Okitipupa/Irele Federal Constituency, Ondo State, protested over the delay in

⁶ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS): www.wanep.org/news/

the release of the party's primary election results. Supporters of a former Minister of Power also demonstrated peacefully at the APC Secretariat in Oyo State, demanding the adoption of direct primaries for the selection of the party's governorship candidate.

In Adamawa State, hundreds of residents of Shuwa Community in Madagali Local Government Area staged a peaceful protest following a recent attack by suspected Boko Haram fighters, calling for improved security. Community youths in Ugakwoche, Egbule Obube Community, Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo State, also protested against the alleged illegal acquisition of their farmlands by the state government. Similarly, community youths in Mgbakwu Community, Awka North Local Government Area of Anambra State, staged separate protests over the alleged killing of a 26-year-old suspect in police custody and the accidental shooting of a resident, with no reported intervention at the time of reporting.

Students of the University of Cross River (UNICROSS) in Calabar, Cross River State, staged a violent protest following the deaths of three students and a driver allegedly linked to negligence at the General Hospital, resulting in road blockades and vandalism. Likewise, residents of Gwarzo Local Government Area of Kano State carried out a violent demonstration over worsening insecurity, during which angry youths reportedly set part of a government building ablaze before security personnel were deployed to restore order.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:

During the reporting month, Nigeria continued to face recurring public health challenges, particularly outbreaks of Lassa fever and cholera in several states. According to the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), 6 deaths, 52 confirmed cases, and 488 suspected cases of Lassa fever were recorded across Ondo, Bauchi, Edo, Benue, Gombe, Plateau, Nasarawa, Delta, Lagos, Oyo, Sokoto, Ekiti, Niger, Borno, Abia, the FCT, Adamawa, Rivers, Yobe, Cross River, Enugu, and Ogun States. Similarly, Borno State experienced a significant cholera outbreak, with more than 3,000 suspected cases and 37 deaths reported during the reporting period. The continued occurrence of these disease outbreaks highlights persistent public health challenges and places additional pressure on already stretched healthcare systems.⁷ The NCDC identified challenges such as delayed presentation of cases and poor health-seeking behaviour, often driven by the high cost of treatment and clinical management of Lassa fever, as key factors contributing to increased fatality rates.⁸

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:

During the reporting period, WANEP NEWS recorded incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), predominantly cases of rape involving female minors in Lagos, Delta, Bauchi and Imo States. Furthermore, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and other security agencies rescued 59 victims of human trafficking, including children

⁷ https://punchng.com/orno-records-37-deaths-over-3000-cholera-cases/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁸ <https://ncdc.gov.ng/diseases/sitreps/?cat=5&name=An%20update%20of%20Lassa%20fever%20outbreak%20in%20Nigeria>

and females, in the FCT, Nasarawa, Enugu, and Lagos States during the month.⁹ These incidents highlights the urgent need to strengthen existing protection mechanisms.

Implications for Peace and Security

Nigeria's security landscape remained fragile as terrorism, organized crime, kidnapping, civil unrest, disease outbreaks continued to threaten national stability and human security. Persistent attacks by insurgent groups in the North-East demonstrate their sustained capability to threaten civilian populations despite ongoing military operations with the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), and the Office of Security Cooperation Nigeria (OSC Nigeria). Frequent attacks on farming and fishing communities, travellers, and educational institutions continue to disrupt livelihoods, reduce agricultural and economic activities, and heighten food insecurity in affected areas. The recurring use of explosive devices further restricts movement, limits access to farmlands and markets, and increases fear among residents. Continued attacks and abductions also undermine confidence in public safety, discourage school attendance, delay the return of displaced populations, and weaken efforts aimed at rebuilding resilient and secure communities.

The high incidence of organized crime, which resulted in over 700 fatalities and included armed banditry, farmer-herder violence, cult clashes, and armed robbery, continues to weaken community security across several states. Beyond the immediate loss of lives, attacks involving cattle rustling, arson, looting, and property destruction are likely to deepen poverty, displace households, disrupt local economies, and fuel intercommunal mistrust. Persistent violence in farming communities may reduce agricultural productivity, increase food prices, and worsen household food insecurity. The growing activities of criminal networks involved in arms trafficking, drug trafficking, and human trafficking also indicate the continued expansion of illicit economies capable of sustaining armed violence and undermining state authority.

Kidnapping continues to pose a serious threat to human security across Nigeria, with its widespread occurrence deepening fear and insecurity among communities. The persistent abduction of civilians is likely to restrict freedom of movement, disrupt livelihoods, discourage investment and commercial activities, and impose significant psychological, social, and economic burdens on affected families. The growing trend of kidnapping, particularly school children in Oyo and Borno States, raises serious child protection and education concerns. These incidents may discourage school attendance, increase the risk of displacement, weaken community confidence in public safety, and leave victims and their families with lasting psychological trauma.

Public demonstrations and strike actions during the period reflect growing public dissatisfaction with governance, insecurity, labour disputes, and limited access to essential services, and they continue to affect national stability and social cohesion. These disruptions are likely to weaken public confidence in government institutions, as citizens increasingly question the effectiveness

⁹ Source: WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS): www.wanep.org/news/

and responsiveness of authorities in addressing key socio-economic challenges. In the education and health sectors, prolonged strikes have disrupted academic calendars and healthcare delivery, leading to reduced access to essential services and weakening human capital development. Insecurity-related protests, particularly in schools, have heightened fear and reduced attendance, further undermining trust in the safety of learning environments.

The continued outbreak of Lassa fever poses a significant challenge to Nigeria's health security by placing additional pressure on healthcare systems, limiting access to essential health services, and increasing the vulnerability of affected communities. At the same time, incidents of rape involving minors and human trafficking expose persistent gaps in child protection and law enforcement, with long-term physical, psychological, and socio-economic consequences for victims. Collectively, these challenges weaken community resilience, erode public confidence in protection mechanisms, and undermine overall human security.

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 the development of a more responsive, accountable, and well-resourced security architecture through strategic recruitment, continuous capacity building, and effective deployment of personnel, particularly in high-risk and vulnerable areas. Strengthening inter-agency coordination and intelligence sharing will improve operational effectiveness and ensure timely responses to emerging security threats.
- State Governments should enhance collaboration with traditional rulers, community leadership structures, faith-based institutions, and women and youth networks to strengthen grassroots dialogue, mediation, and early warning mechanisms. This will facilitate the early detection of security threats, promote peaceful conflict resolution, and reinforce social cohesion at the community level.
- The Federal and State Governments should expand inclusive job creation and vocational training initiatives, particularly for out-of-school and at-risk youth. Increasing access to sustainable livelihood opportunities will help address socio-economic drivers of insecurity and reduce vulnerability to recruitment by criminal networks and violent extremist groups.
- State and Local Governments, in collaboration with the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), should strengthen partnerships with civil society organisations, media, and traditional and religious leaders to promote public awareness on disease prevention, sanitation, and health-seeking behaviour. Context-specific and culturally sensitive communication strategies, particularly in underserved communities, will support efforts to reduce the incidence and spread of diseases such as Lassa fever.
- State and Local Governments should strengthen collaboration with civil society organisations, traditional and religious institutions, women and youth groups, and media platforms to support the effective domestication and enforcement of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) Act and the Child Rights Act. Community-

based advocacy should focus on preventing gender-based violence, addressing harmful social norms, strengthening child protection, and promoting gender equality and respect for human rights.

CONCLUSION:

As Nigeria continues to grapple with complex security challenges across the country, response efforts should be conflict-sensitive, inclusive, and sustainable to promote lasting peace and stability. Strengthening preventive mechanisms, particularly those driven by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), is essential to improving resilience at the community level. Additionally enhancing early warning and early response systems to detect emerging and evolving human security threats, while strengthening their integration with formal state security institutions, will facilitate more timely, coordinated, and effective interventions. Furthermore, state governments should prioritize strategic risk communication on environmental and public health risks, particularly in remote and underserved communities, in collaboration with public health authorities, disaster management agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR MAY 2026

THEMATIC AREA	NO OF INCIDENTS /ATTACKS	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
VIOLENT EXTREMISM: Boko Haram/ISWAP terrorists attack.	6	35 people including security operatives and civilians including CJTF	Over 20 injured
ORGANISED CRIME:			
Armed bandits/Bomb Explosion	23	152	Over 37 people
Mob attack	4	2	3
Cult/gang clash	8	18	3
Armed robbery/theft	17	1	4
Murder	6	9	-
Armed violence	13	15	5
Violent Clash:			
a. Violent between a Fulani community and local residents (Niger)	4	4	-

b. Clash between suspected herders and residents in (Edo) c. Clash between community youths in (Bauchi) d. Clash between suspected rival armed thugs in (Lagos)			
Security Clearance Operations - Shoot-out between security operatives and criminal gangs.	31	415	Over 55 people injured
Abduction (evident across 28 States)	53	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	3	-	-
Extrajudicial killing/Shooting	2	9	1
Physical/Armed Assault	2	-	2
Herder-Community Conflict/Ethnic Militia Attacks	11	41	Over 20 people injured
Illicit Drug Trafficking	17	-	-
Homicide	6	4	-
Suicide	1	2	-
<u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u>			
Demonstration (peaceful)	8	-	-
Violent demonstration	1	-	-
Strike	3	-	-
Arrest/detention	245	-	-
Road accident	33	61	27
Boat Accident	1	1	5
Building /fence Collapse		-	-
Electrocution	2	1	-
Drowning	2	2	-
Threats	2	-	-
Gas Explosion	3	-	1
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u>			
Communal clash	4	7	-
Bridge collapse	1	-	-
<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u>			<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u>
a. Lassa Fever Outbreak#	15	6	Lassa Fever: 488
b. Cholera Outbreak	4	37	3,000

Fire Outbreak	12	-	-
Tanker Explosion	-	-	-

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>			
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape	3	1	1
Human Trafficking	3	-	-
Total	557	832	3,672